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House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
January 31, 2017.

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

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

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 3, 2017, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

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

HONORING THE LIFE OF LEWIS ODOM

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

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember the life of a community leader, public servant, proud veteran, personal mentor, and great American, Lewis Odom.

Lewis Odom lived a life many strive to emulate, a life filled with purpose, integrity, and selfless commitment to those around him. He had such a genuine impact on my life and the lives of so many others.

From a young age, Lewis held himself to a standard of excellence. Upon graduation from high school, Lewis enlisted in the U.S. Navy Reserve and was selected to join the prestigious V–12 Naval College Training Program during World War II and thereafter. Through this program, he attended Millsaps College and Tulane University and went on to serve in the Navy aboard the USS *Mississippi*.

After serving, Lewis continued his education at the University of Alabama where he received a law degree, and, soon after, commissioned as a first lieutenant in the U.S. Air Force in 1951, serving as a legal officer in Korea.

Lewis Odom's career of service was only just beginning when he left the military. His hard work and integrity as a lawyer were recognized as he became the general counsel of the U.S. Senate Small Business Committee. He would go on to serve as administrative assistant to Alabama Senator John Sparkman before being named staff director and counsel for the Senate Banking Committee. He played a critical role in shaping many of our Nation's financial regulations during this important time period.

Probably one of his most memorable accomplishments during his career on Capitol Hill was to plan and organize the inauguration ceremony for President John F. Kennedy. He often spoke of the great challenge and honor of that job.

Following his time on Capitol Hill, he served as deputy to the Chairman of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, or FDIC. He was eventually appointed senior Deputy Comptroller of the Currency before retiring from Federal service in 1981.

After his years of service in the Federal Government, Lewis returned to practice law in Mobile, joining the law firm of Miller, Hamilton, Snider & Odom. That was when I met Lewis. As a newly minted lawyer, Lewis took me under his wing and served as an important mentor.

Lewis was a thorough and exact lawyer who paid attention to detail and helped instill those traits in me and many others that he worked with. He inspired in me the confidence to hold myself to a standard of excellence, but he did so without being overbearing or harsh. He took a new lawyer and allowed me to gain invaluable experience.

As a young lawyer, Lewis taught me an important lesson that every young lawyer must learn: to choose your battles wisely. This lesson applied to more than just the field of law, however, and I have continued to use this principle in many of the other skills that I learned from Lewis throughout my life and career.

Lewis was also a true community leader committed to making Alabama a better place. From his first days in Mobile to his last, Lewis was ever present in the community, serving in any way he could, always giving his time and his devotion.

During his years in Mobile, Lewis served as the chairman of the Alabama Ethics Commission, the chairman of the Mobile water board, chancellor of the Episcopal Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast, and chairman of the Mobile Museum Board.

He was also a strong supporter of the University of Alabama, serving as president to various alumni chapters and as a founding member of the Farrah Law Society for the University of Alabama School of Law.

It is true that Lewis worked just as hard for his community in his retirement as he had earlier in his legal career.

Sadly, Lewis Odom passed away on January 16 of this year at the age of 91.

My wife, Rebecca, and I were both heartbroken to learn of his passing because he was such a dear friend. During this time of sadness, we take great

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comfort in remembering the impact he had on each of us as well as on our community, State, and country.

I hope his wife, Janelle; son, Mike; daughter, Patty; beloved grandchildren and great-grandchildren can take comfort in the same.

Mr. Speaker, Lewis was a man of great integrity and set an example for all those around him to hold ourselves to such a level of excellence and service. He was a great man, and he will be sorely missed.

TRUMP MUSLIM BAN

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

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise out of deep concern for our country, our people, and those who serve us in uniform.

The executive order signed by President Trump on Friday has not only sown chaos and created a backlash being felt across the world, it is also endangering our people here at home and our troops overseas.

It bans refugees and is, for all intents and purposes, a ban on Muslims entering our country. It is a religious test. It plays right into the hands of ISIS, al Qaeda, and other extremist groups that mean to do us harm. It arms them. Their message in recruiting and propaganda has been that America is at war with Islam and that when we say we are tolerant and inclusive, it is a lie.

We must not let it be a lie.

Make no mistake, Mr. Speaker, this order will do nothing to make America safer from terrorism. Our enemies will use this Muslim ban to their full advantage, broadcast to all of those who, for whatever reason, may be teetering on the edge of extremism, one image, one tweet, one excuse away from radicalization. And our Muslim allies are scratching their heads in disbelief and disappointment.

CBS News reported this morning, Mr. Speaker, that a senior Iraqi general who commands the elite counterterrorism force trained by the United States military was supposed to come here next week but is now banned from doing so. He told CBS news: ''I am a four-star general. I have been fighting terrorism for 13 years and winning. Now my kids are asking me if I am a terrorist.'' That general, Talib al-Kenani, has been coming here for over a decade meeting with senior U.S. military leaders at CENTCOM, but now he is banned from entering the country.

This policy is dangerous, counterproductive, and extremely unfortunate.

It is important to note, Mr. Speaker, that of the seven countries included in this ban—hear me, my colleagues—of the seven countries included in this ban, no refugee or immigrant from any of those nations has committed a terrorist act in the United States.

The President of the United States has a responsibility—a sacred and public trust—to do everything in his power to protect our Nation. We have that same responsibility. This Congress has a sacred duty to hold the President accountable and ourselves for doing so in a way that respects our Constitution and our values. That, Mr. Speaker, is patriotism.

So I urge my colleagues on both sides: Stand against this order. Stand up for America. Stand up for the Constitution. Stand up for our values. Stand against an act that does nothing but empower our enemies and erode faith in our highest principles in our country and around the world.

The Nation, Mr. Speaker, is watching.

The world, Mr. Speaker, is watching.

I urge us to action.

Representatives LOFGREN and CONYERS have introduced a bill to block this executive order. I have cosponsored it, along with 160 other Members of this House. This is a time when party should not be put before country. Party should not be put before patriotism. Party should not be put before principle.

Join me, and let us deny our enemies this potent tool and remind the world what truly makes America great.

IMPORTANCE OF FIREFIGHTERS IN RURAL AMERICA

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about the unsung heroes in many rural communities throughout America: our volunteer firefighters.

These dedicated volunteers answer the call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. They spend time away from their families and homes. The training that is required can be costly and very time consuming.

Our volunteer firefighters make these sacrifices because they care deeply about their friends and neighbors. They care about their communities.

But rural America is facing a real problem with dwindling numbers of those who are willing to volunteer. A National Fire Protection Association report published last year shows the number of volunteer firefighters per 1,000 people has been decreasing since 1986.

Gone are the days when those seeking to volunteer had to add their names to a waiting list to join their local fire department. Sometimes volunteers could wait for years to be added to the roster, but that is not how it is anymore as fewer individuals are interested in signing up.

This is not unique to Pennsylvania, but it is happening in communities across the country. Small communities reap the benefits of having volunteer forces. According to a 2016 National Fire Prevention Association study, the time donated by volunteer firefighters saves localities across the country an estimated $139.8 billion a year.

The savings are clear, and the service could not be more important. That is why last year I hosted two fire summits in my district to speak directly with local firefighters and try to identify not only the challenges that they face, but also some solutions to those problems.

Funding is always a problem that plagues volunteer departments and can truly decline quickly when we think of what it costs to purchase new equipment and be compliant with the latest regulations. Small communities are often already stressed economically and do not have a tax base that can assume another increase; but equipment replacement is paramount, and it can sometimes mean the life or death of a firefighter.

Volunteer fire departments also face training challenges. Firefighters in rural communities regularly need to travel long distances for instructional courses, and paying for the necessary training can be difficult. Training sessions might not focus enough on firefighting in rural communities, which is different from that in urban communities in a number of ways.

Personnel challenges remain a constant issue with declining populations, aging firefighters who are not being replaced with those of a younger generation, and a lack of tangible retention incentives.

□ 1015

Yet, with all of these challenges, fire departments are faced with higher call volumes than ever before, according to a study from the National Volunteer Fire Council. Most fire departments across the country have experienced a steady increase in calls over the past two decades. This is a major source of the increased time demands on volunteer firefighters.

The number of calls, coupled with the decline in the number of volunteer firefighters, means that fire departments are continuously spread too thin. Most of the increase is attributed to a sharp rise in the number of emergency medical calls, false alarms, and the use of mutual aid as the number of firefighters has decreased.

Mr. Speaker, the dangerous work that these men and women do in order to protect the homes and livelihoods of Americans is not something that should be taken for granted. These first responders put their lives on the line and make great sacrifices in order to protect their neighbors and communities from harm. As a volunteer firefighter and EMT rescue technician myself and as a member of the Congressional Fire Caucus, I am grateful for the services that our first responders—brothers and sisters who serve the communities—provide and the constant state of readiness that they operate under.

While we must not forget those who have made the ultimate sacrifice through their service, we must also ensure that their colleagues and all of

our Nation's first responders are respected and have the resources they need to safely perform their jobs.

That is why I am working with the volunteer fire departments in Pennsylvania's Fifth Congressional District to develop solutions—ideas—to not only recruit more firefighters but to retain them. It is my hope that, by increasing awareness and examining incentives, we might be able to strengthen and grow the rosters of our volunteer fire departments. We know that this service is critical, and we must respect those who are willing to show up, day or night, to protect their neighbors.

Thank you to all of our volunteers who answer when the alarm sounds. We value you; we respect you; and I hope we can find more of you to serve.

I AM AN AMERICAN

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

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Mr. Speaker, I am an American man, born in Chicago, to parents who were born citizens of the United States.

The ban on legal immigration from seven countries does not impact me or my family directly, but, as an American, I am speaking up today. I am an immigrant.

The proposed roundup of millions of immigrants will not hit my house directly, but, as an American, I am standing up today to say I, too, am undocumented.

I have not fled systematic persecution, but, today, like a lot of Americans, I am speaking out and saying clearly that I, too, am a refugee.

Today, I am an 81-year-old man who was originally from Iran who traveled with a heart problem to the United States—with my American family and a green card in my hand—and was detained at O'Hare International Airport in Chicago.

Today, I am a Fulbright scholar who was put on a plane back to Iran because our government did not understand what the new President was doing, how he was doing it, or what people already traveling should do.

Today, I am a citizen of the United Kingdom—I am English—with a green card, who was blocked entering at O'Hare with my U.S. citizen wife and my U.S. citizen child. That is who I am today.

Today, I am a student who is in the middle of my academic career at the University of Chicago who does not know whether I can come back to school and continue my education.

Today, I am one of more than 67,000 refugees who is already approved for travel and certified by both the United States and the U.N. in a painstaking process that took me years to complete, but I am stranded overseas.

Today, I am gay or Jewish, Christian, Hindu, Shia, Sunni, am from a tribe or ethnic group that is systematically targeted for persecution, or am living in a country anywhere in the world that cannot protect my basic safety, and the United States is closed to me.

Today, I am an immigrant who has a green card and who has followed all of the rules to the letter, but I cannot renew my green card or lawfully apply for citizenship here in the U.S. because I am from one of seven mostly Muslim countries on Trump's list where, incidentally, there are no Trump hotels, buildings, or golf courses.

By now, the entire world knows that the President of the United States screwed up bigly last week and caused an international and domestic crisis and that his staff is lying when they say it was a ''huge success.''

When the German Chancellor has to lecture your President about the Geneva Convention, you have made one hell of a bad decision.

When the Prime Minister of England is saying on one day that the U.S. and Britain have a special relationship but that, on the very next day, you are keeping her citizens out of your country when they are green card holders, your country has made a mistake.

When Rudy Giuliani—of all people—makes it clear that the President requested a Muslim ban and that they dressed up the policy to make it look better but still carved out exceptions to help Christians, you are probably acting in an unconstitutional manner.

That is not what one but two Federal judges thought: that there are significant enough constitutional issues that have been raised by recent executive actions to stop the President's order from being implemented.

Honestly, even at this hour, I am not sure they are fully complying with the orders or will reverse the actions of government officers at airports who coerced—intimidated—green card holders into signing away their rights and being deported.

On Sunday, the glaring bald spot of the President's executive order was combed over by the Secretary of Homeland Security, who said that keeping out travelers who already live in the U.S. and have green cards is not in the interests of the United States, to which the entire world said, sarcastically: Ya' think?

Today, I am an American, and I am standing up. Today, I am one of the millions of Americans who went to airports, Trump hotels, or town squares and who is marching peacefully, praying privately, and preparing personally to act as an advocate for immigrants and other families in our communities—women, Jews, gentiles, LGBT, and every one of every color and shape.

Today, they did not come for us, but we could not be quiet. We joined arms and worked together as Americans. We pledged to stand up for those who are being targeted so that we can protect each other and stem the next wave of targeted attacks.

DETECTIVE JERRY WALKER: TEXAS LAWMAN—LITTLE ELM, TEXAS

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Texas has lost another one of our finest men in blue.

Last month, Detective Jerry Walker responded to a call of a man brandishing a rifle and screaming and hollering in his backyard. So the officers arrived, and they ordered the man to drop the weapon, but the outlaw did not comply. He ran into the house and started firing his weapon—shooting at the officers from inside the cover of his home.

During the shoot-out with the officers, the outlaw was killed, but Detective Walker—a 48-year-old father of four and an 18-year veteran of the force—was shot during the shoot-out. This is a photograph of him.

His fellow officers rushed to Detective Walker, and he was later airlifted to the hospital, but he died at the hospital. As his body was transported from the hospital, dozens of officers and emergency responders lined the street, saluting their fallen detective. The song ''Amazing Grace'' could be heard on bagpipes as his body was taken away and traveled down the street.

Not only was Detective Walker an outstanding member of the Little Elm Police Department, but he also wore another uniform. He wore the uniform of a soldier in the United States Army. Walker served our country both at home and abroad.

Mr. Speaker, Little Elm is in north Texas. It has a population of about 3,500 people. It has approximately 21 police officers, and Detective Walker was the longest-serving officer in that town. Detective Walker's youngest child is only a few months old. His four children need to remember that their father died a servant of the people of Little Elm, Texas.

He will be remembered by his family, his friends, and his community as a model officer who protected the innocent. Most importantly, he will be remembered as someone who genuinely cared about the people of the community that he lived in.

Before he became a detective with the Little Elm Police Department, Walker served as a school resource officer at Little Elm High School. Students there remember him as someone who could talk to the students and put them at ease. In fact, the kids just loved him. They often would arm wrestle with their beloved officer during lunchtime.

One such student, Lionel Valdez, met Walker at school at about the same time that Valdez started getting into trouble. Valdez' father had walked out of his own life; so Walker took on a parent's role in making sure that Valdez kept his nose clean and stayed out of trouble while he was in school. He even went so far as to make sure

that he showed up in class. Years after Valdez graduated from high school, he would return to the school and have conversations with Walker—the one man who showed him the light during his darkest times as a student at school.

Jerry Walker was a realtime hero.

Detective Walker, Mr. Speaker, is the sixth officer killed in the line of duty in the first 17 days in 2017. Six deaths in 17 days is tragic. Our Nation must honor those men and women who wear the badge—the badge of honor, sacrifice. We must back the blue, Mr. Speaker—back the blue—and back officers like Jerry Walker of Little Elm, Texas.

And that is just the way it is.

MUSLIM BAN

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

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, three centuries ago, Hans Christian Andersen wrote a fairy tale about a king who was so vain and insecure that nobody dared challenge him. Andersen wrote: ''He cared nothing about reviewing his soldiers, going to the theater, or taking a ride in his carriage except to show off his new clothes.''

Sound familiar—a leader so vain and insecure that those around him are afraid to challenge him? a man who thinks he is so smart that he can ignore intelligence briefings and who thinks he is so powerful that he can attack an entire religion without respecting the Constitution, consulting Congress, or even his own Cabinet?

The White House claims its ban on Muslims entering our country is about ''keeping America safe.'' Don't be fooled. It is about keeping America scared. I am not naive. There is good and evil in this world. My argument is that the administration has the two sides confused.

On Saturday, a 5-year-old Maryland boy was held for hours at the Washington Dulles International Airport while his frantic Iranian-born mother waited outside. Meanwhile, at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, alt-right provocateur Steve Bannon reassured the President that their extreme vetting was protecting us from evil.

Okay, Mr. Bannon. Let's talk extreme vetting.

Before refugees make it to America, they are first vetted by the U.N. Commission for Refugees. Then the State Department investigates and interviews them overseas, checking them against databases with data from battlefields, email intercepts, intelligence, and other interviews. If they make it this far—and many do not—they are fingerprinted and investigated again by the FBI. This process can take up to 2 years, and everyone is vetted—in fact, extremely vetted; but no extreme seems extreme enough for the extremists who are currently in the White House.

And how did they choose the seven countries to target?

In the past 40 years, there hasn't been a single terrorist act in America by someone from Syria, Iran, Sudan, Libya, Somalia, Yemen, or Iraq. Of course, that is not all these countries have in common. They are also nations in which The Trump Organization has no business. Meanwhile, the homes of every one of the 9/11 hijackers—Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Egypt, and Lebanon—were left off the list. The Trump Organization has holdings in three out of the four.

Last weekend, at the San Francisco International Airport, an Afghani interpreter for our military was detained—held—and questioned after risking his life for our country.

In Chicago, Sahar Algonaimi traveled from Syria to care for her dying mother. Despite having a valid visa, she was put back on a plane and sent home. Before she left, her sister said she was coerced into signing papers that canceled her visa.

□ 1030

Other detainees say they were asked their views on the current President. What does that have to do with anything? If having a negative view of the man in the White House is cause for getting kicked out of the country, we are going to need a lot more planes.

Since Friday, hundreds have been detained and thousands of legal residents and visa holders are in limbo overseas. ISIS is rejoicing, and American troops and travelers are in danger.

So how does the White House describe the results? '' . . . a massive success story . . . on every single level.'' If this is the Trump administration's idea of success, God help us all when they fail.

At the end of his famous story, Hans Christian Andersen's foolish emperor parades naked down the street while those around him marvel at his magnificent clothes. Andersen wrote:

''No costume the Emperor had worn before was ever such a complete success.''

Then a child cried out: ''But he hasn't got anything on.''

We all know how the story ends. Just like in the fairy tale, sometimes it takes a child to show us the truth.

HONORING CHIEF SPECIAL WARFARE OFFICER WILLIAM ''RYAN'' OWENS

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

Mr. TAYLOR. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Chief Special Warfare Officer William ''Ryan'' Owens and his wife and his children.

The Department of Defense announced his death January 28 in the Arabian peninsula after wounds sustained in a raid against al Qaeda. It should also be noted that two others were wounded in the raid and three others injured in a crash landing.

I looked for my own words today, but I came across the profound writing of Andrew Stumpf, and I shall recite his powerful words today in honor of Chief Owens and his family: ''A Debt That Cannot Be Repaid.''

''In a country that most would struggle to find on a map, in a compound that few possess the courage to enter, men from my previous life took the fight to our enemy.

''In that compound, they found men that pray five times a day for your destruction. Those men don't know me, they don't know you, and they don't know America. They don't understand our compassion, our freedoms, and our tolerance. I know it may seem as if those things are currently missing, but they remain, and I know they will return. Our capacity for them is boundless, and is only dwarfed by their hatred for you. They don't care about your religious beliefs; they don't care about your political opinions. They don't care if you sit on the left or the right, liberal or conservative, pacifist or a warrior. They don't care how much you believe in diversity, equality, or freedom of speech.

''I'm sorry that you have never smelled the breath of a man who wants to kill you. I am sorry that you have never felt the alarm bells ringing in your body, the combination of fear and adrenalin, as you move towards the fight, instead of running from it. I am sorry you have never heard someone cry out for help, or cried out for help yourself, relying on the courage of others to bring you home. I am sorry that you have never tasted the salt from your own tears, as you stand at flag draped coffins, burying men you were humbled to call your friends. I don't wish those experiences on you, but I wish you had them. It would change the way you act, it would change the way you value, it would change the way you appreciate. You become quick to open your eyes, and slow to open your mouth.

''Most will never understand the sacrifice required to keep men from that compound away from our doorstep, but it would not hurt you to try. It would not hurt you to take a moment to respect the sacrifices that others make on your behalf, whether they share your opinions or not. It would not hurt you to take a moment to think of the relentless drain on family, friends, and loved ones that are left behind. Ideas are not protected by words. Paper may outline the foundation and principles of this nation, but it is blood that protects it.

''In that compound, a man you have never met gave everything he had, so that YOU, have the freedom to think, speak, and act however you choose. He went there for all of us, whether you loved him, or hated what he stood for. He went there to preserve the opportunity and the privilege to believe, to be, and to become what we want. This country, every single person living inside its borders and under the banner of

its flag, owe that man. We owe that man everything. We owe him the respect that his sacrifice deserves.

''Saying thank you is not enough.

''We send our best, and lose them, in the fight against the worst this world has to offer. If you want to respect and honor their sacrifice, it needs to be more than words. You have to live it.

''Take a minute and look around. Soak it in, all of it. The good, the bad, and the ugly. You have the choice, every day, as to which category you want to be in, and which direction you want to move. You have that choice, because the best among us, the best we have ever had to offer, fought, bled, and died for it.

''Don't ever forget it.''

FIGHT CLOSED DOORS

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

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, on Friday, I visited a community health center in Worcester, Massachusetts. There, at a place dedicated to healing those in their community, I met one of their patients. It was a 42-year-old Muslim refugee from Baghdad who arrived in the United States this past November. He, his wife, and his children spent 3 years in a Turkish refugee camp after fleeing their home country.

His family had been targeted in Iraq. He had been hospitalized four times with bombing injuries. He and his wife had both been shot. He watched his own brother burn to death in front of his eyes, and countless members of his family are still missing.

He was a musician back home, but he struggled to keep up his craft as he has fled. A doctor in that health center managed to track down a used trumpet and presented it to that man as a gift. Now, every time he visits that health center, he brings the trumpet and plays it for the staff.

My visit was no exception. He stood in front of our group and proudly played our national anthem with tears in his eyes because this country had given him a home. This country is helping him mend his wounds, has protected his family, and has given him a chance to fight another day.

It is a badge of honor that he shares with every single person living in our great Nation, regardless of color or creed, that we are all bound together by the immense opportunity of those golden doors, opened at one point for our own families sometime down the road.

Hours after our visit, our President—his President—told him that his relatives, his neighbors, and millions of others who have suffered just as he has were no longer welcome here.

To Samira Asgari, a 30-year-old doctor traveling to Boston to study cures for tuberculosis, he closed the doors.

To the Iraqi general who commands an American-trained counterterrorist force traveling here to visit his relocated family, our President closed our doors.

To all of the 21.3 million refugees worldwide, the leader of our free world told them that their pain and their suffering was not his problem, and he closed our doors.

And to the global community, he made clear that his government will give in to terror and will make decisions based on fear rather than strength.

Mr. President, I hope you hear us loud and clear when we say that these actions are an insult to the country we all love. They are an insult to our Constitution and an embarrassment to the blood, the sweat, and the tears that generations of Americans have shed in defense of Lady Liberty.

So, Mr. President, we will fight, we will march, we will protest, we will raise our voices, and one day we will win.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to direct their remarks to the Chair and not to the President.

A NATION THAT WELCOMES AND RESPECTS PEOPLE FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I have had the privilege of working with Republican and Democratic Presidents, and, I might add, that I have had the sadness to be standing with them during times of need of this Nation. Living knowledge, during my tenure, President George W. Bush was President during 9/11.

I was in this Capitol on September 11, 2001, and so I was physically evacuated. As we were leaving with no understanding of what was happening—particularly for those of us who had come for early morning meetings, not having the full impact of what had happened in New York and not having the full knowledge. But as we were fleeing this building, we took a look to our right. We could see the billowing black smoke in the Pentagon. We were running for our lives. We were running as Americans, Muslims, Jews, Christians, people of many faiths, many races, many genders, many orientations. We were running as Americans.

Those families at Ground Zero watched in horror or heard in horror of their loved ones lost, in spite of the heroic efforts of first responders. First responders were lost. There, too, was a multitude of the United Nations.

This Nation has always welcomed and respected people from all over the world, and so it disturbs me when those of us who have now taken a visible and stoic stand against an unconstitutional executive order begin to receive attacks from the very person who should be bringing this Nation together.

I take great insult from the firing of Deputy Attorney General Sally Yates, a person whom I have worked with personally as a senior member of the House Judiciary Committee. She is of profound integrity, honesty, respectability, and professionalism. I congratulate Deputy Attorney General Sally Yates for being a patriot.

Last evening, she rendered this statement: ''In addition, I am responsible for ensuring that the positions we take in court remain consistent with this institution's solemn obligation to always seek justice and stand for what is right. At present, I am not convinced that the defense of the executive order is consistent with these responsibilities nor am I convinced that the executive order is lawful.''

Responding to that, almost like Nixon, some decades ago, this White House fired Attorney General Yates and proceeded to make this statement: ''The acting Attorney General, Sally Yates, has betrayed the Department of Justice by refusing to enforce a legal order designed to protect the citizens of the United States. This order was approved as to form and legality by the Department of Justice Office of Legal Counsel.''

Sally Yates explained it, but there is no betrayal of the Department of Justice. It is an entity. It is not the American people, and it is not a Constitution. She has no obligation to the Department of Justice. She has an obligation to the American people to uphold the Constitution.

□ 1045

The White House proceeds to go on to say—I assume President Trump—''Ms. Yates is an Obama administration appointee who is weak on borders and very weak on illegal immigration,'' of which I don't know their proof for such.

But what I will say to you is that she was doing her civic and patriotic duty by remaining there as a senior member who was the only person there that could sign subpoenas. She was doing America a favor.

So I will say, in the backdrop of that, were you at the Bush Intercontinental Airport, as I was, when an Iraqi citizen came in, a legal permanent resident with a green card, and was detained for 5 hours while his employer and lawyers were gathering and hovering outside; and CBP, to my understanding, how frightened they were, how they did not know what was going on, did not allow them to be able to speak?

Or did you listen last night when an Iraqi woman indicated that her husband was murdered and she hid for 12 years in Iraq until she was able to bring her children here?

Did you hear that refugees are being denied to come in for 120 days on Friday, Mr. Speaker, and that their papers will expire?

Finally, Mr. Speaker, did you hear that the perpetrator in Quebec had on his social media that he was supporting or praising President Trump?

Enough is enough. Repeal this order. Pass the SOLVE Act. Pass the USA Act

that I have introduced as well that includes gender and religion.

Stop this madness. The executive order is unconstitutional.

AMERICA IS AND MUST REMAIN A COUNTRY THAT WELCOMES REFUGEES

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

Mr. SWALWELL of California. Mr. Speaker, America is and must remain a country that welcomes refugees, and we must welcome refugees of all religions.

President Trump has our country under a Muslim ban that makes us less safe and less American. Less safe because we already have in place since World War II a process for vetting refugees who come to this country, an intense process that takes 18 to 24 months before anyone can get here.

Less safe because it makes us less of a team player on an international stage that requires cooperation among our allies and those in the Middle East who are helping us fight terrorism. If we are not taking on refugees, as our allies, like Jordan and Germany and others who are in the thick of this fight, we will not be seen as a team player and we will not be able to count on them for cooperation.

Less safe because it motivates and inspires an enemy who is determined to dispel a message that the United States is not welcome to Muslims.

It makes us less American because refugees have helped America as much as America has helped refugees. We have seen this in the wisdom of Albert Einstein, the patriotism of Secretary Madeleine Albright.

I have seen this in my own congressional office with my chief of staff, Ricky Le, who came to our country at age 4, on a raft, fleeing Vietnam, and was welcomed into this country, where he was given an opportunity to be the first in his family to go to college, started working on Capitol Hill as an intern, and serves as the chief of staff in my office today.

I have seen this spirit of the refugee in Mohammad Usafi, who was my guest at the State of the Union just 2 years ago. Mohammad served our country as an interpreter in Afghanistan. He lost his father, who was kidnapped and killed by the Taliban for his service. His little brother was kidnapped, and he gave his life savings to save his brother's life.

We brought Mohammad over to the United States. But today, if Mohammad was on his way to the United States, under this Muslim ban, he would be detained in an airport.

But what is American?

American is standing up and welcoming people in need. Being American means going to an airport, as I saw thousands do when I went to SFO airport in San Francisco this weekend. I saw the lawyers on our staff working to provide casework to anyone who was detained. I saw the spirit of generosity across our country at airports and town squares.

Being an American means supporting Congresswoman LOFGREN's SOLVE Act, the Statue of Liberty Values Act, that will fix and end this Muslim ban.

Being an American is what Sally Yates did last night when she stood up against an illegal order and she was fired. Acting Attorney General Sally Yates was not the person who deserved to be fired yesterday.

To stop this Muslim ban, we must unite in this country; unite and make sure that we are safe and welcoming to those in need; unite to say we will not target people for persecution based on religion; unite to live out, indeed, what we are taught in the Bible.

In Luke 10:25, a student asked Jesus: ''What must I do to inherit eternal life?''

Jesus says: ''Love the Lord with all of your heart, and love your neighbor as yourself.''

The student asks: ''Who is my neighbor?''

And Jesus tells him the story of a traveler from Jerusalem headed to Jericho who was attacked, robbed, and beaten along his journey, and stripped of all of his clothes. He encounters a priest, who walks to the other side of the road when he sees the traveler.

He encounters a Levite, who also, like the priest, walks to the other side of the road when he sees this beaten, weary traveler. But then he comes across a Samaritan. The Samaritan took pity on the traveler, bandaged his wounds, and took him and paid for him to stay at an inn.

Jesus asked the student: ''Which of these men was a neighbor?''

The student said: ''The one who showed mercy.''

Jesus said to the student: ''Go and do likewise.''

To my colleagues in this House, Republicans and Democrats, and Americans across this great land, refugees are our neighbors. They are the weary travelers. How will we receive them? The American spirit is to be like the Samaritan. We must go and do likewise.

A DECADE OF SERVICE

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

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a Minnesota public servant. After nearly a decade of service to his community, my friend and St. Michael's former mayor, Jerry Zachman, I congratulate him on his retirement.

Jerry has deep roots in St. Michael, as he is a part of the fifth generation of his family to live there, and these strong ties to his beloved community, no doubt, inspired Jerry to serve.

As the community began to grow and develop, his main goal was to ensure that St. Michael residents were always put first. I think it is safe to say that Jerry did just that. During his 10 years as mayor, Jerry made numerous improvements to this ever-growing community and city. One major project Jerry played a huge role in is the expansion of the I–94 corridor, which cuts through Minnesota's Sixth Congressional District.

I thank Jerry for his unwavering dedication to St. Michael and to our great State, and I wish him nothing but the best in his future.

AN X GAMES STAR

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate an athlete from my district who has persevered and conquered, achieved, despite challenges that have been presented to him during his life.

This past week, snowmobile motocross racer Mike Schultz, from St. Cloud, Minnesota, won his sixth gold medal at the Winter X Games. Mike lost his left leg during a tragic accident in 2008. This past week, he competed amongst opponents who were also amputees or partially paralyzed.

Mike Schultz serves as a wonderful reminder of what can be accomplished when one never gives up and displays courage in the face of extreme challenge. It is inspiring to see a young man come out on top against such adversity.

We are proud of you, Mike, and I look forward to watching you compete in the 2017 International Paralympic Committee World Para Snowboard Championships in Canada later this year. I have no doubt you will be victorious once again.

MINNESOTA'S MEDIA MOGUL

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate one of the great leaders in Minnesota. Stanley S. Hubbard, the president and chairman of Hubbard Broadcasting, has been awarded the First Amendment Leadership Award from the Radio Television Digital News Foundation. Hubbard Broadcasting owns several media outlets, including KSTP, a local news affiliate in the great State of Minnesota.

Stan Hubbard is well-known in his industry. In fact, he has already been inducted into the Broadcast & Cable Hall of Fame, and he has received the Distinguished Service Award from the National Association of Broadcasters.

The First Amendment Leadership Award is presented annually to a business or government leader who has made a significant contribution to the protection of the First Amendment and the freedom of the press. This award was made for someone like Stan Hubbard.

Stan Hubbard, of Hubbard Broadcasting, has spent his entire career in the media protecting and promoting free speech and a free and accountable press.

Congratulations to you, Stan, and to the entire Hubbard Broadcasting family. You deserve this award because you earn it every day.

PRESIDENT TRUMP'S CABINET NOMINEE, STEVE MNUCHIN

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

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to place in the RECORD a very important story from The Columbus Dispatch newspaper. It focuses on Steve Mnuchin, President Trump's nominee to be Treasury Secretary, and it raises issues of deep concern.

[From the Columbus Dispatch, Jan. 29, 2017]

TRUMP TREASURY PICK MNUCHIN MISLED SENATE ON FORECLOSURES, OHIO CASES SHOW

(By Alan Johnson and Jill Riepenhoff)

President Donald Trump's nominee for U.S. treasury secretary was untruthful with the Senate during the confirmation process, documents uncovered by The Dispatch show.

Steve Mnuchin, former chairman and chief executive officer of OneWest Bank, known for its aggressive foreclosure practices, flatly denied in testimony before the Senate Finance Committee that OneWest used ''robo-signing'' on mortgage documents.

But records show the bank utilized the questionable practice in Ohio.

''The guy is just lying. There's no other way to say it,'' said Bill Faith, executive director of the Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio.

The revelation comes with the committee's vote on whether to confirm Mnuchin's nomination, currently scheduled for Monday night.

Barney Keller of Jamestown Associates, who represents Mnuchin, was asked to comment for this story but did not respond before deadline. Jamestown Associates is a Washington political consulting and advertising firm that represented Trump in his campaign.

''Robo-signing'' is the informal term for when a mortgage company employee signs hundreds of foreclosures, swearing they have scrutinized the documents as required by law when in fact they have not.

''OneWest Bank did not 'robo-sign' documents,'' Mnuchin wrote in response to questions from individual senators, ''and as the only bank to successfully complete the Independent Foreclosure Review required by federal banking regulators to investigate allegations of 'robo-signing,' I am proud of our institution's extremely low error rate.''

But a Dispatch analysis of nearly four dozen foreclosure cases filed by OneWest in Franklin County in 2010 alone shows that the company frequently used robo-signers. The vast majority of the Columbus-area cases were signed by 11 different people in Travis County, Texas. Those employees called themselves vice presidents, assistant vice presidents, managers and assistant secretaries. In three local cases, a judge dismissed OneWest foreclosure proceedings specifically based on inaccurate robo-signings.

The Dispatch found more than 1,900 OneWest foreclosures in the state's six largest counties from 2009 to 2015.

Carla Duncan, a social worker from Cleveland Heights, was snared by OneWest's robo-signing machinery.

On her way out of town for a short trip in 2010, Duncan stopped by her home to get her mail and found a note from a field inspector for her mortgage company saying that her house was vacant and was going to be boarded up.

''It wasn't vacant. I was living there,'' Duncan said. ''There were curtains on the windows. The radio was playing and the dog was there.''

What Duncan didn't know at the time was that OneWest had begun foreclosure proceedings on her three-bedroom home even though she was up-to-date on her payments. OneWest refused to accept a loan modification approved by a previous lender that had been purchased by OneWest, and it wanted to substantially increase Duncan's interest rate and monthly payment and add late fees. The company also put a lock box on a separate rental property she owned in Cleveland.

After hiring former Ohio Attorney General Marc Dann, waging a five-year court battle and filing personal bankruptcy, Duncan was finally able to get the foreclosures dismissed and keep her home and rental property. She said the experience was devastating.

''It's almost like being raped, like being emotionally violated,'' Duncan said. ''It got to the point that I was afraid to open my own door.''

Court records show that Duncan's mortgage was robo-signed by Erica Johnson-Seck, vice president of OneWest's department of bankruptcy and foreclosures. From her office in Austin, Texas, Johnson-Seck robo-signed an average of 750 foreclosure documents a week, according to a sworn deposition she gave in a Florida case in July 2009.

Under oath, Johnson-Seck acknowledged that she did not read the documents she was signing, taking only about 30 seconds to sign her name. To speed up the process, Johnson-Seck said she shortened her first name on her signature to just an ''E.'' She said in the deposition that OneWest's practice was to review just 10 percent of the foreclosure documents for accuracy.

Dann, who now specializes in representing clients who have problems with banks and other lenders after he was forced to resign as attorney general nearly 10 years ago, said Mnuchin's businesses were a ''major offender'' in problem mortgages. Dann said Mnuchin's firms were known for dual tracking (pursuing foreclosures simultaneously as they allegedly worked with homeowners), fabricating documents and other tactics ''that caused unbelievable devastation in people's lives.''

In 2010, federal laws were changed, enabling borrowers victimized by lenders to sue them. Dann said he worries that Mnuchin, as treasury secretary, would quietly work to repeal reforms, collectively known as the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act.

That appears to be the case.

''It has been over six years since the passage of Dodd-Frank and it seems like an appropriate time to review all of the regulations from Dodd-Frank to understand their impact on the market, investors, small businesses and economic growth,'' Mnuchin said in a written answer to the Senate.

U.S. Sen. Sherrod Brown, D-Ohio, grilled Mnuchin at his recent hearing and in follow-up written questions.

''Mnuchin profited off of kicking people out of their homes and then gave false testimony about his bank's abusive practices,'' Brown told The Dispatch. ''He cannot be trusted to make decisions about policies as personal to working Ohioans as their taxes and retirement.''

Faith, the homelessness coalition director, said foreclosure practices by Mnuchin's companies and others like them ''created havoc.''

''People were bamboozled into signing these mortgages,'' Faith said. ''We watched this train wreck happen. It's been devastating, not only to the people who got caught in this kind of scheme, but also to people who happened to live in the neighborhood . . . . It's scary that he's going to be treasury secretary.''

The Dispatch analysis showed thousands of Ohio homeowners—including 245 in Franklin County—found themselves in OneWest's crosshairs when they defaulted on their loans, the majority of them with high interest rates. Many mortgages had terms that housing and financial experts view as predatory: prepayment penalties, interest-only loans and no-money-down loans.

In addition to OneWest, which was born in 2009 from the collapse of subprime mortgage giant IndyMac, Mnuchin's banking group also acquired Financial Freedom, a subsidiary of Lehman Brothers that went bankrupt because of its toxic mortgage portfolio. The firm specialized in loans to senior citizens cashing in on their homes' equity.

Mnuchin was labeled by critics at the time as the ''Foreclosure King.''

Of the nearly four dozen foreclosure cases filed by OneWest in Franklin County in 2010 that were analyzed by The Dispatch, a quarter were filed within three years of the homeowner taking out the loan, typically a red flag that there was a problem with the mortgage terms and/or vetting the borrowers.

Thirteen of the borrowers had double-digit interest rates, ranging from 10 percent to 17.31 percent, largely because of adjustable-rate mortgage terms.

In the cases in which the houses were sold at an auction, two-thirds ended up in the hands of the federal government, which had backed those loans. Collectively, more than $4 million was due on those loans.

Only seven borrowers were able to get a loan modification, even though former President Barack Obama's administration had been pushing since 2009 for lenders to help Americans keep their homes by lowering interest rates and, in some cases, the principal balance.

Mnuchin does have supporters, including the American Bankers Association, which sent a letter to the Senate committee saying Mnuchin's ''public statements as well as his career in finance bring us optimism with regard to the outlook for public policies focused on growth and prosperity.''

Grover Norquist, head of Americans for Tax Reform, released a statement supporting Mnuchin's nomination, in part because of his stated intention to roll back some of the Dodd-Frank legislation: ''Mr. Mnuchin has made it clear that reforming the Dodd-Frank Act will be his 'number one priority on the regulatory side' once he becomes secretary of the treasury.''

Ms. KAPTUR. According to The Columbus Dispatch, Mnuchin was untruthful to the Senate Finance Committee regarding his company's aggressive role in hastening thousands of home foreclosures during the 2000 financial crisis and what followed, and his misdeeds deeply impacted places like Ohio.

Mr. Mnuchin was the chief executive officer of OneWest Bank, which engaged in so-called robo-signing of mortgage documents. That means you really don't—you treat people like objects; you really don't go into the details of every case.

The Columbus Dispatch said its analysis of dozens of foreclosure cases in Ohio, and subsequent action, prove otherwise.

The dastardly practice of robo-signing, prevalent throughout the mortgage industry in the aftermath of that terrible financial crisis, had certain leaders, of which Mr. Mnuchin was at the top of the heap; and their employees signed foreclosure documents en masse without properly reviewing them and forcing unjust foreclosures.

The Columbus Dispatch found more than 1,900 such cases in Ohio alone. Individual cases revealed OneWest Bank declared properties vacant, even though someone was living in them. OneWest Bank, time and again, refused to abide by agreed-upon loan modifications.

Is that the kind of person that we really want in charge of the U.S. Treasury Department?

Nominee Mnuchin comes with a Goldman Sachs pedigree. Well, wouldn't we know that? He was nicknamed the ''foreclosure king'' after buying up IndyMac, a subprime lender that evicted about 36,000 people during the financial crisis.

Sadly, Mr. Speaker, while President-elect Trump promised to drain the swamp, his nominee for Treasury Secretary proves he is not doing that at all. He is enlarging the swamp.

The Columbus Dispatch found more than 1,900, I repeat, OneWest Bank foreclosures in our State's six largest counties from 2009 to 2015.

In addition, Mr. Mnuchin profited personally off of kicking people out of their homes. Does such a person actually deserve confirmation as Secretary of the Treasury of the United States of America?

Wake up, America. Wake up. Pay attention to what is happening here in Washington, D.C. This city belongs to you. This Capitol belongs to you.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to place in the RECORD a release I sent out over the weekend relating to President Trump's executive order on immigration and refugees.

KAPTUR STATEMENT ON PRESIDENT TRUMP'S EXECUTIVE ORDER ON IMMIGRATION AND REFUGEES

CONDEMNS MISGUIDED MANDATE, INVITES TRUMP TO MEET WITH REFUGEES WHO CALL OHIO HOME

WASHINGTON, DC.—Today Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur (OH–09) released the following statement in light of confusion and hurt emanating from President Donald Trump's Executive Order on immigration and refugees.

''In New York harbor, not far from President Donald Trump's office tower stands the awesome Statue of Liberty with Emma Lazarus' immortal words, 'Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free.' Surely, President Trump has read these words.

''Ancesters of the Trump and Kaptur families both passed through that unforgettable portal as they made their way to America as immigrants. How can we deny to others the gift of freedom bequeathed to us?

''I support robust efforts to make America safe and secure. But a workable solution should ensure America's safety without destroying our heritage as an immigrant nation, dedicated to liberty and justice for all.

''President Trump's mandate will make America less safe. It penalizes worthy individuals and actually gives terrorist cells ammunition to use against America. This mandate puts people at risk who have helped America in our battle against terrorism, at home and abroad. It punishes innocent individuals caught in the crossfire fleeing terror and tribal conflict.

''Dangerously this misconceived Executive Order will spur anti-American sentiment globally and on the Internet, spurring more terrorism, including against our troops, and it potentially aggravating religious conflict half way around the world. Reckless rhetoric puts our nation at greater risk at home and puts Americans traveling abroad in danger.

''I cordially invite the President to northern Ohio to meet personally with some of the crossfire fleeing the terror of war and tribal conflict. A well-crafted policy should enshrine liberty for all law-abiding persons while avoiding unintended consequences that can be used by our enemies to enflame terrorism.''

Ms. KAPTUR. I just wish to say that the ancestors of the Trump family, as well as the Kaptur family, passed through the unforgettable portal of the Statue of Liberty in New York Harbor. And the words at the base of that statue are emblazoned in the minds of families like our own going back generations. ''Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free.'' Surely, President Trump has read these words.

I support robust efforts to make America safe and secure, and have served on all the committees in this Congress that aim to do that. But workable solutions should ensure America's safety, without destroying our heritage as an immigrant Nation dedicated to liberty and justice for all.

President Trump's mandate actually will make America less safe because it penalizes worthy individuals and puts them at greater risk, and it actually gives terrorist cells ammunition to use against America.

□ 1100

Think about it. This mandate puts people at risk who helped America in our battle against terrorism abroad and at home, and it punishes innocent individuals caught in the crossfire fleeing terror and tribal conflict.

Dangerously, this misconceived executive order will spur anti-American sentiment globally and on the internet spurring more terrorism. The old World War II motto ''loose lips sink ships'' is going to happen because of the way this was conducted. Reckless rhetoric puts our Nation at greater risk at home and puts Americans fighting for us and those traveling abroad in greater danger.

Mr. Speaker, I cordially invite the President to northern Ohio. Come and meet some of the people whose lives your order changed. I think you will change your mind.

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

IRAQI SPECIAL IMMIGRANT VISAS

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, we are seeing from coast to coast demonstrations, protests, with people speaking out against the outrageous, reckless, and cruel executive order promulgated by the administration on Friday. It is wrong, and it is immoral on so many levels. It is hard to know where to start.

I just left my office with the president of the Western States chiropractic college—the largest such institution in the country—Joe Brimhall has a number of students who are dual citizens who need to leave the United States to take their board-certified tests next week in Canada. He doesn't know what to tell them. Pursue their professional career and maybe not be able to come back to the United States and finish at the college? It is embarrassing that we can't give him guidance about this ill-thought-out and reckless executive order that wasn't planned and still is having the details worked out.

But perhaps the worst aspect of this blanket cancelation is as it affects Special Immigrant Visas for Iraqis who are waiting to come to the United States. Whatever you think about the Iraq war, the men and women in Iraq who volunteered to help our forces were essential. They were guides, they were interpreters, and they worked on the projects. We could not have done the job over there without them. In many cases, they blended into the units in which they served. I have had cases where our soldiers have described to me how these people literally saved their lives.

I have heard from veterans who care deeply and wonder about the signal that they are sending to people they regarded essentially as family. They wonder how this administration could have forgotten about them. The guard in my office in Portland, who is a veteran, was asking me what is going on. He recalled his story about an interpreter who was critical to him when he served in Iraq. How could we have forgotten them?

I will tell you somebody who has not forgotten them are the Taliban and the ISIS terrorists. They regard these people as traitors. The terrorists have long memories, and want to make people pay for helping the United States. We have seen countless examples of these people being hunted down by terrorists. They have been assaulted, they have been kidnapped, they have had family members held for ransom, and they have been murdered.

That is why I have worked on a bipartisan basis for 10 years establishing the Special Immigrant Visa program with the late Senator Kennedy, with Senator JOHN MCCAIN, Senator SHAHEEN, my Republican colleague ADAM KINZINGER, and Congressmen STIVERS and HUNTER who were veterans themselves and understood why this program was important.

There is a lot of talk about extreme vetting. Trust me—the applicants for these visas are extremely vetted, taking 2 and 3 years, sometimes longer, fighting the bureaucracy, trying to make sure that they can escape to safety. Many have been killed because the extreme vetting process took so long.

To turn their lives upside down and put them at risk because there are people in the White House who don't understand or who don't care is appalling.

I applaud my colleagues in both parties who are speaking out and asking the administration to come to its senses on this blanket ban of Muslims from seven countries—seven countries, by the way, that have not been involved with terrorist acts. This is not going to make us any safer. Some have speculated that some of the countries that have been left out, like Saudi Arabia, where most of the 9/11 terrorists came from, were left out because the President has business interests there.

I don't know why these countries were selected, but the fact is it should end today. It should end not just because of the brave men and women under the Special Immigrant Visa program from Iraq whose lives are now at greater risk because of this reckless act. It is wrong because of the signals we are sending to foreign nationals whom we rely upon. It is not just in Iraq. We have people who work for the United States who live in many other countries who help us with the State Department programs and with the military. What message are we sending to them if the United States is not going to stand up and protect them?

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 6 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

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

PRAYER

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

God of the universe, thank You for giving us another day.

It is Your nature to hold us in Your living presence always. It is our nature to think of You or of others only momentarily or in passing.

Be with each of us that we may be our very best and prove ourselves worthy of Your love and Your grace.

Bless the Members of this people's House in their work and deliberations today that they might merit the trust of the American people and manifest the strength of our Republican democracy to the nations of the world.

As the new administration finds its footing and settles into its governing principles, may this assembly assist by remaining faithful to its constitutional responsibilities with the help of Your grace and wisdom.

May all that 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 gentleman from Alabama (Mr. ROGERS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

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

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

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

SPY CAR STUDY ACT

(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, American families today are at an increased risk of cyber attacks. Additional reports of cyber vulnerability in cars threaten the safety of American families by allowing a hacker to access a vehicle and take control from the driver. Vehicle safety is of great importance to me because South Carolina is America's leading exporter of automobiles and tires, with BMW, soon Volvo, along with Michelin, Bridgestone, Continental, and Giti in Singapore.

Last week, I was grateful to introduce the SPY Car Study Act of 2017 with Congressman TED LIEU of California. This bipartisan legislation directs government partners and private automobile manufacturers to conduct a study on the security and privacy threats to our motor vehicles.

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

President Donald Trump has taken positive action to vet refugees who ISIS has threatened to infiltrate so as to commit mass murder as they did in France and Germany.

WELCOMING REFUGEES IN RUTLAND, VERMONT

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

Mr. WELCH. Madam Speaker, I wish to introduce President Trump to two Syrian families who made it to safety in Rutland, Vermont, just a week before he slammed the door.

The al-Hallak family is from Damascus, and the Khatib family is from Aleppo. These families survived a home being bombed, al Qaeda and ISIS terrorists, and the brutal violence of the Assad regime. They found temporary refuge in Turkey. They have now found permanent freedom in Vermont. These good people endured all of this hardship to do what all parents strive to do—protect their children from harm.

Madam Speaker, I wish President Trump were with me last Thursday in Rutland to meet the al-Hallaks and the Khatibs. Do we really fear these families when they have been so rigorously vetted?

I wish President Trump were with me to meet the generous people of Rutland. They had good questions about the refugee program—its cost and their security. Yet, Madam Speaker, unlike President Trump, the folks in Rutland never, never wanted to ban Muslims and welcome only Christians.

PRESERVING WORKPLACE PROTECTIONS FOR LGBT FEDERAL CONTRACTORS

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I am heartened by the administration's announcement that it will preserve workplace protections for LGBT Federal contractors. This is a meaningful and positive step toward ending discrimination against hardworking LGBT Americans who only want to earn a living and provide for themselves and their families.

For many years I have been working with my congressional colleagues on both sides of the aisle to protect skilled, qualified, and motivated LGBT employees. Too often these individuals experience rejections at job interviews, are denied promotions, or face other types of harassment in the workplace simply because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

This shameful practice of discrimination on the job runs counter to our core values of fairness and equality. I hope that the administration and Congress can work together to extend equal rights to LGBT individuals in every sector.

BASIC AMERICAN VALUES IN WESTERN NEW YORK

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

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise on behalf of so many western New Yorkers and Americans who are outraged by the President's executive order on immigration.

The story of America is defined by the struggle of immigrants overcoming

incredible odds to claim their piece of the American Dream. The executive order on immigration is callous, unlawful, and unconstitutional. An immigration ban on anyone that is based on religion or country of origin is in conflict with basic American values and who we are as a people.

Inspired by the work of the International Institute, Catholic Charities, Jericho Road, Jewish Family Services, and so many more, my western New York community continues to be welcoming to refugees and immigrants from all over the world, including from those countries that are directly affected by this order. I know my community will continue to lead by example and proudly project American values.

RUSSIA DECRIMINALIZES DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, according to a Russian proverb: ''If he beats you, it means he loves you.'' In Russia, that has become the norm. Forty percent of all violent crimes in Russia are done within the home. 36,000 people are beaten by their partners every day.

Madam Speaker, this is disturbing; but the Russian Parliament has voted overwhelmingly to decriminalize domestic violence if it does not cause substantial bodily harm and does not happen more than once a year. So, if a husband beats his wife once a year, that is fine, sayeth the lords of Siberia.

Madam Speaker, domestic violence is not just a family issue; it is a human rights issue. As a lifelong advocate for victims, our societies and countries must recognize the devastating effect of domestic violence. It tears at the fabric of society—and not legalize it, but stop this nightmare wherever it is.

Like my grandmother always taught me, you never hurt somebody you claim you love.

And that is just the way it is.

REFUGEE BAN

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

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Madam Speaker, the recent executive order signed by President Trump to ban refugees and other individuals from certain Muslim-majority nations is a shameful attempt to create a religious test for entry into our country. Rather than making our Nation safer, it discredits our heritage and undermines our shared values.

The American people demonstrate these values every single day. One example: just last Friday, Synagogue Am Shalom, in the 10th District, welcomed a refugee family who fled the violence in Syria. There were 22 members of the congregation who met the family at O'Hare International Airport and greeted them with flowers, toys, and well wishes. Volunteers then brought the family to their new apartment that was full of donated furniture, clothing, and food to help them start their new life here at home. This refugee family was one of the last to arrive before President Trump slammed the door shut.

Madam Speaker, I am the grandson and great-grandson of immigrants who fled the persecution of Jews in Russia a century ago in order to build a better life here for themselves and future generations. That is the American Dream. We must not allow fear to turn us inward or bar the gates to innocent refugees who seek a safe home and a better future here in America.

INMATE MANNING

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

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Madam Speaker, I rise to share my disgust and contempt for the former President's decision to commute the sentence of inmate Manning, formerly known as Bradley Manning. Manning's commutation was even opposed by President Obama's Secretary of Defense, Ash Carter.

According to press reports, after Manning released over 450,000 Army field reports and intelligence reports, plus over 200,000 diplomatic cables, the Taliban went on a killing spree—taking out everyone who seemed to fit the description of individuals working with the U.S. It was indiscriminate killing.

Madam Speaker, we are hearing the usual handwringing this morning from President Trump's critics about the impacts of his executive order on those who helped us in Iraq and Afghanistan. These individual voices would be much more credible if they had criticized President Obama for his irresponsible commutation of inmate Manning.

President Obama may be gone, thankfully, but we are still suffering from his irresponsible decisions. Change has finally come to America, Madam Speaker. Manning and other enemies of our Nation should be on notice.

TRUMP'S MUSLIM BAN

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

Ms. JAYAPAL. Madam Speaker, for hours at Sea-Tac International Airport on Saturday, I worked with colleagues from the Port of Seattle, the Northwest Immigrant Rights Project, the ACLU, and our Governor to get people who were being held to be released because of President Trump's Muslim ban.

In the utter chaos, I found a gentleman who had come from Somalia to be reunited with his wife. He had all of his legal papers; but, instead, he was blindly turned away without any due process. We were able to get two other individuals released—one from Yemen and one from Sudan—after a brutal and determined effort to literally stop the plane that they had been boarded onto in order for them to be deported.

This wasn't just in Seattle, Madam Speaker. This happened at airports across the Nation. Our office has been contacted by dozens of people who are absolutely terrified. These are students, legal permanent residents, and businesspeople who do not know anymore what their place in this country is. Simply put, this is un-American and unconstitutional.

I, myself, immigrated when I was 16 years old, and it took me 19 years to become a citizen. I am intimately familiar with the barriers that people face in our immigration system, and I hope that all of the Members of this Chamber will welcome immigrants the way we always have.

IN MEMORY OF OFFICER DENNIS McNAMARA

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

Mr. MEEHAN. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor the memory of Officer Dennis McNamara of the Upper Darby Police Department in Delaware County, Pennsylvania.

Fifteen years ago yesterday, Officer McNamara was brutally gunned down and murdered in the line of duty while he served his community. He was survived by his wife, Diane, and his wonderful children, Spike and Melissa. I was with Diane, Spike, Melissa, and others yesterday as we dedicated a road in Dennis' hometown of Upper Darby as the ''Dennis McNamara Memorial Highway.'' It was a fitting memorial to Dennis' wonderful life and the legacy he has left behind, and it is one of the many ways Dennis' own community will never be forgotten.

Madam Speaker, I will soon be presenting Dennis' family with two flags. The first flag flew over the United States Capitol yesterday, which marked the 15th anniversary of his death. The second is a flag of the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Foundation, which flew over the law enforcement memorial—just blocks from here in Judiciary Square—during National Police Week.

No gesture will bring Dennis back to his family, but it is my hope that these flags will continue to help his community honor his family and the ultimate sacrifice he made.

□ 1215

NO NOTHING PARTY

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

Mr. PASCRELL. Madam Speaker, there are stark similarities between what happened in the 1850s and now. You judge for yourself.

In 1856, former President Millard Fillmore ran for President as part of the Know-Nothing group. A year after the failed attempt, most of the Know-Nothing supporters joined the newly formed Republican Party. You can't make this up.

A primary concern of the Know-Nothing movement in the 1850s was the large number of Irish and German Catholics who were coming to the United States. A concern they repeatedly professed was a worry that the character of the country would be changed because they were coming here.

Lincoln said this: ''As a nation, we begin by declaring that 'all men are created equal.' We now practically read it 'all men are created equal, except Negroes.' When the Know-Nothings get control, it will read 'all men are created equal except Negroes, and foreigners, and Catholics.' ''

When it comes to this, I should prefer immigrating to some country where they make no pretense of loving liberty. Russia—oh, the similarities are unbelievable—where despotism can be taken pure, and without the base alloy of hypocrisy. That is the difference. But there are a lot of similarities.

KEEP AMERICANS SAFE

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

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Madam Speaker, anyone who wants to protect Americans from terrorist attacks should support President Trump's immigration executive orders.

Put aside the hysteria of his political opponents. Here are the facts:

There will be a temporary halt in the admission to the U.S. of those from seven designated countries, including Iraq, Iran, Libya, and Syria. These are the exact same countries designated a security threat by President Obama.

Congress passed bipartisan legislation in 2015 designating these countries as security risks in order to protect our homeland from terrorism. In fact, the bill passed the House of Representatives by a vote of 407–19.

Despite what the media and others imply, Muslims are not being targeted. Many Muslim majority countries, in fact, are not singled out. The purpose of the temporary halt is to allow time to improve procedures so better background checks can be developed.

Who could possibly oppose efforts to keep Americans safe?

SUPPORT THE REPORT ACT

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

Mr. AGUILAR. Madam Speaker, last week I introduced the Reporting Efficiently to Proper Officials in Response to Terrorism Act, the REPORT Act. It creates a legal requirement that the Secretary of Homeland Security, in coordination with the United States Attorney General, the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the head of the National Counterterrorism Center, submit a report to Congress when an incident of terrorism occurs in the United States.

Currently, there is no legal mandate for this report which would play an important role in helping lawmakers and agencies learn more and respond to extraordinary emergencies like we saw in San Bernardino.

I would like to thank my colleague Representative KEN CALVERT, an original cosponsor of the bill, for working with me and my office over the past year to help in the San Bernardino recovery process.

I would also like to recognize Mr. Gregory Clayborn, father of Sierra Clayborn. Sierra was one of the 14 victims of the San Bernardino terrorist attack, and Mr. Clayborn worked with my office for months to help shape this legislation.

This bill is a tribute to Sierra, the other 13 innocent victims, and all of those who were affected by the attack on December 2. While it does not address every issue raised by the attack, it is a commonsense change to help us understand how this and other attacks unfolded so we can prevent these types of tragedies from happening in other cities and to other families.

I urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan bill and to help strengthen our national security.

HONORING THE LIFE OF STANLEY RUSS

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

Mr. HILL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of one of Arkansas's great leaders and a dear friend, former State Senator Stanley Russ, who passed away earlier this month at the age of 86.

Born and raised in Conway, Arkansas, Stanley served in the U.S. Army during the Korean war before becoming a State senator for 25 years.

Stanley received numerous awards for his work, including being named of one of the Ten Outstanding State Legislators in the United States by the Assembly of State Governmental Employees. He also received the Distinguished Service Award from the Conway Chamber of Commerce and was elected into the Arkansas Tech University Hall of Distinction as well as the Arkansas Agriculture Hall of Fame.

Our State and Faulkner County will miss Stanley's smile, his enthusiasm and ability to get things done to enrich the lives of all Arkansans.

I extend my respect, affection, and prayers to his family and loved ones.

CHANGE DIRECTION NEW HAMPSHIRE

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

Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Change Direction New Hampshire, a first-of-its-kind statewide campaign to raise awareness of the five signs of mental illness and emotional suffering.

Since its first launch last May, Change Direction has touched the lives of thousands of Granite Staters, helping to change the culture and erase the stigma surrounding mental illness in New Hampshire and across the country.

Campaign co-chairs, my dear friends, the Honorable John Broderick, Peter Evers, and Dr. Bill Gunn, have dedicated countless hours to help spread this campaign through schools, workplaces, and institutions throughout the Granite State. They have met with thousands of stakeholders and community members, holding more than 100 public presentations. They have distributed nearly 320,000 informational posters and cards, and they have placed a billboard on one of our busiest highways.

The goal of Change Direction is to make the five signs of mental illness—personality change, agitation, withdrawal, poor self-care, and hopelessness—as well-known indicators as the indicators of a heart attack. This increased recognition will help improve treatment of mental illness, address substance misuse, and help prevent suicide among our friends and neighbors.

But the impact of this campaign goes far beyond the five signs. Please join me in recognizing John, Peter, Bill, and all of those who support the Change Direction campaign.

NATIONAL PRAYER BREAKFAST—A WONDERFUL TRADITION

(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. Madam Speaker, on Thursday, Members of Congress and leaders from across the globe will gather in Washington, D.C., to mark one of our finest traditions: the National Prayer Breakfast.

This event is hosted annually on the first Thursday in February. More than 3,000 people typically gather for this international forum that allows individuals from various sectors—including political, business, and social—to build relationships and come together in faith, fellowship, and prayer.

Personally, I look forward to the National Prayer Breakfast each year as a time when thousands around the world and right here at home can reflect on their faith, focus on the year ahead, and walk away from this remarkable

event with a renewed sense of hope and faith.

This nonpartisan event brings together so many unique individuals who will hear the stories of inspiration from faith-filled speakers.

From the Book of First Chronicles, Scripture tells us to, ''Look to the Lord and His strength; seek His face always.'' This is what we will be seeking at the National Prayer Breakfast.

It is my hope that I will see many of my colleagues there this Thursday.

MUSLIM BAN

(Mrs. DAVIS of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, whatever you call the President's recent executive orders, the reality is that they constitute a Muslim ban.

Yesterday, one of my constituents was crossing the border into San Diego when he was singled out for having brown skin. He was asked by a CBP agent if he was Muslim as he stood in line. Well, in fact, he is an Indian-American man who got his citizenship mere months ago, and he was so proud to become a U.S. citizen because it meant that he could finally vote in our elections.

His wife called our office, horrified at how casually her husband's civil rights had been violated, and she told us that she was scared now to travel with her kids because she didn't want to tell them that they shouldn't talk to any agents at the airport. Her voice wavered as she explained that she has lived here for 45 years, but this is the first time she ever felt scared because of her skin color.

Mr. Speaker, I demand—in fact, we all should demand—that President Trump rescind these discriminatory orders immediately and that my Republican colleagues stand up against these un-American policies.

EXECUTIVE ORDER TO BAN MUSLIMS IS UNCONSTITUTIONAL

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, the executive order is patently and clearly unconstitutional. An executive order to ban Muslims is unconstitutional.

None of us stand against the stringent review of individuals to determine who would come to do well, but who would come to do harm. A ban or a temporary suspension of all of the refugees around the world who have been vetted over and over again is clearly discriminatory.

It is true that the Constitution of the United States starts with: ''We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence . . .'' and ''welfare. . . .''

Deputy Attorney General Sally Yates made the right decision. Many court jurisdictions have already said that this is an unconstitutional and discriminatory order. The office of a public servant in the United States Federal Government requires that you take an oath to defend and protect the Constitution of the United States. I believe the President should uphold his oath.

REQUEST TO CALL UP H.R. 724, SOLVE ACT, AND H.R. 735, USA VALUES ACT

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, today I join with the resolve of the Deputy Attorney General, and I ask unanimous consent for the SOLVE Act, and ask unanimous consent for H.R. 724 and H.R. 735, the USA Values Act, all dealing with banning and repealing and rescinding, now, the unconstitutional executive order on banning Muslims.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COLLINS of New York). Any such unanimous consent request has not been cleared.

The gentlewoman's time has expired.

WHAT IS HAPPENING IN OUR COUNTRY?

(Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I, like millions of Americans, have been watching over the last 10 or 11 days, and especially this past weekend, shaking my head and wondering just what is happening in our country?

This is not who we are. I can't tell you the number of people that I spoke to this weekend from all walks of life, all backgrounds, who have said this phrase: ''I can't believe I am really seeing this in America.''

Mr. Speaker, I can understand why, in light of Brussels, Paris, San Bernardino, I can understand why many of my fellow Americans are scared. I share their concern. But let's be clear: this illegal, un-American executive order signed on Friday does absolutely nothing to protect us. It makes us less safe. It was a wonderful gift to ISIS, and it must be repealed.

SAFETY OF OUR CITIZENS IS A TOP PRIORITY

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

Mr. YODER. Mr. Speaker, the safety and security of our citizens here on American soil must remain our top priority, and our borders must always be secure against anyone who would enter our country legally or illegally to cause us harm, especially those who wish to exploit our Nation's generosity and compassion. However, compassion and security are not conflicting ideals, and we must continue our Nation's legacy of being a beacon of hope and freedom around the world.

The idea of reform, though, and oversight of our Nation's vetting system is not in conflict with our longstanding value of accepting refugees, and it is not new. The Obama administration and the Trump administration, alike, have now both paused refugee settlements into our Nation.

President Trump should have our Nation's support to carry out his mission to protect our Nation's borders, but he must do so without unnecessarily burdening lawful entrance into the United States.

Mr. Speaker, I stand ready to work with you and my colleagues in Congress to come up with clear procedures to ensure that our refugee program can continue in the safest possible manner, and together we can live in a nation that is both secure and charitable.

□ 1230

OPPOSITION TO THE MUSLIM BAN

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

Mr. ESPAILLAT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to President Trump's Muslim ban because that is exactly what it is. It is a mean-spirited ban against members of a religious faith. I love my country, and I am saddened by these divisive and hateful actions being wrongfully taken in the so-called name of national security.

Mr. Trump's actions make us less secure as a nation. They take a sledgehammer right through the founding principles of our Nation. America is not this nonsensical, antirefugee Nation. Quite frankly, Mr. Trump's actions are un-American, beneath us, and downright dangerous.

Let me remind my colleagues, there has been a protest every day since Mr. Trump took office. The people have hit the streets. We will continue to march, and we will keep demanding what is right. We will keep fighting to ensure American values are upheld and that our civil rights are not trashed like yesterday's news.

To our Muslims, LGBT, immigrants, women, and all our brothers and sisters hurt by Mr. Trump's garbage, I mean executive orders, I am with you.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President.

PRESIDENT TRUMP SHOULD REMOVE STEVE BANNON FROM NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

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

Mr. BROWN of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call on President Trump to remove Steve Bannon from the National Security Council.

Mr. Speaker, the National Security Council was created in 1947, and it is

designed to provide the President of the United States with diplomatic, military, intelligence, and economic information to coordinate, to plan, and to implement national security, and to make sound decisions affecting national security with input from professionals and not from political operatives. And the National Security Council has done that for seven decades.

Yet, last week, the President issued an ill-conceived, dangerous, and unconstitutional executive order that bans Muslims. It puts Americans abroad, American communities at home, and American soldiers around the world at risk; and I believe that Steve Bannon, who might become a member of the National Security Council, was the architect of that executive order.

Mr. Speaker, I ask President Trump, if he is not willing to remove Mr. Bannon from the White House, at least, for the safety of this country, remove him from the National Security Council.

WHAT IS HAPPENING IN OUR COUNTRY

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

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I rise this afternoon really with a very, very sad and heavy heart. I don't know anyone in our country who watched what took place across the country who wasn't dismayed, who wasn't heartbroken, who wasn't confused. And as my constituents said: What is happening in our country?

Now, there are some that say this must be done. This executive order must be done in the name of national security.

I am a veteran of the House Intelligence Committee, but it doesn't take a veteran of the House Intelligence Committee to understand that this harms our national security.

We need to have more voices in the House. We need Republicans and Democrats standing up together, because historians will replace your surname, and those that don't raise their voices will be called coward because this is ripping at the fabric and the soul of our Nation. It is appalling. It is unlawful. I believe it is unconstitutional.

If you stood up for history and what was done to others, it is taking place right now in our country.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.J. RES. 38, DISAPPROVING A RULE SUBMITTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 70 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 70

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 38) disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of the Interior known as the Stream Protection Rule. All points of order against consideration of the joint resolution are waived. The joint resolution shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the joint resolution are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the joint resolution and on any amendment thereto to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) One hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Natural Resources; and (2) one motion to recommit.

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

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

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, just yesterday, the House Rules Committee met and reported a rule, House Resolution 70, providing for the consideration of H.J. Res. 38, legislation utilizing the Congressional Review Act to overturn the final stream protection rule promulgated by the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement, or the OSMRE, which is at the Department of the Interior. The rule provides for consideration of the joint resolution under a closed rule, as is customary with these CRA measures.

Mr. Speaker, this rule provides for consideration of a critical measure that will help protect American businesses and families from the Obama administration's rampant regulatory overreach. H.J. Res. 38 disapproves of the final stream protection rule which was released by the Department of the Interior on December 19, 2016, representing yet another last-minute, midnight regulation from the previous administration.

This burdensome rule seeks to govern the interaction between surface mining operations and streams by establishing a buffer-zone rule that blocks mining within 100 feet of those streams. This was done, despite the Department of the Interior's own reports, which shows that virtually all coal mines in this country have no offsite impacts, they are being operated safely, and that lands are being restored successfully under existing Federal and State regulation.

During the rulemaking process, OSMRE and the Department of the Interior ignored existing regulatory success at the Federal and the State level and shut out the cooperating agencies, the States who are responsible for enforcing Federal mining regulations.

In 2015, 9 of the 10 cooperating States withdrew as cooperating agencies in the rulemaking and development process, due to OSMRE's exclusionary tactics, failure to provide for meaningful participation, and continual limiting of the States' involvement over the past several years.

The National Environmental Policy Act or, as we know it as, NEPA, requires OSMRE, as the lead rulemaking agency, to involve States in the drafting of the regulation and requires them to involve States. These failures, and the restrictive tactics that were employed by OSMRE, led the House Natural Resources Committee chairman, Mr. ROB BISHOP of Utah, to send a letter in 2015 to the GAO, the Government Accountability Office, requesting a review of OSMRE's compliance with NEPA in the agencies' development and drafting of the proposed stream protection rule. Ample evidence exists that OSMRE excluded these States from the NEPA process, in contradiction of both NEPA regulations and the memoranda of understanding between OSMRE and the States.

Mr. Speaker, the stream protection rule unilaterally rewrites over 400 existing rules and regulations. It threatens over one-third of the Nation's coal mining workforce and will send repercussions throughout the broader U.S. economy. The final rule is the definition of a one-size-fits-all solution due to OSMRE's failure to conduct the 7-year rewrite in a transparent process consistent with their statutory requirements to engage State and local stakeholders.

An economic analysis conducted by the National Mining Association found that the total number of jobs at risk of loss is somewhere between 112,000 and 280,000 people, approximately 30 to 75 percent of the current industry employment levels.

Further, the misguided regulation would jeopardize 40,000 to 77,000 jobs in both surface and underground mining operations, industries that are still reeling from 8 years of overregulation from the previous administration.

And while the Obama administration never seemed to mind the consequences of its actions on hardworking Americans, I can assure you that the new, unified Republican government is opposed to ineffective regulations like this one which unnecessarily put people out of work, raise energy costs on consumers, and do nothing to improve the environment.

By passing this rule, we have the opportunity to consider a resolution that will prevent this regulation from removing over one-half of the total U.S. coal reserves available for extraction, while also reducing oppressive barriers to responsible coal production.

The Congressional Review Act of 1996 was enacted to be a powerful tool to

allow Congress to overturn last-minute regulations from the previous administration, under an expedited legislative process. If Congress passes a joint resolution disapproving the rule, and the resolution becomes a law, the rule cannot take effect or continue. CRAs are designed to address and invalidate problematic rules from the previous administration, and the stream protection rule clearly fits the bill.

Furthermore, this CRA provides certainty to State regulatory bodies tasked with regulating 97 percent of the coal mines in the United States and enforcing Federal mining regulations by strengthening the State primacy framework provided in the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act.

Blocking the final stream protection rule will restore an important stream of State and Federal tax revenue associated with coal extraction across the country that is benefiting hardworking American taxpayers.

Mr. Speaker, every Member of this body wants to protect the environment, ensure clean water and clean air for our citizens, and encourage innovative and responsible ways to produce energy. However, these goals are not mutually exclusive, as some opponents of this legislation will argue.

It is past time that we embrace commonsense, practical Federal rules and regulations that protect the environment and the countless Americans working in the industries that support our economy and provide for greater domestic energy independence.

The rule we consider here today provides for the consideration of a bill that is critically important to the future economic growth and job growth of our country. By passing this CRA, we can take a badly needed step toward protecting American families and businesses from the rampant executive overreach that will be the defining achievement of the past administration.

I urge my colleagues to support this rule, as well as the underlying legislation.

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

□ 1245

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I thank my good friend, the gentleman from Washington, for yielding me the customary 30 minutes for debate.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to debate the rule for consideration of a joint resolution disapproving of a Department of the Interior regulation known as the stream protection rule.

Through this action, my Republican colleagues are now attempting to repeal a thoughtful and thoroughly vetted regulation that reflects current science, technology, and mining practices in order to better protect people and the environment from the negative impacts of mountaintop removal mining. This regulation took 7 years to develop and updates a 30-year-old coal mining regulation.

This regulation is not, as we have seen coming out of the administration of late, some fly-by-night executive order, but rather a serious attempt by serious people to make us a healthier and more environmentally conscious nation.

However, what we see here today is business as usual for the Republican majority—turning a blind eye to science in order to help wealthy polluters at the expense of the public's health and the environment. Just because my friends' unending attempts to normalize such misguided governance have become almost numbing in their effect does not make such attempts any less appalling to those of us who believe in the scientific method and a clean and safe environment.

Indeed, the paucity of care that we see here today in ridding the books of a regulation that hardworking and good people took 7 years to write with, mind you, input from all stakeholders, is starting to look like a variation of a theme when we consider the paucity of care the Republicans in the White House have exhibited over the past 10 days.

As everyone knows, last Friday, President Trump issued an executive order banning Muslims from certain countries from entering the United States and callously shutting down the refugee program. What ensued, and I predict will continue to ensue as we speak here today, was nothing short of chaos. Scores and scores of people were detained for hours, including green card holders, children, the elderly, and even Iraqi translators who had helped the United States during the insurgency.

Equally as horrifying as this Muslim ban that is the antithesis of everything we value as Americans is the ineptitude in which such a sweeping policy was implemented. Relevant agencies were not even consulted. In fact, Homeland Security Secretary Kelly, found out about the executive order on the phone while on a Coast Guard plane heading back to Washington. Secretary Mattis was also left off the list of those consulted. Had he been on it, he would have almost certainly expressed the sentiment he expressed during the campaign, mainly that the Muslim ban would cause great damage and send shock waves through the international community.

Like Ms. ESHOO, who spoke earlier, I am a veteran of the Intelligence Committee as well. We serve there together. I can assure you our experience leads us to know—and anyone that is on the Intelligence Committee knows now—that what we are about to experience is a handout to our enemies and will cause additional shock waves in the international community.

The result of this amateur hour rollout was a Customs and Border Patrol agency that wasn't sure how to even execute the order. From management on down, no one knew what was going on while scores of people were riddled with fear that their realization of a free and fair life here in the United States was lost forever. People with visas and green cards were held for hours. Will someone please tell me what it means to issue a visa to persons if they cannot utilize the visa?

People were denied access to a lawyer even after a Federal Court order stayed the executive action.

Here is a small sampling of the immediate impact of this Muslim ban: A 5-year-old boy, a U.S. citizen, was detained for several hours. 5 years old—a truer threat to our national security we have never faced. An 88-year-old man and his 83-year-old wife, both wheelchair bound and both possessing green cards, were detained for hours. He is legally blind, and she recently suffered a stroke—detained for hours.

A Ph.D. student at Stony Brook University, who has lived in the United States for 12 years, was detained for more than 24 hours. The mother of an Active Duty United States servicemember was detained for more than 30 hours.

Tell me, what danger do these people pose? What security objective is achieved by detaining them?

I argue none.

I have to agree with Senator ROB PORTMAN when he said what was so plainly obvious to see: ''This was an extreme vetting program that wasn't properly vetted.''

As thousands arrived at airports across the country to protest the President's executive order and hundreds of lawyers showed up to volunteer their time to write habeas petitions for those so clearly wrongfully detained, President Trump, living in a world all his own, tweeted the following: ''All is going well with very few problems.''

All is not going well, Mr. President, and there are many problems.

Then he defended the hastily implemented order saying that: ''If the ban were announced with a one week notice, the 'bad' would rush into our country during that week. A lot of bad 'dudes' out there!''

This is a stunningly ignorant and offensive statement that reveals to the entire world a person with no grasp of even what the refugee program is or how the visa process works.

Immediately preceding this tweet, the President advised everyone to: ''Study the world!''

I encourage him to take his own advice.

Beyond the human toll this foolish and callous policy has inflicted on scores of innocent people, the executive order actually undermines our efforts to defeat terrorism—jeopardizing the very safety the order purports to provide. The chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, headed by JOHN MCCAIN, along with Senator LINDSEY GRAHAM, underscored this irony, and I quote their joint statement: ''We fear this executive order

will become a self-inflicted wound in the fight against terrorism,'' noting further that President Trump's executive order ''may do more to help terrorist recruitment than improve our security.''

So I find it interesting now that the majority of my Republican colleagues in the House, even the ones that voiced opposition to a Muslim ban during the campaign when then-President-elect Trump first proposed it, including our Speaker of the House, are now deafeningly silent.

Instead, Republicans are using their time today not to respond to this chaos-inducing executive order that so clearly violates core American values, but rather to repeal a rule that was actually properly vetted—vetted for 7 years, using the best science and technology available, and following input from the public and leaders in the industry. I caution my friends, the events of today and how you respond to them will be written in the history books tomorrow.

A question emerges from the fog that is the Trump administration's full frontal attack on our Constitution: What is more important, appeasing a man who is just as likely to tweet insults at you as he is to rush out ill-conceived and horrid executive orders, or protecting our Constitution and the ideals of this great Nation?

The ideals and dedication to the rule of law that have inspired the poor, the tired, and the huddled masses to seek a better and freer life here in the United States. It didn't begin with Muslims. It began with the Founders of this country, and it was followed by countless others, from Irish, Italians, Polish, Hungarians, Vietnamese, and Chinese, all over this world coming to this country to seek the kind of life that many of our ancestors sought over the course of time and some of our ancestors had no choice but to undertake.

The time to act in the name of short-term political expediency is over. It is time to stand up and do what is right. It is time to protect our Constitution. It is time to defend the idea that we can indeed form a more perfect Union. But we cannot do that with the kind of division that is being sold by this administration, and we cannot do that by spending what appears to be the month of February disapproving executive orders that the previous President issued. It seems to me somehow or another in that fog is going to be the kind of confusion and chaos that we just witnessed this weekend.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, getting back to the issue at hand and the stream protection rule, there are many points that my friend from Florida brought up. One occurred to me as well: Is this really a midnight rule; or could something that was started in 2008 really be considered as something that was shoved through at the last minute?

I did ask that question, and the answer is a resounding ''yes.''

During the process in 2011, some of the reports came out that were leaked that the Department did not see as favorable as it related to jobs and the economy and the negative impact that it would have on that, so they stopped the process, shutting out the States violating the memorandum of understanding that they are required to work with the States on the rulemaking process leaving those States with no recourse but to withdraw from the process.

In 2015, this Congress told them to reengage with the States, which they did to some degree, making it necessary for States to actually pay for the scientific evidence that was necessary for them to be engaged. So there are several problems that cause this to be an issue that we need to address today, and certainly making it a midnight rule, the last thing done as the administration walks out the door, qualifies this as something that we should be considering for many reasons and on many levels.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON), who is my good friend.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Washington State, whom I have been proud to serve with. I had an opportunity to visit his district, and I know natural resources are extremely important to him. I appreciate his yielding on what is germane to this discussion, which is basically trying to claw back regulations that had no basis in science that essentially were causing harm and taking away good-paying jobs for Americans.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the underlying legislation, which disapproves of a midnight regulation that the Obama administration made with just 1 month left in his Presidency.

The stream protection rule negatively targets coal country and will devastate communities that have already been hit hard by job losses and reduced mining activity making sure that America has affordable and reliable energy and electricity.

Pennsylvania is the fifth largest coal producing State and generates roughly 25 percent of its electricity from coal-fired power plants. Coal-fired electricity provides roughly 30,000 jobs in my State, equaling nearly $8 billion in economic impact.

Although coal continues to be an essential component of our energy mix, this rule duplicates many existing laws while providing very little environmental gain. What the rule does is expands the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement's regulatory authority. In effect, this Federal agency would overtake the regulatory authorities of individual States.

□ 1300

This makes no sense. States should be able to continue their own regulation of coal production. This is the epitome of a midnight rule that has more to do with empowering the Federal Government at the expense of coal miners' jobs than it has to do with protecting streams.

The Office of Surface Mining's own reports show that virtually all coal mines have no offsite impacts. The reports year over year show that coal mines are being safely operated and the lands are being successfully restored thanks to the watchful eyes of the States that regulate 97 percent of the mines in the United States.

This rule does nothing to protect our streams that State and Federal regulators are not already doing. We do not need a one-size-fits-all approach from Washington, which rarely works.

In order to bring real-world thinking back into the regulatory process, we must act quickly to stop this rule. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the joint resolution of disapproval under the Congressional Review Act.

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

Mr. Speaker, both of my colleagues on the other side referred to the rule they seek to disapprove as a midnight rule. Well, I don't know how you take 7 years of midnights that it took to develop this rule and call it a midnight rule—7 years.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE), my very good friend and ranking member of the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to strongly oppose H.J. Res. 38, which would disapprove the Department of the Interior's stream protection rule.

When the Obama administration announced the final stream protection rule, it was a victory for those who live in coal country. The rule prioritizes the health of our fellow Americans by establishing clear requirements for responsible surface coal mining, especially dangerous mountaintop removal mining.

If this Obama rule were fully enforced, it would protect or restore 6,000 miles of streams and 52,000 acres of forests over the next two decades. At the time the rule was finalized, I called for stronger stream buffer zone protections, but the announced regulation was undoubtedly a win for human health, clean water, and our environment.

I want to be very clear about what the stream protection rule does. This rule requires that mining companies avoid practices that permanently pollute streams and sources of drinking water, damage forests, and increase flood risks. The rule requires, for the first time, that streams around mining sites be monitored and tested for the presence of toxic chemicals, like lead and arsenic. This rule also requires mining companies to restore polluted streams and replant mined areas with native trees and vegetation.

These provisions ensure that mining companies take responsibility for their actions and act to ensure that coal country communities do not suffer because of destructive mining practices. Now we are debating an ill-conceived resolution which would negate these important advances.

If this rule were to be overturned, American families living near impacted streams and rivers will not be protected from toxic chemicals getting into their water. What is even more appalling is that, because the Congressional Review Act prevents substantially similar regulations from being developed in the future, this joint resolution means that these affected communities might never be protected from the impacts of mining waste in their water.

Protecting our rivers and streams from the damaging impacts of mountaintop removal has been a priority for me, and it is why in past Congresses I have introduced the Clean Water Protection Act, which would end the dumping of mining waste into our country's rivers and streams. I will be reintroducing that legislation this session.

It is unfathomable that congressional Republicans would pass this joint resolution and doom generations of children and families to irreparable harm. I strongly urge my colleagues to oppose this resolution.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. JOHNSON).

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

It is interesting to me that my colleagues on the other side take offense to this being referred to as a midnight rule. This is actually a midnight rule twice. Let's look at how this thing started.

In 2005, during the Bush administration, 5 years of effort went into codifying how coal mining operations should take place around streams. The last President announced, during his campaign, that he was going to make coal-fired energy financially, economically impossible, thereby launching his war on coal. There was a lawsuit with the Bush-era rule. The Interior Department and the administration settled, paying that settlement out of taxpayer dollars and then launching an effort to rewrite that rule.

In 2011 when we came in, they were planning to release that rule in April of 2011. What took 5 years to codify, they wanted to redo in just 4 months. Not only that, but they left the States out of the equation. The States complained about that. No one in the administration was listening.

When the contractors then told the truth about how many tens of thousands of jobs were going to be lost as a result of this rule, the administration fired the contractor that was doing the work. Not only that, they paid them in full. Now, go figure.

We have been back and forth with the administration asking that the States be involved, asking that the rulemaking process be transparent, asking, if it really had to do with stream protection, why was it talking about and why was it going to be negatively impacting underground coal mining that takes place hundreds, if not thousands, of feet below the surface of the Earth. You answer me that.

So, here we are today, and now we have the Congressional Review Act. I am so grateful that we have the opportunity to set the record straight and to do away with this rule now and forever.

I urge my colleagues to support H.J. Res. 38 when it comes to the floor this week.

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

Mr. Speaker, President Trump's xenophobic executive order banning Syrian refugees and suspending emigration from certain countries is driven by fear. It demonstrates a callous indifference to human suffering; it ignores the Constitution; and it will not only tarnish our image abroad, but harm our national security. If we defeat the previous question, I will offer an amendment to the rule to bring up my good friend Representative LOFGREN's bill to overturn and defund this dangerous executive order.

Let me be abundantly clear for people watching this debate. The question we are about to decide is: Should we even have a vote on undoing Trump's order? A ''no'' vote on the previous question will give us the opportunity to overturn this order. A ''yes'' vote means that the House will do nothing to stop Trump's executive action.

The American people watching this debate should take notice to see how their Representatives vote on this important motion, and they should hold their elected officials accountable. Did your Member of Congress turn a blind eye to Trump's unconstitutional policy by voting ''yes,'' or did your Representative reject this attack on our core American values and vote ''no?''

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

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

There was no objection.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from California (Ms. LOFGREN), my good friend, to discuss this proposal.

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, the President's executive order of Friday violates the law, it violates the Constitution, and it violates good sense.

How does it violate the law? Section 202(a)(1) of the Immigration and Nationality Act specifically prohibits nationality-based discrimination in the issuance of immigrant visas and other visas. That is what this order did.

Now, the law is clear that individuals who pose a threat to the United States can—and I should add, should be—barred from the United States; but you can't just legally make a blanket objection based on nationality and, I would add, based on religion. That is what the President's order does. It suspends refugee admission completely for months.

Who are these refugees? Most of the refugees admitted last year were from Burma and the Congo, not from Syria. They are people who have been vetted for years, many of whom are fleeing for their lives and will continue to live in fear.

It does something else. It suspends admission even of legal permanent residents from seven countries, violating their rights to equal protection and to due process.

People want to keep the country safe—we all do; of course, I do—but how does this order keep us safe? Let me just give an example.

General Talib al-Kenani from Iraq commands the elite American-trained counterterrorism forces that have been leading the fight against ISIS for 2 years. His family relocated to the U.S. for safety. He can't visit them anymore. He said this:

> I have been fighting terrorism for 13 years and winning. Now my kids are asking: Am I a terrorist? I am a four-star general, and I am banned from entering the United States.

I ask you: How does this advance our safety by barring our allies who are fighting ISIS? It doesn't.

I have got to correct something else. People have said that President Obama had an order in 2011 barring immigrants from Iraq. That is false. We did additional vetting in 2011 because we wanted to make sure that anyone coming in was thoroughly examined. That slowed things down a little bit because there were new procedures, but there was never a halt to admission from those who are our allies in Iraq, those fighting ISIS with us.

I would just like to say that, in addition to violating the law, causing hardship for families trying to visit people in the hospital, permanent residents who are engineers trying to come back to run their companies in Silicon Valley, this order is a gift to ISIS. They are already using it to recruit enemies of our country by saying: America is fighting Islam. As George Bush said when he was President, our argument, our fight is not with Islam. Our fight is with terrorism.

To issue this order with the President's rhetoric saying that we are going to make a distinction on who is admitted to the United States based on their religion is not only illegal, it is contrary to American values and it is contrary to our safety.

So I hope that, instead of doing this antienvironment bill today, we will instead take up H.R. 724. This is a bill that would defund and rescind President Trump's ill-advised order from Friday.

Let me just say this. I would like to issue a formal invitation to every Republican Member of this House to join

me as a cosponsor of this bill. I will be sending out a formal note to each one later today, but you are on notice to please join us.

We as American legislators need to make sure that the rule of law is upheld. Many of our constituents are very uncertain about whether the rule of law is going to survive this Presidency. Help give them faith and hope by cosponsoring this bill.

□ 1315

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the good gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOONEY).

Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the rule and the underlying joint resolution to begin the process of rolling back President Obama's war on coal. That is the rule we are debating today; that is the bill before us, not to be confused with the other issue that is being discussed.

I was proud that, in the last Congress, I was the lead sponsor of the STREAM Act, H.R. 1644, which would have prevented the implementation of a new coal regulation that would have cost upwards of 70,000 good-paying jobs. My legislation passed the House of Representatives in January of 2016, with bipartisan support, and sent a clear message to President Obama's administration that the so-called stream protection rule was bad policy. Unfortunately, my bill never received a vote in the U.S. Senate.

Despite the clear message from Congress, the Obama administration, in the final days, issued a disastrous stream protection rule. Again, he did this as he was leaving the Presidency in the final days before he left office. But don't let the clever name fool you. The new regulation will have far-reaching impacts for the coal industry—an industry, I might add, that provides over 90 percent of the power generation for my home State of West Virginia.

The rule prescribes a one-size-fits-all approach in defiance of common sense and the Federal law. There is no need to rewrite over 400 regulations, as this rule does, other than as a blatant attempt to regulate the coal industry out of business. We cannot allow this rule to move forward, and thus we need to support the rule and the underlying joint resolution of disapproval.

Let us not forget that former President Barack Obama promised that he would bankrupt the coal industry. People are losing their jobs and the dignity that comes with work. Our communities are also suffering. Fewer jobs means less economic investment and less hope.

I encourage my colleagues to visit West Virginia or Appalachia and see firsthand what President Obama's policies have done to our communities. It is heartbreaking to hear the stories and see the faces of struggling families as they try to pay their bills. I stand today with those communities in rolling back the policies that have caused so much harm and pain.

These new regulations would be catastrophic to the coal industry and all of the hardworking American families that depend on coal to keep their energy costs low. The shame of it all is that it is preventable. We must end this war on coal now, and that process begins today.

I made a promise to my constituents of the Second District of West Virginia that I would fight for the coal industry and bring back jobs to my State. Today is the first in many steps this Congress, along with President Donald Trump, will take to make good on the promises we made in November.

Again, I encourage support for the rule and the underlying resolution of disapproval.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from wearing communicative badges while under recognition.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, would the Chair be so kind as to tell me how much time remains on both sides?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Florida has 9½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Washington has 11½ minutes remaining.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, at this time I am very pleased to yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI), the distinguished minority leader, for the purpose of a unanimous consent request.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up Congresswoman LOFGREN's H.R. 724, which would rescind President Trump's refugee ban on individuals, like the 30-year-old Iranian citizen who entered the U.S. to visit his family in San Francisco, then was detained and transferred to county jail.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would advise that all time has been yielded for the purpose of debate only.

Does the gentleman from Washington yield for the purpose of this unanimous consent request?

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, I do not yield.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Washington does not yield. Therefore, the unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LOFGREN) for a unanimous consent request.

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I would plead for unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 724 to overturn President Trump's refugee ban so that individuals like Hameed Khalid Darweesh, who helped the U.S. military in Iraq and who has a special immigrant visa, won't be detained at JFK Airport for 19 hours.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Does the gentleman from Washington yield for the purpose of this unanimous consent request?

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, I am reiterating my earlier announcement that all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only, and I will not yield for any other purpose.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Washington does not yield. Therefore, the unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 5 seconds to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. ESHOO).

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 724, which would rescind the President's ban for the sake of our national security.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair understands the gentleman from Washington has not yielded for that purpose. Therefore, the unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 seconds to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MAXINE WATERS) for debate.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I am referring to H.R. 724, which would rescind President Trump's refugee ban so that green card holders like Bessar Yousif, a refugee from Iraq on his way home after getting engaged in Kurdistan, won't get detained in LAX.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman's time has expired.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 seconds to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BUTTERFIELD).

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I ask that President Trump rescind his refugee ban on children like the 12-year-old Yemeni girl, Eman Ali, who was not allowed to board a plane to join her U.S. parents, leaving her in limbo.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman's time has expired.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 seconds to the gentleman from California (Mr. CÁRDENAS).

Mr. CÁRDENAS. Mr. Speaker, as a proud American, I ask to bring up H.R. 724, which would rescind President Trump's refugee ban on women like the Yazidi refugee from Iraq whose life is in danger because of her husband's work with Americans and who was refused boarding on a flight to the U.S. out of Erbil.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. HASTINGS. Now we are back to unanimous consent. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. BROWNLEY) for a unanimous consent request.

Ms. BROWNLEY of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise to ask this House to bring up the Lofgren bill, H.R. 724, which would rescind President Trump's refugee ban on Yazidi women from Iraq like Nada, who was not allowed to board a flight and remains separated from her husband, a former interpreter for the U.S. Army.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Did the gentlewoman make a unanimous consent request?

Mr. HASTINGS. Yes, she did.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair understands that the gentleman from Washington has not yielded for that purpose. Therefore, the unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, parliamentary inquiry.

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

Mr. HASTINGS. Am I not permitted to yield a limited amount of time to Members for debate?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman said he was yielding to the gentlewoman from California for the purpose of a unanimous consent request.

Mr. HASTINGS. In that instance I did. My question and my parliamentary inquiry continuing, Mr. Speaker, is am I permitted to yield a limited amount of time to each Member for the purpose of debate?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman may yield to Members for debate.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 seconds to the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER).

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I ask to bring up H.R. 724, which would rescind President Trump's refugee ban on individuals like Dr. Suha Abushamma, a Sudanese doctor at the prestigious Cleveland Clinic, who was denied entry, forced to leave the country, and, therefore, deprived the country of his medical services.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 seconds to the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO).

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I ask to bring up H.R. 724 to rescind President Trump's refugee ban on persons like Mustafa, who worked on a construction crew on American bases to fortify them and was tortured because of it.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman's time has expired.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 seconds to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ).

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, bring up H.R. 724, which will rescind President Trump's refugee ban so that family members like Qassim Al Rawi, a 69-year-old Iraqi national, will not be refused boarding on a flight to visit his U.S.-citizen family in the United States.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman's time has expired.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 seconds to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER).

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I would hope that we could bring up H.R. 724, which would rescind President Trump's refugee ban on former Iraqi translators for the United States, like Faud Shareef, who was cleared to settle in Nashville, Tennessee, along with his family, but stopped before he could board his flight and sent back to harm's way in Iraq.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 seconds to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN).

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, yesterday's headline in The Washington Post: ''These Muslim families sought refuge in America's heartland. Now, Trump's visa ban is tearing them apart.'' One is in my district.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 seconds to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GUTIÉRREZ).

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, I ask that we bring up H.R. 724, which would rescind President Trump's immigration ban so that students like Maryim can return to classes at the University of Chicago and other students can continue their studies at U.S. colleges and universities.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 seconds to the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. JAYAPAL).

Ms. JAYAPAL. Mr. Speaker, I ask that this House bring up H.R. 724, which would rescind President Trump's refugee ban on children, like 16-year-old Afghani boy Sardar Hussein, who lost his family in a car bomb and now hopes after nearly 2 years of ordeal to get on his flight to America.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman's time has expired.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 10 seconds to the gentleman from California (Mr. CARBAJAL).

Mr. CARBAJAL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 724, which would rescind President Trump's refugee ban on women like Sara, an Afghani television presenter who fled amidst death threats, had waited for years to be resettled in the U.S., only to have her hopes dashed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. As previously announced, the unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

The gentleman from Florida is recognized.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 10 seconds to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), the distinguished minority whip and my good friend.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding and urge that we bring up H.R. 724, which would rescind President Trump's refugee ban on children, like a 5-year-old that came to Dulles Airport with another family. Her mother was waiting for her, and for 4 hours she was not allowed to see her mother. That is not good policy. It is not good for the safety of our troops. It is not good for the safety of America. Let's pass H.R. 724.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman's time has expired.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 5 seconds to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SCHNEIDER).

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Mr. Speaker, I ask this House to bring up H.R. 724, which would rescind President Trump's refugee ban on women like Sahar Alghnimi, who came here to care for her elderly mother who had just undergone surgery, only to be detained at O'Hare Airport and ultimately returned to Abu Dhabi.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman's time has expired.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, how much time do I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Florida has 8¼ minutes remaining.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 10 seconds to the distinguished gentleman from New York (Mr. SERRANO).

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 724, which would rescind President Trump's refugee ban on families like that of Ghassan Assali, which was en route to Pennsylvania from Syria on approved visas and then turned away and flown back to Qatar.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ALLEN). As previously announced, that unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 10 seconds to the gentleman from New York (Mr. ESPAILLAT).

Mr. ESPAILLAT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 724, which will rescind President Trump's executive order to ban Muslims. Having been at JFK Airport this weekend, I stand in support of military soldiers who risked their lives and whose family members were unlawfully detained and questioned, even after their service to our country. This is un-American.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. As previously announced, that unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

□ 1330

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 10 seconds to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY).

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 724, which would rescind President Trump's refugee ban in light of individuals—women like Faten Diab, a Syrian refugee and former charity work whose family had applied for settlement to the United States but will now not be able to come.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. As previously announced, that unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 10 seconds to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE).

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 724, which would rescind President Trump's refugee ban that prevented South Carolina resident and data scientist Nazanin Zinouri from returning to the United States after visiting her mother in Iran.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. As previously announced, that unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 10 seconds to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MATSUI).

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 724, which would rescind President Trump's refugee ban on individuals like the student from Afghanistan who was denied entry, sent back, and had her visa canceled.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. As previously announced, that unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 10 seconds to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BEYER).

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up 724, which would rescind President Trump's refugee ban on those who, like 69-year-old Armenouhi Badalyan and 77-year-old Hmayak Shahmirian, are Christian refugees from Iran and have applied for resettlement in the U.S.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. As previously announced, that unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 10 seconds to the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. DAVIS).

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 724, which would rescind President Trump's refugee ban in light of individuals like Jordanian Musa Sharkawi, a cardiology fellow in Connecticut whose wife is a Syrian doctor and whose family cannot visit her because of the ban.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. As previously announced, that unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 10 seconds to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. BARRAGÁN).

Ms. BARRAGÁN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 724, which would rescind President Trump's refugee ban and stop the separation of families like that of the Iranian professional whose wife is trapped in Iran and who is considering leaving the United States because of it.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. As previously announced, that unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 10 seconds to the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. DEMINGS), my home girl, for a unanimous consent request.

Mrs. DEMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that we bring up H.R. 724, which would rescind President Trump's refugee ban on individuals like Amir Haji-Akbari, a computational statistical physicist from Iran who was just offered an assistant professor job at Yale University.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. As previously announced, that unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. ADAMS) for a unanimous consent request.

Ms. ADAMS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 724, which would rescind President Trump's refugee ban on women like the 77-year-old held at Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport as she tried to see her son and his family for the first time in years.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. As previously announced, that unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from the Northern Mariana Islands (Mr. SABLAN) for a unanimous consent request.

Mr. SABLAN. Mr. Speaker, as a grandfather, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 724, which would rescind President Trump's refugee ban on women, like the 69-year-old who was scheduled to visit the U.S. this past weekend to meet her new grandson but is now in limbo.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. As previously announced, that unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. JUDY CHU) for a unanimous consent request.

Ms. JUDY CHU of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 724, which would rescind President Trump's refugee ban on families like the Syrian refugee family of six who were scheduled to arrive in Cleveland on Tuesday, January 31, but are now blocked indefinitely.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. As previously announced, that unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. CLARKE) for a unanimous consent request.

Ms. CLARKE of New York. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 724, which would rescind Donald Trump's refugee ban and help unify the family of Farah Usa, a refugee who risked her life for United States forces in Iraq and whose father, mother, and sister are now barred from entering the United States of America.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. As previously announced, that unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY) for a unanimous consent request.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 724, which would rescind the President's refugee ban that impacts green card holders like the woman located in Iran with her 3-year-old U.S. citizen daughter.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. As previously announced, that unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 10 seconds to the distinguished gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO).

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 724 would repeal Trump's overreaching executive order that purports to make America safer. It is time to restore American values. What are the Republicans afraid of? If you support his action, bring up the bill and vote against it. If you don't support his action, we are giving you an opportunity to restore the lawful rights of Congress representing the American people.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. As previously announced, that unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 10 seconds to the distinguished gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, because our Nation has always welcomed refugees and the poor and those who are in need, I don't know why we don't bring up H.R. 724, which would rescind President Trump's refugee ban on students like the Iranian-born anthropology student who left the U.S. to carry out research and is now likely to be unable to return to defend his thesis. If you do not believe in the ban, bring it up so we can vote against this ban.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. TORRES) for a unanimous consent request.

Mrs. TORRES. Mr. Speaker, this is what a refugee looks like, and I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 724, which would rescind President Trump's refugee ban and help unify the family of an Iraqi refugee who is now separated indefinitely from her husband and children because of the ban.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. As previously announced, that unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 10 seconds to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN), my good friend that I serve on the Rules Committee with, for debate.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I ask my Republican friends to bring up H.R. 724, which would rescind President Trump's appalling and discriminatory refugee ban on women like Samira Asgari, a scientist from Iran who was set to begin a project to study tuberculosis at Harvard Medical School, and was stopped from boarding her flight to the United States. Let us have a vote, let us have a little democracy, in the people's House.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from New Hampshire (Ms. SHEA-PORTER) for a unanimous consent request.

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 724, which would rescind President Trump's refugee ban on individuals like the Syrian skin cancer researcher living in Germany whose visa to visit colleagues in Philadelphia has now been revoked. Let us vote.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. As previously announced, that unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE) for a unanimous consent request.

Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, you probably won't be surprised to learn that I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 724, which would rescind President Trump's appalling refugee ban on individuals like the young scientist in Iran who was awarded a fellowship to study cardiovascular medicine at Harvard, but whose visa has now been indefinitely suspended.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. As previously announced, that unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 10 seconds to the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN).

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 724, which would rescind President Trump's outrageous ban on Muslims so that the San Fernando Valley's own Darrius Hicks, an American citizen, can be reunited with his wife, who is a humanitarian worker working with Afghan war victims in Iran. She has been denied even the chance to schedule a visa interview at our embassy in Abu Dhabi.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. As previously announced, that unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 10 seconds to the gentleman from California (Mr. HUFFMAN).

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 724, which would rescind President Trump's unconstitutional Muslim ban that led to a Stanford University graduate student who has lived in the United States since 1993 getting handcuffed and then detained at JFK airport for 5 hours.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. As previously announced, that unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON) for a unanimous consent request.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 724, which would rescind President Trump's cold and callous refugee ban on travelers like the UK resident who holds an Iranian passport, was due to fly back to Glasgow via New York, and had her transit visa revoked.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. As previously announced, that unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. RUIZ) for a unanimous consent request.

Mr. RUIZ. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 724, which would rescind President Trump's refugee ban and help unify the family of Muktar and his wife, who spent 20 years in a refugee camp after fleeing Somalia, and will continue to be separated from their children who still live in the camp.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. As previously announced, that unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. CORREA) for a unanimous consent request.

Mr. CORREA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 724, which would rescind President Trump's refugee ban in light of mothers like Ran Chauhan, who arrived in the U.S. 5 years ago and is going through the naturalization process, but is separated from her sister and two children who are set to arrive in mid February.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. As previously announced, that unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) for a unanimous consent request.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 724, which would rescind President Trump's misguided refugee ban. Scheduled to arrive today in Toledo from war-torn Iraq was a fully vetted mother and her three young daughters, one of whom is less than a year old. They are forced to remain in Tunisia with their futures very uncertain.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. As previously announced, that unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. TONKO) for a unanimous consent request.

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 724, which would rescind President Trump's tragic refugee ban that would have barred women like the Syrian violinist who has performed at the White House and who is worried about her family that remain in Aleppo.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. As previously announced, that unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Massachusetts (Ms. TSONGAS) for a unanimous consent request.

Ms. TSONGAS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 724, which would rescind President Trump's refugee ban that keeps apart families like that of Luca Freschi, who had planned to move to Harvard Medical School in March but whose Iranian wife would not be able to join him.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. As previously announced, that unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO) for a unanimous consent request.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 724, which would rescind President Trump's refugee ban on women like Shadi Heidarifar, a philosophy student at the University of Tehran who was accepted to New York University, but is now unsure if she will be able to attend.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. As previously announced, that unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

□ 1345

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, parliamentary inquiry.

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

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, with the Members who have come here and asked for unanimous consent and with its being denied by virtue of the gentleman from Washington's not agreeing to the unanimous consent and with the notion in mind that the period for debate is what is to be recognized, my

question is: Do the people who did come here and seek unanimous consent—although it was not accepted—have the opportunity to insert a statement in the RECORD that signifies their intentions with reference to the matter at hand?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members may insert remarks under general leave.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, how much time remains on both sides?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Florida has 5 minutes and 55 seconds remaining. The gentleman from Washington has 11½ minutes remaining.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCARTHY), the majority leader of the Republican Conference.

Mr. MCCARTHY. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in favor of the rule and the underlying legislation.

Since the beginning of this Congress, we have devoted ourselves most prominently to a single goal: making Washington work for the people again.

There is one thing here in Washington that consistently stands against our people, our economy, and our Constitution: the Federal bureaucracy.

These agencies, bureaus, and departments—so numerous that nobody even knows how many there are—spend their lives thinking up new rules, and the rules they produce weigh down businesses, destroy jobs, and limit Americans' rights. Career bureaucrats who can't be voted out of office wield punishing authority with little to no accountability. They are agents of the status quo, and the revolving door of Federal employees moving to lobbying arms and consulting firms breed thousands of regulations that enrich the connected and powerful, sometimes at the great expense of the average American. This is the swamp. This is what opposes the people, and we are draining it.

In recent weeks, this House has already started its two-part plan to strip the bureaucracy of its power. We started to change the structure in Washington by passing the REINS Act and the Regulatory Accountability Act. This week, we begin part two: targeting specific rules and stripping them from the books.

There has been no industry in America that has been more regulated than energy. We are going to use the Congressional Review Act to repeal the stream protection rule that could destroy tens of thousands of mining jobs and put up to 64 percent of our country's coal reserves off limits.

Then we will take on President Obama's 11th hour BLM methane emissions requirement. The oil and gas industry in America has already drastically reduced methane emissions even while increasing output, and the EPA already has the authority to regulate air emissions. Instead of helping the environment, this rule could cost America's energy industry up to $1 billion by 2025 and force smaller operations, especially out West, to shut down and lay off employees. So, this Friday, the House will get rid of it.

We will also take the ax to the SEC disclosure rule, which—now, if you can believe it—targets publicly traded American energy companies with even more regulatory compliance while it lets foreign companies off the hook. Washington should put American companies first, not put them at a disadvantage to their foreign competitors.

Mr. Speaker, it is not just energy, which would be bad enough; but under President Obama, the bureaucracy has even threatened our basic constitutional rights. A new rule from the Social Security Administration would increase scrutiny on up to 4.2 million disabled Americans if they attempt to purchase firearms. For the completely unrelated circumstance of having someone help manage your finances, Social Security recipients could be kept from exercising their Second Amendment rights. In an affront to due process, the bureaucracy has even attempted to blacklist from Federal contracts any business that is accused of violating labor laws, and that could be before the company has a chance to defend itself in court.

Every single one of these will be gone. With a vote in the House, a vote in the Senate, and President Trump's signature, we will get rid of every one of these job-killing and destructive regulations. The House is always at the service of the people. Now we are making the bureaucracy serve the people, too.

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I inform the gentleman from Washington that I have no further requests for time and I am prepared to close.

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

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

The majority leader just got through saying all of the things they are getting ready to do to drain the swamp. My feeling about what is happening—and I am speaking for myself—is they may very well drain the swamp, but if you take out the alligators and you put in crocodiles and you put in snakes, you have just made the swamp that much more dangerous to the American people.

Mr. Speaker, the cavalier nature by which my friends across the aisle approach the awesome responsibility of governing is as disturbing as it is disappointing. They all own this now. They are in charge. Although I may understand the emotive desire to turn things on their head, they all would be wise to come to the realization sooner rather than later that their actions affect real people. All they have to do is just see what transpired this past weekend.

The children, the elderly, the students who are waiting in airports across our country who are wishing to flee their oppressors or who are simply returning to their lives here at home are real people. They heard them being identified in the denied unanimous consent requests of my colleagues who came forward here. The children, the elderly, and all of the other folks who have to live in environments that are less clean and that are more likely to make them sick because of their flippant approach here today are real people. To be taken seriously, they must act seriously. Within that context, I would have to surmise that they all would be judged and found wanting.

To truly convey the devastating consequences of what has happened these past few days, I could quote from one of the Founding Fathers about the ideal of freedom from religious persecution; or I could recite for them the inscription on the Statue of Liberty, which has guided and inspired generations of immigrants and refugees as they have come here to seek better lives for themselves and their families; or I could quote from Luke 10:25 wherein Jesus tells the parable of the Good Samaritan. I will not.

Instead, I will leave them with the words of Dr. Amir Heydari, a bariatric surgeon and United States citizen who has lived in the United States for nearly 40 years and who was detained for questioning this past weekend:

''I wanted to live somewhere that celebrated freedom—freedom of speech, freedom of religion, all of these kinds of things. That's what everyone in the world thinks about the USA, and unfortunately, when these types of actions are taken, the image is not the same anymore.''

I urge my colleagues to oppose this rule and the underlying measure.

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

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

I would just like to take a minute to remind the American people and my friends across the aisle that we are here today, as the minority leader said, to begin the process of unwinding the burdensome regulations that are truly stifling job creation and hurting our friends and our families in each and every one of our neighborhoods across the country.

Many from the other side have tried to distract with unrelated issues. I just want to be clear that the rule today does not address immigration in any way and that none of their requests went through the regular and bipartisan process to clear such requests.

So let's focus on why we are here. We are here because we must take a firm stand against the overly burdensome and restrictive regulations that have been issued in the waning days of the previous administration. By passing this CRA, we can rescind the final stream protection rule, which the OSM produced without input from the States—responsible for enforcing mining regulations—and which disregards

existing regulations on both the State and the Federal levels that have proven to be effective.

This regulation will have devastating effects on mining communities across the country and will lead to significant job losses and higher electricity costs—all while weakening U.S. energy security for decades. The stream protection rule will drastically reduce our access to coal and our ability to develop new clean coal technologies, which will result in reduced domestic energy protection and in tens of thousands of lost jobs in coal-producing States as well as in industries across the country that are reliant on this energy. If we fail to pass the underlying bill, the rule's devastating impacts will be felt far and wide in our great land as approximately 78,000 mining jobs will be lost, which is in addition to the tens of thousands of mining jobs that have already been lost in the last 8 years.

Mr. Speaker, coal is essential to the U.S. economy. It provides affordable energy that accounts for almost 40 percent of the Nation's electricity supply—almost 20 percent in the gentleman's home State of Florida. Because of its abundance, reliability, and affordability, electricity generated from coal is generally 30 percent cheaper than other alternative energy sources. Additionally, at current consumption rates, our country has more than 250 years of remaining coal reserves, ensuring that we will have energy security here at home for generations to come.

Passing H.J. Res. 38 will protect American jobs and families from yet another burdensome regulation that has failed to follow the basic tenets of transparency, inclusivity, and cooperation with stakeholders, cooperating States, and, most importantly, the American people.

Now is the time for Congress to overturn this unparalleled executive overreach and implement policies that protect communities that have been long forgotten by the former administration. The CRA was designed for this exact purpose, and we now have a unique opportunity to pass this legislation through both Chambers and see it signed into law.

Mr. Speaker, this is a good, straightforward rule, allowing for the consideration of an important resolution that will ensure that mining communities and hardworking families are not pressed by another crippling Federal regulation. I believe this rule and the underlying legislation are strong measures that are important to our country's future. I urge my colleagues to support House Resolution 70 and the underlying joint resolution.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to H. Res. 70 and the joint resolution for which it would provide consideration, H.J. Res. 38, expressing disapproval of the Stream Protection Rule submitted by the Department of the Interior, Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement.

The Stream Protection Rule is a critical update to a decades-old regulation that provides clear and established requirements for responsible surface coal mining while protecting vital community health and economic opportunity across the United States.

The rule, crafted in an extensive and transparent public process, includes reasonable reforms to avoid and minimize impacts on surface water, groundwater, fish, wildlife, and other natural resources. Grounded in sound, peer-reviewed scientific evidence and modern technological advancements, the rule modernizes 33-year old regulations to keep pace with modern mining techniques and incorporates in its guidance a broader scientific understanding of the deleterious effects caused by unmitigated surface coal mining activity.

During the development of this critical rule, the Department of Interior received over 150,000 public comments, hosted 15 open houses and public meetings, and engaged in broad outreach to stake holders nationwide. This rule was carefully developed and thoroughly considered with all stakeholders provided a seat at the table.

Ultimately, H.J. Res. 38 would undermine the Stream Protection Rule and begin the process to undue monumental steps in the right direction to protect the health, well-being, and economic prosperity of countless Americans living near coal mining sites. I strongly urge my colleagues to reject H. Res. 70, providing for the consideration of the harmful H.J. Res. 38. Any effort to undermine this important health, economic, and environmental protection results in a lose-lose situation for the American public and I oppose it.

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

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 70 OFFERED BY MR. HASTINGS

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

SEC. 2. Immediately upon adoption of this resolution the Speaker shall, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 724) to provide that the Executive Order entitled ''Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States'' (January 27, 2017), shall have no force or effect, to prohibit the use of Federal funds to enforce the Executive Order, and for other purposes. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions. If the Committee of the Whole rises and reports that it has come to no resolution on the bill, then on the next legislative day the House shall, immediately after the third daily order of business under clause 1 of rule XIV, resolve into the Committee of the Whole for further consideration of the bill.

SEC. 3. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H.R. 724.

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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

□ 1400

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee). Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

ENSURING RELIABLE AIR SERVICE IN AMERICAN SAMOA

Mr. LoBIONDO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 276) a bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to ensure reliable air service in American Samoa, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 276

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. RELIABLE AIR SERVICE IN AMERICAN SAMOA.

Section 40109(g) of title 49, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2), by striking subparagraph (C) and inserting the following:

''(C) review the exemption at least every 30 days (or, in the case of exemptions that are necessary to provide and sustain air transportation in American Samoa between the islands of Tutuila and Manu'a, at least every 180 days), to ensure that the unusual circumstances that established the need for the exemption still exist.''; and

(2) by striking paragraph (3) and inserting the following:

''(3) RENEWAL OF EXEMPTIONS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), the Secretary may renew an exemption (including renewals) under this subsection for not more than 30 days.

''(B) EXCEPTION.—An exemption that is necessary to provide and sustain air transportation in American Samoa between the islands of Tutuila and Manu'a, may be renewed for not more than 180 days.

''(4) CONTINUATION OF EXEMPTIONS.—An exemption may continue for not more than 5 days after the unusual circumstances that established the need for the exemption cease.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. LoBIONDO) and the gentleman from Washington (Mr. LARSEN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LoBIONDO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 276.

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

There was no objection.

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

I rise today in support of H.R. 276, as amended. This bill will improve transportation in American Samoa by making air service between its islands more reliable and predictable.

Specifically, the bill streamlines a burdensome Federal regulatory process that artificially inhibits economic growth and jobs on the islands. The Senate unanimously passed similar legislation in the last Congress, and I am hopeful they will join with us this year in addressing this issue.

I want to thank the sponsor of the bill, the gentlewoman from American Samoa (Mrs. RADEWAGEN), for her tireless efforts on behalf of her constituents and for working with us to bring a bill that benefits so many of them to the floor.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 276.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LARSEN of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of H.R. 276, as amended, introduced by the gentlewoman from American Samoa (Mrs. RADEWAGEN), which will ensure reliable air service into American Samoa.

American Samoa is situated in the center of the South Pacific, about 2,500 miles south of Hawaii. Its nearest neighboring islands are at least 500 miles away, and the territory is more than 7,000 miles from where we stand today.

This remote location already makes export and travel difficult and costly. Complicating matters more is the fact that the current cabotage laws prohibit foreign air carriers from carrying passengers between the islands, except in certain emergency situations.

The Department of Transportation has authority to issue waivers in such emergency cases, but the waivers are good for only 30 days. A foreign airline that is otherwise fit to provide service between American Samoa's islands is, therefore, forced to apply monthly for a waiver.

H.R. 276 would remove this burden by permitting DOT to grant the cabotage waiver for up to 6 months. This change ensures that domestic air transportation is provided and sustained between the islands, benefitting both the people and the economy.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LoBIONDO: Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from American Samoa (Mrs. RADEWAGEN).

Mrs. RADEWAGEN. Mr. Speaker, first, I would like to thank Chairman SHUSTER, Subcommittee Chairman LoBIONDO, Ranking Members DEFAZIO and LARSEN, and their staff for the effort and work they put in to quickly see this measure through this committee. They do an excellent job, and it is always encouraging to work with such bright people. I also want to thank Leader MCCARTHY and his staff for their assistance in getting this measure to the floor. I look forward to working under their leadership to bring prosperity to the American people, including those in the territories.

Mr. Speaker, the people of American Samoa desperately need improvement to their access to reliable transportation between the islands of Tutuila and Manu'a. The remote Manu'a islands are losing residents at an alarming pace, mostly due to the lack of reliable transportation; and it is causing a great hardship on the families and businesses who reside on these islands which lie 60 miles from the main island of Tutuila.

Also, the lack of reliable transportation poses a severe health risk to those who need emergency medical care, as the only hospital in American Samoa is in Tutuila.

My bill, H.R. 276, will help alleviate this issue by easing some of the burdensome red tape causing the issue, and I look forward to seeing it signed into law by the President.

Mr. LARSEN of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from the Northern Mariana Islands (Mr. SABLAN).

Mr. SABLAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 276, a bill to provide more reliable air service to the people of American Samoa for air travel within American Samoa.

The Northern Mariana Islands are similar to American Samoa in many ways. Although the large majority of our population resides on Saipan, I have also several thousand constituents residing on the islands Tinian and Rota. We are fortunate that air travel between these islands is possible with the presence of commercial air travel.

Unfortunately, in American Samoa, there are no U.S. carriers operating a route between Tutuila and Manu'a. So Polynesian Airlines, based out of Samoa, is the only carrier operating that route.

H.R. 276, introduced by my good friend and colleague, the gentlewoman from American Samoa (Mrs. RADEWAGEN), presents a commonsense approach to cut red tape and allow regular flights to continue between these islands. It would help the people of American Samoa conduct business, visit relatives, and access health care.

It has my full support, and I ask the House to pass this commonsense legislation.

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

Mr. LoBIONDO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Washington (Mr. LARSEN) and the staff for their help on this.

I urge all Members to support H.R. 276, as amended.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. LoBIONDO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 276, 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.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. LOBIONDO

Mr. LoBIONDO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to amend the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amend the long title by striking ''A bill''.

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

There was no objection.

The amendment was agreed to.

FIRST RESPONDER IDENTIFICATION OF EMERGENCY NEEDS IN DISASTER SITUATIONS

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 58) to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to submit a study on the circumstances which may impact the effectiveness and availability of first responders before, during, or after a terrorist threat or event, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 58

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 ''First Responder Identification of Emergency Needs in Disaster Situations'' or the ''FRIENDS Act''.

SEC. 2. CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH MAY IMPACT FIRST RESPONDERS DURING A TERRORIST EVENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the Committees on Homeland Security and Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate a report that describes select State and local programs and policies, as appropriate, related to the preparedness and protection of first responders. The report may include information on—

(1) the degree to which such programs and policies include consideration of the presence of a first responder's family in an area impacted by a terrorist attack;

(2) the availability of personal protective equipment for first responders;

(3) the availability of home Medkits for first responders and their families for biological incident response; and

(4) other related factors.

(b) CONTEXT.—In preparing the report required under subsection (a), the Comptroller General of the United States may, as appropriate, provide information—

(1) in a format that delineates high risk urban areas from rural communities; and

(2) on the degree to which the selected State and local programs and policies included in such report were developed or are being executed with funding from the Department of Homeland Security, including grant funding from the State Homeland Security Grant Program or the Urban Area Security Initiative under sections 2002 and 2003, respectively, of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 603 and 604).

(c) HOMELAND SECURITY CONSIDERATION.—After issuance of the report required under subsection (a), the Secretary of Homeland Security shall consider such report's findings and assess its applicability for Federal first responders.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BARLETTA) and the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 58, as amended.

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

There was no objection.

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

First, I welcome the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON) to the committee. I look forward to working together to do good work for the American people.

Mr. Speaker, firefighters, police, EMS, and other first responders are critical to our Nation's emergency management system. First responders leave their own families, even during disasters, to protect you and me.

As recently as this past August, we saw devastating flooding in Baton Rouge and southeast Louisiana. The flooding touched every home, including the homes of firefighters, police, hospital workers, and other first responders. First responders focused on rescuing flood victims, while they knew their own homes were flooded and their own families were homeless.

This legislation would require a report on the State and local programs and policies in place to prepare and protect first responders and their families in times of disaster. Taking care of first responders and their families gives our firefighters, police, and other critical emergency personnel the peace of mind to focus on the task at hand, rather than worrying whether their family is safe and taken care of.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I rise in support of H.R. 58, the First Responder Identification of Emergency Needs in Disaster Situations, or the FRIENDS Act.

This bill requires the Government Accountability Office, or GAO, to submit a report on how State and local programs affect the preparedness and protection of first responders. Congress and the American people need to know whether these programs consider circumstances that may affect a first responder's ability to respond to an event.

In particular, the bill requires GAO to examine the degree to which State and local programs and policies consider the presence of a first responder's family in an area impacted by a terrorist attack, the availability of personal protective equipment for first responders, and the availability of home MedKits for first responders and their families for biological incident response.

While we are asking GAO to examine State and local programs and policies, some of these programs and policies may be funded with Federal dollars. To that extent, Congress needs to know whether these federally funded programs and policies are as effective as possible to prepare and protect first responders.

This month, the State of Georgia received two Presidential disaster declarations from devastating tornados in districts neighboring my own. While these are not terrorist attacks, these tornados highlight the fact that first responders are often called upon to respond to events in their own communities where they and their loved ones live. Our heros immediately respond to the call of duty, even though they themselves or their loved ones may be impacted. Thus, it is important that State and local preparedness programs are designed and developed to consider all situations that may impact first responder preparedness.

□ 1415

We must do everything we can to support our first responders who are often called upon to put their lives on the line to help others, even when their own families need them. So I thank my colleague, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE), for introducing this bill and for her diligent work on this issue.

In response to my chairman's welcome, I would have to respond by saying I am just giddy about being a part of this subcommittee, and I look forward to working with him and his staff to make things good for America and for our future.

I urge my colleagues to join in my support of this bill.

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

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

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE), the sponsor of this legislation.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia and, likewise, congratulate him for his leadership on the Transportation Committee, along with his chairman.

Mr. Speaker, I rise as a senior member of the Homeland Security Committee, which committee has had special emphasis on protecting and responding to our first responders, and so I am excited about the fact of moving this bill forward. I thank the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, and I thank my Homeland Security Committee for moving this forward through an amendment process and now, ultimately, onto the floor of the House.

I rise, Mr. Speaker, enthusiastically, in support of H.R. 58, the First Responder Identification of Emergency Needs in Disaster Situations, or FRIENDS, Act.

I thank my chairman, Mr. MCCAUL, and Ranking Member THOMPSON for the valuable assistance and support in bringing this important bill before the House for consideration during the 114th Congress. We are now in the 115th Congress. I appreciate Chairman SHUSTER and Ranking Member DEFAZIO for allowing the FRIENDS Act now to come forward, which was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure to be considered on today's suspensions.

The FRIENDS Act reflects what America is all about. The FRIENDS Act reflects what we, as Members of Congress, are all about. How many of us stop by fire stations, pat a police officer of many different levels on the back, say ''thank you,'' and recognize that that 911 number is a very special number to many of our constituents.

But more importantly, when natural disasters or manmade disasters such as the horrific and heinous terrorist act of 9/11 occur, who are among the first to come? It is the first responders, and they go to faraway places.

The FRIENDS Act reflects stakeholder input and bipartisan collaboration with the majority.

I thank the International Association of Fire Chiefs, the National Association of State EMS Officials working with me, and The International Emergency Management Society for their valuable assistance and input regarding the FRIENDS Act.

Our two committees, Transportation and Infrastructure and Homeland Security, really respond in a bipartisan way. Our Homeland Security Committee will be facing many mountains of concerns dealing with intelligence issues, dealing with the issues with Russia, dealing with the issues of executive orders, but we do know that we come together to honor our first responders that are our Nation's heroes. They run into burning buildings; they rescue people trapped by dangerous floods and put themselves in harm's way to protect others. Just last week, in San Bernardino, we saw the brave first responders heroically pursue two individuals that fled from the scene of a deadly attack recently over the last year.

To do their jobs, first responders must leave their homes and families while the rest of us cling to ours. Whether it is to deal with the aftermath of a terrorist attack, as I indicated, or the fires, hurricanes, and tornadoes that we have seen across America—devastation of so many of our constituents, loss of life—first responders leave their homes to ensure that others are safe.

Unfortunately, today, first responders are asked to answer the call to action without knowing whether their families will be safe as the work to rescue others proceeds. Our first responders deserve better.

The FRIENDS Act directs the Government Accountability Office to conduct a comprehensive review of policies and programs designed to ensure that first responders are able to do their jobs, and effectively, by assessing, among other things, measures taken to ensure first responder families are safe, first of all, and the availability of personal protective equipment exists so that they can come home to their families.

It was particularly noticed during 9/11. For those of us who were able to go to Ground Zero as they were still continuing the recovery, many of you know they continued to recover for months and months and months, and you saw the kind of exposure those first responders had.

During committee consideration of the FRIENDS Act, my friend from New York (Mr. HIGGINS) offered an amendment to authorize GAO to evaluate the availability of home med kits for first responders and their families in assessing the preparedness of first responders. I was pleased to support the Higgins amendment, and it adds to this bill.

H.R. 58 also directs GAO to distinguish policies available in high-risk urban areas which may be better resourced, and rural areas where efforts to ensure preparedness for first responders and their families may require creative leveraging of resources.

This provision will ensure that the information included in the report will be applicable and adaptable by various communities across the country as they work to better protect their protectors. Let us remember both the rural community as well as the urban community.

Additionally, the FRIENDS Act directs the Secretary of Homeland Security to review its findings and assess whether the policies identified could be applicable to Federal first responders.

The FRIENDS Act has been endorsed by the International Association of Fire Chiefs and a number of other organizations.

Before I conclude, let me again thank all of my colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a letter from the International Association of Fire Chiefs and, as well, the National Association of State EMS Officials.

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF FIRE CHIEFS,
Fairfax, VA, January 31, 2017.

Hon. SHEILA JACKSON LEE,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE JACKSON LEE: On behalf of the approximately 12,000 fire and emergency service leaders of the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC), I would like to thank you for introducing H.R. 58, the First Responder Identification of Emergency Needs in Disaster Situations (FRIENDS) Act. The IAFC supports this legislation, because it will examine an important issue facing the nation's first responders during a major terrorist attack: adequate preparedness for the first responders' families.

During terrorist incidents, fire, law enforcement and EMS officials will be called upon to take heroic actions to protect the public and provide fire and emergency medical response. In the case of a large-scale incident or biological attack, the families of these first responders also will be at risk. Based on the experience of IAFC members during the response to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita and the 2014 response to potential Ebola incidents in the United States, I know that the welfare of the first responders' families weighs heavily on them as they serve the public. It is important that federal, state, and local officials make plans to provide for the safety of first responders' families in order to ensure strong morale among local fire, law enforcement, and EMS officials during a major terrorist attack.

Thank you for introducing this important legislation. We look forward to working with you to pass this legislation in the House of Representatives.

Sincerely,

FIRE CHIEF JOHN D. SINCLAIR,
President and Chairman of the Board.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF STATE EMS OFFICIALS,
Falls Church, VA, September 28, 2015.

Re: Expressing Support for the Jackson Lee Amendment in the Nature of a Substitute to H.R. 2795.

Hon. MICHAEL T. MCCAUL,
Chairman, House Committee on Homeland Security, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

Hon. MARTHA MCSALLY,
Chairman, Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

Hon. BENNIE G. THOMPSON,
Ranking Member, House Committee on Homeland Security, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

Hon. DONALD M. PYNE,
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

We are writing to express our support for the Jackson Lee Amendment in the Nature of a Substitute titled, the ''Families of Responders Identification of Emergency Needs in Designated Situations'' or the ''FRIENDS Act.'' This bill would provide an important report on the state of family support planning for the families of first responders.

We believe that Federal family support planning is important to homeland security because this area of continuity of operations planning addresses the health and safety needs of first responder families during terrorist attacks or incidents as well as other emergencies. The FRIENDS Act will be an

important first step in engaging the first responder community on the role of family in preparedness and continuity of operations.

The FRIENDS Act would also engage first responder organizations to get their perspectives on best practices in family support planning programs on the local and state levels.

For these reasons, we support the FRIENDS Act of 2015.

Sincerely,

PAUL R. PATRICK,
President, National Association of State EMS Officials.

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

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 2 minutes to the gentlewoman.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, it is important to know of the important role that the International Association of Fire Chiefs play in the lives of first responders and their advocacy for their fellow brothers and sisters—and they call them their fellow brothers and sisters. I want to briefly read their words:

Dear Representative JACKSON LEE,

On behalf of the approximately 12,000 fire and emergency service leaders of the International Association of Fire Chiefs, I would like to thank you for introducing H.R. 58, the First Responder Identification of Emergency Needs in Disaster Situations, FRIENDS, Act.

The IAFC supports the legislation because it will examine an important issue facing the Nation's first responders during a major terrorist attack, adequate preparedness for the first responders' families.

It goes on to list terrorist incidents, fire, and law enforcement, and EMS officials will be called upon to take heroic action, and it recounts that their concern is what is happening to their family under these circumstances.

In a letter from the National Association of State EMS Officials which I will insert into the RECORD, they indicate in their letter:

We are writing to express our support for the Jackson Lee amendment, which was the bill the Families of Responders Identification of Emergency Needs in Designated Situations. This bill would make an important report on the state of family support planning for the families of first responders.

Ladies and gentlemen, I am grateful to my colleagues for their assistance as we move the FRIENDS Act forward, but I am more grateful to those first responders who unselfishly put themselves forward and in danger to help our constituents and help all of us. To their families, we owe them the responsibility of ensuring that they are safe during the time of their loved ones being on the front lines of saving others.

I ask my colleagues to support the FRIENDS Act, H.R. 58.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 58, the "First Responder Identification of Emergency Needs in Disaster Situations, or "Friends' Act", and yield myself such time as I may consume.

I thank Chairman MCCAUL and Ranking Member THOMPSON for the valuable assistance and support in bringing this important bill before the House for consideration during the 114th Congress.

I appreciate and thank Chairman BILL SHUSTER and Ranking Member PETER A. DEFAZIO for allowing the FRIENDS Act, which was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure to be considered under today's suspensions.

The FRIENDS Act embodies the important and fundamental idea that we have an obligation to ensure that the first responders who protect our loved ones in emergencies have the peace of mind that comes from knowing that their loved ones are safe while they do their duty.

During terrorist incidents, fire, law enforcement, and EMS officials will be called upon to take heroic actions to protect the public and provide fire and emergency medical response.

The FRIENDS Act reflects stakeholder input and bipartisan collaboration with the Majority.

I thank the International Association of Fire Chiefs, the National Association of State EMS Officials, and the International Emergency Management Society for their valuable assistance and support for the FRIENDS Act.

I also thank Kay Goss, the President of the International Emergency Management Society, who provided technical assistance on the work of first responders to prepare for catastrophic events.

I am passionate about the work of those who dedicate themselves to public service.

I hold in high regard the service of firefighters, law enforcement officers, emergency response technicians, nurses, emergency room doctors, and the dozens of other professionals who are the ultimate public servants.

First responders are called to serve and few outside of their ranks can understand why they do the work they do each day—placing their lives in harm's way to save a stranger.

Law enforcement officers, fire fighters, and emergency medical technicians make our lives safer, while often at the same time putting their own lives at risk.

In the case of a large-scale incident or biological attack, the families of these first responders also will be at risk.

Based upon the experience of International Fire Chiefs, which endorsed the FRIENDS Act, the members' experiences during their response to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita and the 2014 response to potential Ebola incidents in the United States, know that the welfare of their families weighs heavily on first responders as they serve the public.

It is important that federal, state, and local officials make plans to provide for the safety of first responders' families in order to ensure strong morale among local fire, law enforcement, and EMS officials during a major terrorist attack.

H.R. 58 provides Congress an opportunity to let our first responders know that we know they have families and loved ones who they leave behind when they are called to duty, and their families will be protected in the first responder absence.

The GAO study that will be provided as a result of this bill will report on what is being done by local and state governments to address the needs of first responder families when threats like Hurricanes Sandy, Hugo, and Katrina hit communities, or when a terrorist attack like the ones seen in New York and Boston occur.

The report required by the Jackson Lee FRIENDS Act will also provide information on the availability of personal protective equipment for first responders.

The issue of personal protective equipment was an acute problem for front line first responders during the 2014 Ebola crisis.

First responders, including EMTs, emergency room doctors and nurses as well as law enforcement and fire department professionals, were not prepared for the crisis:

1. Nearly 80 percent of first responders report that their hospital had not communicated to them any policy regarding potential admission of patients infected by Ebola;

2. 85 percent said their hospital had not provided education on Ebola that allowed the nurses to interact and ask questions of patients;

3. One-third said their hospital had insufficient supplies of eye protection (face shields or side shields with goggles) and fluid resistant/impermeable gowns; and

4. Nearly 40 percent said their hospital did not have plans to equip isolation rooms with plastic covered mattresses and pillows and discard all linens after use; fewer than 10 percent said they were aware their hospital does have such a plan in place.

The Centers for Disease Control and only a few hospitals around the country with infectious disease units knew the right protocols and had the right protective gear to be used when treating an Ebola patient.

Ebola in the United States was a frightening experience for many, but I think we saw the great work that first responders do each day—our doctors and nurses went to work and treated the sick and did what they always do—they took care of us.

During the 114th Congress the Homeland Security Committee unanimously voted to report the FRIENDS Act favorably to the full House, which passed the measure by an overwhelming margin and in support of local, state and federal first responders.

The Comptroller General's comprehensive review of the range of policies and programs in place at the State level to address the preparedness and protection of first responders will also delineate high risk urban areas and rural communities; and the degree to which selected state policies were developed or executed with funding from the DHS Grant Programs or Urban Area Security Initiative authorized by the Homeland Security Act.

The report's focus will be on the presence of the family of first responders in an area affected by a terrorist attack and the availability of essential personal protective equipment.

This will be the first report that focuses on the family as a critical factor that should be considered in the work of first responders during times of crisis such as a terrorist attack or public emergency like in the massive flooding that occurred in the city of Houston last year and the year before.

The well-being of family members is a factor that one would expect to weigh on a first responder called to respond to a terrorist attack or unprecedented emergency.

The bravery or dedication of first responders is not in question—they are the people who run into burning buildings to save people whom they may never have met.

They are some of the best among us and we appreciate their dedication and service.

Finally, the FRIENDS Act requires the Secretary of Homeland Security to consider the report's findings and their applicability for federal first responders.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Natalie Matson, of the Committee's majority staff and

Moira Bergin, of the Committee's minority staff, both of whom worked closely with Lillie Coney on my staff on the FRIENDS Act.

I also thank the staff of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure for their efforts to bring the bill before the full House for consideration.

I ask all Members to join me in voting to pass H.R. 58, the FRIENDS Act.

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

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I again urge my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on H.R. 58, as amended, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BARLETTA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 58, 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.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY INSIDER THREAT AND MITIGATION ACT OF 2017

Mr. KING of New York. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 666) to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish the Insider Threat Program, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 666

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 ''Department of Homeland Security Insider Threat and Mitigation Act of 2017''.

SEC. 2. ESTABLISHMENT OF INSIDER THREAT PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Title I of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 111 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

''SEC. 104. INSIDER THREAT PROGRAM.

''(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall establish an Insider Threat Program within the Department. Such Program shall—

''(1) provide training and education for Department personnel to identify, prevent, mitigate, and respond to insider threat risks to the Department's critical assets;

''(2) provide investigative support regarding potential insider threats that may pose a risk to the Department's critical assets; and

''(3) conduct risk mitigation activities for insider threats.

''(b) STEERING COMMITTEE.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish a Steering Committee within the Department. The Under Secretary for Intelligence and Analysis shall serve as the Chair of the Steering Committee. The Chief Security Officer shall serve as the Vice Chair. The Steering Committee shall be comprised of representatives of the Office of Intelligence and Analysis, the Office of the Chief Information Officer, the Office of the General Counsel, the Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties, the Privacy Office, the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer, the Office of the Chief Financial Officer, the Federal Protective Service, the Office of the Chief Procurement Officer, the Science and Technology Directorate, and other components or offices of the Department as appropriate. Such representatives shall meet on a regular basis to discuss cases and issues related to insider threats to the Department's critical assets, in accordance with subsection (a).

''(2) RESPONSIBILITIES.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this section, the Under Secretary for Intelligence and Analysis and the Chief Security Officer, in coordination with the Steering Committee established pursuant to paragraph (1), shall—

''(A) develop a holistic strategy for Department-wide efforts to identify, prevent, mitigate, and respond to insider threats to the Department's critical assets;

''(B) develop a plan to implement the insider threat measures identified in the strategy developed under subparagraph (A) across the components and offices of the Department;

''(C) document insider threat policies and controls;

''(D) conduct a baseline risk assessment of insider threats posed to the Department's critical assets;

''(E) examine existing programmatic and technology best practices adopted by the Federal Government, industry, and research institutions to implement solutions that are validated and cost-effective;

''(F) develop a timeline for deploying workplace monitoring technologies, employee awareness campaigns, and education and training programs related to identifying, preventing, mitigating, and responding to potential insider threats to the Department's critical assets;

''(G) require the Chair and Vice Chair of the Steering Committee to consult with the Under Secretary for Science and Technology and other appropriate stakeholders to ensure the Insider Threat Program is informed, on an ongoing basis, by current information regarding threats, beset practices, and available technology; and

''(H) develop, collect, and report metrics on the effectiveness of the Department's insider threat mitigation efforts.

''(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) CRITICAL ASSETS.—The term 'critical assets' means the people, facilities, information, and technology required for the Department to fulfill its mission.

''(2) INSIDER.—The term 'insider' means—

''(A) any person who has access to classified national security information and is employed by, detailed to, or assigned to the Department, including members of the Armed Forces, experts or consultants to the Department, industrial or commercial contractors, licensees, certificate holders, or grantees of the Department, including all subcontractors, personal services contractors, or any other category of person who acts for or on behalf of the Department, as determined by the Secretary; or

''(B) State, local, tribal, territorial, and private sector personnel who possess security clearances granted by the Department.

''(3) INSIDER THREAT.—The term 'insider threat' means the threat that an insider will use his or her authorized access, wittingly or unwittingly, to do harm to the security of the United States, including damage to the United States through espionage, terrorism, the unauthorized disclosure of classified national security information, or through the loss or degradation of departmental resources or capabilities.''.

(b) REPORTING.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than two years after the date of the enactment of section 104 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (as added by subsection (a) of this section) and the biennially thereafter for the next four years, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate a report on how the Department of Homeland Security and its components and offices have implemented the strategy developed pursuant to subsection (b)(2)(A) of such section 104, the status of the Department's risk assessment of critical assets, the types of insider threat training conducted, the number of Department employees who have received such training, and information on the effectiveness of the Insider Threat Program (established pursuant to subsection (a) of such section 104), based on metrics developed, collected, and reported pursuant to subsection (b)(2)(H) of such section 104.

(2) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection, the terms ''critical assets'', ''insider'', and ''insider threat'' have the meanings given such terms in section 104 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (as added by subsection (a) of this section).

(c) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 103 the following new item:

''Sec. 104. Insider Threat Program.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. KING) and the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. THOMPSON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. KING of New York. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. KING of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the legislation. Recent high-profile cases of government employees leaking classified information have caused drastic damage to U.S. national security and diplomacy. The names Snowden and Manning are now synonymous with the term ''insider threat.'' Unfortunately, Snowden, Manning, and others were able to conduct their traitorous work undetected because the government had at one time vetted and granted them access to secure facilities and information systems.

In response to these cases, it is vital that Congress ensure Federal agencies have the tools to detect and disrupt future insider threat situations before damage is done. H.R. 666, in contrast to its unholy numbering, has the important and respectable goal of authorizing and expanding insider threat detection and mitigation efforts at the Department of Homeland Security.

DHS has over 115,000 employees with access to classified information and many more with access to law enforcement sensitive data. Unauthorized disclosures of classified information, whether deliberate or unwitting, represent a significant threat to national security. The very nature of modern communication systems, as well as DHS' important information-sharing role with State and local partners, adds complexity to the challenge and requires thoughtful programs to educate employees and enhance DHS-wide detection capabilities.

The bill directs DHS to develop a strategy for the Department to identify, prevent, mitigate, and respond to insider threats and requires DHS to ensure that personnel understand what workplace behavior may be indicative of a potential insider threat and how their activity on DHS networks will be monitored. The bill codifies a comprehensive insider threat program at DHS that can be implemented through the Department and its component agencies and, most importantly, reinforces the importance of preventing future insider attacks.

I want to thank Homeland Security Chairman MCCAUL, Ranking Member THOMPSON, and Congressmen DAN DONOVAN and LOU BARLETTA for working with me to bring this bill to the floor.

The same bill passed the House floor in November 2015 by voice vote. Unfortunately, last-minute scheduling issues with the Senate prevented the bill from reaching the President's desk. I am pleased that the House is willing to take up this measure so quickly in the new Congress so we can move it through the process. I look forward to working with the Senate to move this measure forward.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill so we can establish a comprehensive, transparent, DHS-wide insider threat program. I urge support for the bill.

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 666, the Department of Homeland Security Insider Threat and Mitigation Act of 2017. H.R. 666, the Department of Homeland Security Insider Threat and Mitigation Act of 2017, authorizes the Department of Homeland Security to address the homeland and national security risk posed by trusted insiders.

Typically, trusted insiders are given unrestricted access to mission-critical assets such as personnel, facilities, and computer networks. While DHS, like other Federal agencies, conducts extensive vetting of prospective employees, there is a risk that someone with insider status exploits their position to damage the United States through espionage, terrorism, or the unauthorized disclosure of sensitive national security information.

As the ranking member of the Committee on Homeland Security, I am supportive of the Department of Homeland Security's current Insider Threat Program. It is targeted at preventing and detecting when a vetted DHS employee or contractor with access to U.S. Government resources, including personnel, facilities, information, equipment, networks, and systems, exploits such access for nefarious, terroristic, or criminal purposes.

□ 1430

Though I support the DHS program, I do have some concerns about DHS and other Federal agencies deploying continuous evaluation programs without transparency and congressional oversight. I am concerned that Federal agencies, with the understandable urge to protect their IT systems and facilities, are racing to acquire the capability before knowing whether such costly systems are even effective.

Therefore, I would like to reiterate to this Congress, as I did last Congress, that prior to establishing any such program, under which certain DHS employees would be subjected to ongoing automated credit, criminal, and social media monitoring, the Department engage Congress about not only the potential costs and benefits of such a program but what protections would be in place for workers subject to such a program.

Mr. Speaker, we live at a time when the threats to our Nation are complex. When this bill was considered last Congress, the prospect that a foreign intelligence agency would carry out an espionage campaign to influence the outcome of our Presidential election was material for the movies or for a good spy thriller. Today, in light of the Russian Government's actions in the 2016 elections, we have a greater appreciation for the importance of counterintelligence efforts. As such, this bill is particularly timely. None of us wants to see someone exploit their access to DHS networks to carry out cybercrimes or other criminal activity.

Even as DHS works to detect and prevent such threats, it is important that such activities be carried out in a transparent way so as not to compound the chronic morale challenges that exist within its workforce. Each time DHS considers making an adjustment to its insider threat program, thoughtful consideration must be paid to whether the operational drawbacks and costs for such an adjustment outweigh the benefits of such a change.

That said, I commend General TAYLOR, the previous Under Secretary for Intelligence and Analysis at DHS, for the attention he gave to the insider threat challenge. I look forward to continuing to work with the Department's successor to bolster security within the Department.

I would also like to give Mr. KING particular credit for his interest in this effort to make sure that problems don't come from the inside if we can help it.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of H.R. 666.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KING of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, at the outset, let me thank the ranking member for his support and for his kind words, and let me fully agree with him on the outstanding job General TAYLOR did during his time at DHS and throughout his career in public service.

Mr. Speaker, on a daily basis, adversaries are targeting DHS and other Federal agencies seeking to acquire sensitive information. U.S. citizens with trusted access to government facilities and electronic networks have been responsible for some of the most damaging attacks to the U.S. Government.

This bill provides the framework for DHS to implement an insider threat program that identifies and disrupts malicious insiders who seek to do the Department and its employees harm. It also seeks to protect the Department's workforce by conducting a transparent process to reinforce cyber hygiene, data security, and an awareness of malicious activity through a robust training program.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote for this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. KING) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 666.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY CLEARANCE MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION ACT

Mr. KING of New York. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 697) to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to improve the management and administration of the security clearance processes throughout the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 697

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 ''Department of Homeland Security Clearance Management and Administration Act''.

SEC. 2. SECURITY CLEARANCE MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Title VII of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 is amended—

(1) by inserting before section 701 (6 U.S.C. 341) the following:

"Subtitle A—Headquarters Activities";

and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subtitle:

"Subtitle B—Security Clearances

"SEC. 711. DESIGNATION OF NATIONAL SECURITY SENSITIVE AND PUBLIC TRUST POSITIONS.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall require the designation of the sensitivity level of national security positions (pursuant to part 1400 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations, or similar successor regulation) be conducted in a consistent manner with respect to all components and offices of the Department, and consistent with Federal guidelines.

''(b) IMPLEMENTATION.—In carrying out subsection (a), the Secretary shall require the utilization of uniform designation tools throughout the Department and provide training to appropriate staff of the Department on such utilization. Such training shall include guidance on factors for determining eligibility for access to classified information and eligibility to hold a national security position.

"SEC. 712. REVIEW OF POSITION DESIGNATIONS.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than July 6, 2017, and every five years thereafter, the Secretary shall review all sensitivity level designations of national security positions (pursuant to part 1400 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations, or similar successor regulation) at the Department.

''(b) DETERMINATION.—If during the course of a review required under subsection (a), the Secretary determines that a change in the sensitivity level of a position that affects the need for an individual to obtain access to classified information is warranted, such access shall be administratively adjusted and an appropriate level periodic reinvestigation completed, as necessary.

''(c) CONGRESSIONAL REPORTING.—Upon completion of each review required under subsection (a), the Secretary shall report to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate on the findings of each such review, including the number of positions by classification level and by component and office of the Department in which the Secretary made a determination in accordance with subsection (b) to—

''(1) require access to classified information;

''(2) no longer require access to classified information; or

''(3) otherwise require a different level of access to classified information.

"SEC. 713. AUDITS.

''Beginning not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this section, the Inspector General of the Department shall conduct regular audits of compliance of the Department with part 1400 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations, or similar successor regulation.

"SEC. 714. REPORTING.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall annually through fiscal year 2022 submit to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate a report on the following:

''(1) The number of denials, suspensions, revocations, and appeals of the eligibility for access to classified information of an individual throughout the Department.

''(2) The date and status or disposition of each reported action under paragraph (1).

''(3) The identification of the sponsoring entity, whether by a component, office, or headquarters of the Department, of each action under paragraph (1), and description of the grounds for each such action.

''(4) Demographic data, including data relating to race, sex, national origin, and disability, of each individual for whom eligibility for access to classified information was denied, suspended, revoked, or appealed, and the number of years that each such individual was eligible for access to such information.

''(5) In the case of a suspension in excess of 180 days, an explanation for such duration.

''(b) FORM.—The report required under subsection (a) shall be submitted in unclassified form and be made publicly available, but may include a classified annex for any sensitive or classified information if necessary.

"SEC. 715. UNIFORM ADJUDICATION, SUSPENSION, DENIAL, AND REVOCATION.

''Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this section, the Secretary, in consultation with the Homeland Security Advisory Committee, shall develop a plan to achieve greater uniformity within the Department with respect to the adjudication of eligibility of an individual for access to classified information that are consistent with the Adjudicative Guidelines for Determining Access to Classified Information published on December 29, 2005, or similar successor regulation. The Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate the plan. The plan shall consider the following:

''(1) Mechanisms to foster greater compliance with the uniform Department adjudication, suspension, denial, and revocation standards by the head of each component and office of the Department with the authority to adjudicate access to classified information.

''(2) The establishment of an internal appeals panel responsible for final national security clearance denial and revocation determinations that is comprised of designees who are career, supervisory employees from components and offices of the Department with the authority to adjudicate access to classified information and headquarters, as appropriate.

"SEC. 716. DATA PROTECTION.

''The Secretary shall ensure that all information received for the adjudication of eligibility of an individual for access to classified information is consistent with the Adjudicative Guidelines for Determining Access to Classified Information published on December 29, 2005, or similar successor regulation, and is protected against misappropriation.

"SEC. 717. REFERENCE.

''Except as otherwise provided, for purposes of this subtitle, any reference to the 'Department' includes all components and offices of the Department.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 is amended—

(1) by inserting before the item relating to section 701 the following new item:

''Subtitle A—Headquarters Activities'';

and

(2) by inserting after the item relating to section 707 the following new items:

''Subtitle B—Security Clearances

''Sec. 711. Designation of national security sensitive and public trust positions.
''Sec. 712. Review of position designations.
''Sec. 713. Audits.
''Sec. 714. Reporting.
''Sec. 715. Uniform adjudication, suspension, denial, and revocation.
''Sec. 716. Data protection.
''Sec. 717. Reference.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. KING) and the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. THOMPSON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. KING of New York. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. KING of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 697, the Department of Homeland Security Clearance Management and Administration Act, and I commend the gentleman from Mississippi for sponsoring it.

A security clearance is a privilege granted to individuals who have pledged to protect the American people from threats domestically and abroad. DHS has approximately 115,000 employees with varying access to classified materials. One important element of H.R. 697 is the requirement for the Secretary of Homeland Security to conduct an inventory of the Department's positions that require security clearances and assess what positions may be duplicative or are no longer necessary. It is just good government to ensure that individuals still have a need to know.

In 2013, then-Director of National Intelligence James Clapper called the number of individuals with clearances ''too high.'' In a memo to government agencies, Director Clapper expressed his concern with the growing number of individuals with access to classified information, particularly TS and SCI clearances.

Security clearances are costly to investigate, adjudicate, and maintain. This bill would ensure that DHS conducts a thorough accounting of its workforce needs and reduces the number of positions if determined appropriate. The bill also includes requirements for additional transparency on how security clearances are adjudicated, including when there are reasons to suspend or deny a security clearance.

H.R. 697, introduced by Ranking Member THOMPSON, is an example of the accounting that each Federal department should be conducting today and will lead to a more effective and lean Department of Homeland Security in the future.

The bill is identical to the version the House passed last Congress by voice vote. I urge support for the gentleman's bill.

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 697, the Department of Homeland Security Clearance Management and Administration Act.

Mr. Speaker, I want to start off by thanking the chairman of the Counterterrorism and Intelligence Subcommittee, Mr. KING, as well as Chairman MCCAUL for their support for my bill. I reintroduced H.R. 697, the Department of Homeland Security Clearance Management and Administration Act, to reform how the Department manages its security clearance processes.

This measure, which the House approved by voice vote in November, 2015, specifically addresses how DHS carries out the complex and expensive tasks of, number one, identifying positions that warrant security clearances; number two, investigating candidates for clearances; and number three, administering its clearance adjudications, denials, suspensions, revocations, and appeals processes.

Since September 11, there has been a massive proliferation of classified material across the Federal Government. Along with the enormous growth in classified material holdings has come a sizeable growth in the number of Federal positions requiring security clearances.

H.R. 697 reflects regulations issued by the Office of Personnel Management and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence to help ensure that national security positions are properly designated by Federal agencies. By doing so, agencies can avoid the costly exercise of recruiting, investigating, and hiring individuals at clearance levels and salaries well above what is necessary.

Simply put, Mr. Speaker, H.R. 697 seeks to put DHS on a path to rightsizing the number of classified positions in its workforce. Specifically, my bill directs DHS to ensure that the sensitivity levels of national security positions are designated appropriately across the Department and its components. It also requires the Department's chief security officer to audit national security positions periodically to ensure that such security designations are still appropriate.

Additionally, the bill directs DHS to develop a plan to ensure that adjudications of eligibility for a security clearance are done accurately across the Department. Lastly, Mr. Speaker, in response to growing security threats from data breaches, my bill also provides safeguards for the protection of applicants' personal information.

Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned, passage of H.R. 697 will help ensure that the Department of Homeland Security takes targeted steps to improve critical aspects of its secured clearance program.

If enacted, H.R. 697 would make DHS a leader among Federal agencies with respect to security clearance and position designation practices.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues' support, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KING of New York. Mr. Speaker, I, once again, thank the gentleman and commend him for his leadership on this issue.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 697, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. KING) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 697.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

FUSION CENTER ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2017

Mr. KING of New York. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 642) to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to enhance the partnership between the Department of Homeland Security and the National Network of Fusion Centers, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 642

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 ''Fusion Center Enhancement Act of 2017''.

SEC. 2. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY FUSION CENTER PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 210A of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 124h) is amended—

(1) by amending the section heading to read as follows:

''SEC. 210A. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY FUSION CENTER PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVE.'';

(2) in subsection (a), by adding at the end the following new sentence: ''Beginning on the date of the enactment of the Fusion Center Enhancement Act of 2017, such Initiative shall be known as the 'Department of Homeland Security Fusion Center Partnership Initiative'.'';

(3) by amending subsection (b) to read as follows:

''(b) INTERAGENCY SUPPORT AND COORDINATION.—Through the Department of Homeland Security Fusion Center Partnership Initiative, in coordination with principal officials of fusion centers in the National Network of Fusion Centers and the officers designated as the Homeland Security Advisors of the States, the Secretary shall—

''(1) coordinate with the heads of other Federal departments and agencies to provide operational and intelligence advice and assistance to the National Network of Fusion Centers;

''(2) support the integration of fusion centers into the information sharing environment;

''(3) support the maturation and sustainment of the National Network of Fusion Centers;

''(4) reduce inefficiencies and maximize the effectiveness of Federal resource support to the National Network of Fusion Centers;

''(5) provide analytic and reporting advice and assistance to the National Network of Fusion Centers;

''(6) review information within the scope of the information sharing environment, including homeland security information, terrorism information, and weapons of mass destruction information, that is gathered by the National Network of Fusion Centers and incorporate such information, as appropriate, into the Department's own such information;

''(7) provide for the effective dissemination of information within the scope of the information sharing environment to the National Network of Fusion Centers;

''(8) facilitate close communication and coordination between the National Network of Fusion Centers and the Department and other Federal departments and agencies;

''(9) provide the National Network of Fusion Centers with expertise on Department resources and operations;

''(10) coordinate the provision of training and technical assistance to the National Network of Fusion Centers and encourage participating fusion centers to take part in terrorism threat-related exercises conducted by the Department;

''(11) ensure, to the greatest extent practicable, that support for the National Network of Fusion Centers is included as a national priority in applicable homeland security grant guidance;

''(12) ensure that each fusion center in the National Network of Fusion Centers has a privacy policy approved by the Chief Privacy Officer of the Department and a civil rights and civil liberties policy approved by the Officer for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties of the Department;

''(13) coordinate the nationwide suspicious activity report initiative to ensure information gathered by the National Network of Fusion Centers is incorporated as appropriate;

''(14) lead Department efforts to ensure fusion centers in the National Network of Fusion Centers are the primary focal points for the sharing of homeland security information, terrorism information, and weapons of mass destruction information with State, local, tribal, and territorial entities to the greatest extent practicable;

''(15) develop and disseminate best practices on the appropriate levels for staffing at fusion centers in the National Network of Fusion Centers of qualified representatives from State, local, tribal, and territorial law enforcement, fire, emergency medical, and emergency management services, and public health disciplines, as well as the private sector; and

''(16) carry out such other duties as the Secretary determines appropriate.'';

(4) in subsection (c)—

(A) by striking so much as precedes paragraph (3)(B) and inserting the following:

''(c) RESOURCE ALLOCATION.—

''(1) INFORMATION SHARING AND PERSONNEL ASSIGNMENT.—

''(A) INFORMATION SHARING.—The Under Secretary for Intelligence and Analysis shall ensure that, as appropriate—

''(i) fusion centers in the National Network of Fusion Centers have access to homeland security information sharing systems; and

''(ii) Department personnel are deployed to support fusion centers in the National Network of Fusion Centers in a manner consistent with the Department's mission and existing statutory limits.

''(B) PERSONNEL ASSIGNMENT.—Department personnel referred to in subparagraph (A)(ii) may include the following:

''(i) Intelligence officers.

''(ii) Intelligence analysts.

''(iii) Other liaisons from components and offices of the Department, as appropriate.

''(C) MEMORANDA OF UNDERSTANDING.—The Under Secretary for Intelligence and Analysis shall negotiate memoranda of understanding between the Department and a State or local government, in coordination with the appropriate representatives from fusion centers in the National Network of Fusion Centers, regarding the exchange of information between the Department and such fusion centers. Such memoranda shall include the following:

''(i) The categories of information to be provided by each entity to the other entity that are parties to any such memoranda.

''(ii) The contemplated uses of the exchanged information that is the subject of any such memoranda.

''(iii) The procedures for developing joint products.

''(iv) The information sharing dispute resolution processes.

''(v) Any protections necessary to ensure the exchange of information accords with applicable law and policies.

''(2) SOURCES OF SUPPORT.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Information shared and personnel assigned pursuant to paragraph (1) may be shared or provided, as the case may be, by the following Department components and offices, in coordination with the respective component or office head and in consultation with the principal officials of fusion centers in the National Network of Fusion Centers:

''(i) The Office of Intelligence and Analysis.

''(ii) The Office of Infrastructure Protection.

''(iii) The Transportation Security Administration.

''(iv) U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

''(v) U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

''(vi) The Coast Guard.

''(vii) Other components or offices of the Department, as determined by the Secretary.

''(B) COORDINATION WITH OTHER FEDERAL AGENCIES.—The Under Secretary for Intelligence and Analysis shall coordinate with appropriate officials throughout the Federal Government to ensure the deployment to fusion centers in the National Network of Fusion Centers of representatives with relevant expertise of other Federal departments and agencies.

''(3) RESOURCE ALLOCATION CRITERIA.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall make available criteria for sharing information and deploying personnel to support a fusion center in the National Network of Fusion Centers in a manner consistent with the Department's mission and existing statutory limits.''; and

(B) in paragraph (4)(B), in the matter preceding clause (i), by inserting ''in which such fusion center is located'' after ''region'';

(5) in subsection (d)—

(A) in paragraph (3), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(B) in paragraph (4)—

(i) by striking ''government'' and inserting ''governments''; and

(ii) by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(C) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(5) utilize Department information, including information held by components and offices, to develop analysis focused on the mission of the Department under section 101(b).'';

(6) in subsection (e)—

(A) by amending paragraph (1) to read as follows:

''(1) IN GENERAL.—To the greatest extent practicable, the Secretary shall make it a priority to allocate resources, including deployed personnel, under this section from U.S. Customs and Border Protection, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and the Coast Guard to support fusion centers in the National Network of Fusion Centers located in jurisdictions along land or maritime borders of the United States in order to enhance the integrity of and security at such borders by helping Federal, State, local, tribal, and territorial law enforcement authorities to identify, investigate, and otherwise interdict persons, weapons, and related contraband that pose a threat to homeland security.''; and

(B) in paragraph (2), in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking ''participating State, local, and regional fusion centers'' and inserting ''fusion centers in the National Network of Fusion Centers'';

(7) in subsection (j)—

(A) in paragraph (4), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(B) by redesignating paragraph (5) as paragraph (6); and

(C) by inserting after paragraph (4) the following new paragraph:

''(5) the term 'National Network of Fusion Centers' means a decentralized arrangement of fusion centers intended to enhance individual State and urban area fusion centers' ability to leverage the capabilities and expertise of all fusion centers for the purpose of enhancing analysis and homeland security information sharing nationally; and''; and

(8) by striking subsection (k).

(b) ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act and annually thereafter through 2024, the Under Secretary for Intelligence and Analysis of the Department of Homeland Security shall report to the Committee on Homeland Security and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate on the efforts of the Office of Intelligence and Analysis of the Department and other relevant components and offices of the Department to enhance support provided to fusion centers in the National Network of Fusion Centers, including meeting the requirements specified in section 210A of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 124h), as amended by subsection (a) of this section.

(c) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in section 1(b) of such Act is amended by striking the item relating to section 210A and inserting the following new item:

''Sec. 210A. Department of Homeland Security Fusion Centers Initiative.''.

(d) REFERENCE.—Any reference in any law, rule, or regulation to the ''Department of Homeland Security State, Local, and Regional Fusion Center Initiative'' shall be deemed to be a reference to the ''Department of Homeland Security Fusion Center Initiative''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. KING) and the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. THOMPSON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. KING of New York. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. KING of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 642, the Fusion Center Enhancement Act of 2017, introduced by the gentleman from Pennsylvania, my good friend, Congressman LOU BARLETTA.

The bill before us today, Mr. Speaker, is focused on improving the partnership between the Department of Homeland Security and the National Network of Fusion Centers. The bill amends section 210A of the Homeland Security Act to clarify and enhance partnership between DHS and fusion centers.

As the United States is facing the highest threat environment since 9/11, it is vital that State and local agencies are receiving realtime threat information and have access to Federal intelligence and support. This was a key lesson learned from the 9/11 terror attacks, and, unfortunately, reinforced after the 2012 Boston Marathon bombing. DHS has a legal mandate to assist fusion centers in this effort, and H.R. 642 helps move the ball forward.

The threat of lone wolves inspired by ISIS and other radical Islamist terrorist groups are not deteriorating, and it is critical that there are strong partnerships between the Federal Government and State and local law enforcement agencies. This bill will help the Department and the national network maintain and improve their current partnership.

This bill passed the House last Congress by voice vote, and I am pleased the House is willing to move it again this year.

I want to thank Congressman BARLETTA for leading the committee's efforts in developing this responsible and commonsense legislation. Congressman BARLETTA's background as a businessman, city councilman, mayor, and Congressman has left him with a strong commitment to public safety and security.

□ 1445

It has been a pleasure to work with LOU on the Homeland Security Committee, where he was a vocal advocate for information sharing. I urge my colleagues to support this bill to ensure that the partnership between DHS and the national network is strong and agile to protect the United States against the ever-changing terrorism threat.

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

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE,
Washington, DC, January 31, 2017.

Hon. MICHAEL T. MCCAUL,
Chairman, Committee on Homeland Security, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN MCCAUL: I write concerning H.R. 642, the Fusion Center Enhancement Act of 2017. This legislation includes

matters that I believe fall within the Rule X jurisdiction of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

In order to expedite floor consideration of H.R. 642, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure agrees to forgo action on this bill. However, this is conditional on our mutual understanding that forgoing consideration of the bill would not prejudice the Committee with respect to the appointment of conferees or to any future jurisdictional claim over the subject matters contained in the bill or similar legislation that fall within the Committee's Rule X jurisdiction. I request you urge the Speaker to name members of the Committee to any conference committee named to consider such provisions.

Please place a copy of this letter and your response acknowledging our jurisdictional interest into the Congressional Record during consideration of the measure on the House floor.

Sincerely,

BILL SHUSTER,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY,
Washington, DC, January 31, 2017.

Hon. BILL SHUSTER,
Chairman, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN SHUSTER: Thank you for your interest in H.R. 642, the ''Fusion Center Enhancement Act of 2017.'' I appreciate your cooperation in allowing this legislation to move expeditiously before the House of Representatives. I understand that the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, to the extent it may have a jurisdictional claim, will not seek a sequential referral on the bill; and therefore, there has been no formal determination as to its jurisdiction by the Parliamentarian. We appreciate your cooperation in this matter.

The Committee on Homeland Security concurs with the mutual understanding that the absence of a decision on this bill at this time does not prejudice any claim the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure may have held or may have on similar legislation in the future.

I will insert copies of this exchange in the Congressional Record during consideration of this bill on the House floor. I thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL T. MCCAUL,
Chairman.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 642, the Fusion Center Enhancement Act of 2017.

Mr. Speaker, last Congress, the House approved this measure to update the law to reflect the evolution of the Department of Homeland Security's National Network of Fusion Centers.

H.R. 642 clarifies that fusion centers are State and locally owned and operated, and requires the Department's Office of Intelligence and Analysis to provide support to centers in its network by deploying personnel and providing access to timely information.

Importantly, H.R. 642 also adds several new responsibilities to DHS' Under Secretary of Intelligence and Analysis with respect to the grant guidance, nationwide suspicious activity reports, and fusion centers' access to information.

The bill makes several technical changes to existing law to help ensure more information sharing resources are made available to Federal, State, and local law enforcement officials at our National Network of Fusion Centers.

If enacted, H.R. 642 will go a long way to provide States and localities that have invested significant resources in standing up fusion centers with the support they need to keep their communities, and ultimately the Nation, secure.

I urge passage of H.R. 642.

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

Mr. KING of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the distinguished gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BARLETTA), the sponsor of the legislation.

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. KING of New York for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of my legislation, the Fusion Center Enhancement Act of 2017. I thank Mr. KING of New York and Chairman MCCAUL for working with me to introduce this legislation.

The purpose of my bill is to clarify and enhance the partnership between the Department of Homeland Security and the National Network of Fusion Centers. The bill amends the existing statute to update the Department's responsibilities for sharing information with State and local law enforcement and other emergency personnel within the National Network of Fusion Centers.

After the 9/11 terrorist attacks, State and local governments created fusion centers as a way to communicate Federal homeland security information to State and local law enforcement officials, as well as fuse State and locally collected information with Federal intelligence.

Congress supported this partnership by mandating that the Office of Intelligence and Analysis within the Department of Homeland Security coordinate and share information with fusion centers. There are now 78 State and locally owned fusion centers across the country.

I would especially like to recognize the work of the Pennsylvania Criminal Intelligence Center, PaCIC, which is run by the Pennsylvania State Police. In 2015, our fusion center received the Fusion Center of the Year Award from the National Fusion Center Association.

I want to congratulate the men and women working at PaCIC for their commitment to security and public safety. They share vital information with police departments that keep officers and our citizens safe.

PaCIC provides intelligence and information products to over 1,200 local, State, and Federal criminal justice agencies, while also working with over 6,000 private and public center partners to also share information to help protect critical infrastructure and key resources.

Our center has been nationally recognized for their training and compliance with issues of privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties. They produce documents that highlight threats and scams that target Pennsylvanians, and help make sure that local police departments have information on public events, ranging from the Little League World Series to the visit of Pope Francis.

A significant amount of progress has been made by States and fusion centers within the national network to improve information sharing and analytic support. Many centers, including PaCIC, provide all crime, all hazard support. They also maintain a focus on our homeland security missions, including protecting critical information and sharing suspicious activity reporting.

H.R. 642 recognizes the progress and focuses on enhancing the Department of Homeland Security's responsibility to support, share information, and coordinate with fusion centers. This includes improving coordination with other Federal departments that provide better operational intelligence, reduce inefficiencies, and coordinate nationwide suspicious activity reporting.

As a member of the Homeland Security Committee and a former mayor, I have heard concerns raised by law enforcement in my district and elsewhere about the lack of information and coordination from several DHS component agencies, including ICE and CBP. To address this issue, I included language in this bill to direct the Department to ensure that each component is providing information and personnel to work with fusion centers.

To address the need for better accountability, language is included throughout the bill requiring DHS to coordinate with fusion centers and State Homeland Security Advisers in carrying out the assigned responsibilities.

Additionally, there is a requirement for the Department to submit a report to Congress on their efforts, including the components to support fusion centers, and specifically report on how they are meeting the requirements that are set forth in this bill.

I urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan bill so that we can add important requirements and accountability in how the Department of Homeland Security interacts and shares information with key State and local stakeholders.

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

Mr. KING of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MARSHALL).

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 642, the Fusion Center Enhancement Act.

I spent the last 2 years traveling across the State of Kansas, and was reminded time and time again that national security is a top-three issue for my residents.

Why is this?

After years of turmoil and the lack of strong American leadership, people in Kansas no longer feel safe.

This legislation that my colleague from Pennsylvania has introduced will ensure that those on the front lines of protecting our Nation's citizens have access to the critical information they need to evaluate threats to protect our national security.

Fusion centers conduct analyses and facilitate information sharing, which are necessary and fundamental actions that assist State and local law enforcement in preventing and responding to crime and terrorism.

Just this last week I had the opportunity to go back to meet with staff and visit the Kansas Threat Integration Center in Topeka, Kansas. I can assure you the work they are doing is vital to our national security and the citizens of my State. They are leveraging partnerships with the private sector and focused on protecting our critical infrastructure.

I encourages my colleagues to support H.R. 642.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I want to express my support for this bill. I urge passage of H.R. 642, the Fusion Center Enhancement Act of 2017, which, if enacted, would send the message that Congress values the investment that States and localities have made to address the challenges of a post-9/11 world and stand with DHS in supporting the National Network of Fusion Centers.

Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of H.R. 642.

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

Mr. KING of New York. Mr. Speaker, I strongly urge support of the gentleman's bill. I urge my colleagues to vote for H.R. 642 in order to bolster the information sharing environment within the Department of Homeland Security and between the Department and State and local stakeholders.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. KING) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 642.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

COUNTERTERRORISM ADVISORY BOARD ACT OF 2017

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 526) to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish in the Department of Homeland Security a board to coordinate and integrate departmental intelligence, activities, and policy related to counterterrorism, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 526

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 ''Counterterrorism Advisory Board Act of 2017''.

SEC. 2. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY COUNTERTERRORISM ADVISORY BOARD.

(a) IN GENERAL.—At the end of subtitle A of title II of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 121 et seq.) insert the following new section:

''SEC. 210G. DEPARTMENTAL COORDINATION ON COUNTERTERRORISM.

''(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is in the Department a board to be composed of senior representatives of departmental operational components and headquarters elements. The purpose of the board shall be to coordinate and integrate departmental intelligence, activities, and policy related to the counterterrorism mission and functions of the Department.

''(b) CHARTER.—There shall be a charter to govern the structure and mission of the board. Such charter shall direct the board to focus on the current threat environment and the importance of aligning departmental counterterrorism activities under the Secretary's guidance. The charter shall be reviewed and updated every four years, as appropriate.

''(c) MEMBERS.—

''(1) CHAIR.—The Secretary shall appoint a Coordinator for Counterterrorism within the Department who will serve as the chair of the board.

''(2) ADDITIONAL MEMBERS.—The Secretary shall appoint additional members of the board from among the following:

''(A) The Transportation Security Administration.

''(B) United States Customs and Border Protection.

''(C) United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

''(D) The Federal Emergency Management Agency.

''(E) The Coast Guard.

''(F) United States Citizenship and Immigration Services.

''(G) The United States Secret Service.

''(H) The National Protection and Programs Directorate.

''(I) The Office of Operations Coordination.

''(J) The Office of the General Counsel.

''(K) The Office of Intelligence and Analysis.

''(L) The Office of Policy.

''(M) The Science and Technology Directorate.

''(N) Other Departmental offices and programs as determined appropriate by the Secretary.

''(d) MEETINGS.—The board shall meet on a regular basis to discuss intelligence and coordinate ongoing threat mitigation efforts and departmental activities, including coordination with other Federal, State, local, tribal, territorial, and private sector partners, and shall make recommendations to the Secretary.

''(e) TERRORISM ALERTS.—The board shall advise the Secretary on the issuance of terrorism alerts pursuant to section 203 of this Act.

''(f) PROHIBITION ON ADDITIONAL FUNDS.—No additional funds are authorized to carry out this section.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in section 1(b) of such Act is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 210F the following new item:

''Sec. 210G. Departmental coordination on counterterrorism.''.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary, acting through the Coordinator for Counterterrorism, shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate a report on the status and activities of the board established under section 210G of the Homeland Security Act of 2002, as added by subsection (a).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. KATKO) and the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. THOMPSON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, nearly 16 years after September 11th, our country continues to face the persistent threat of terrorism. From ISIS to al Qaeda, radical groups continue to target the United States and our way of life. Last year alone, we saw more than 131 plots by ISIS alone against the West.

As terrorists continue to evolve, this body must ensure that the security measures in place to protect the United States and its citizens adapt to meet these threats.

Faced with the most dangerous threat environment since 9/11, the Department of Homeland Security needs to continue to focus on its core mission of protecting Americans from these threats in an increasingly expeditious manner. I am proud that this body is working to continue to strengthen our national security by debating the bill before us today.

H.R. 526, the Counterterrorism Advisory Board Act of 2017, will help integrate intelligence, operations, and policy decisions to ensure the Department of Homeland Security remains adaptable, while eliminating waste and duplication. This same bill was introduced last year and passed the House by overwhelming majority.

Mr. Speaker, with open investigations in all 50 States and more than 119 arrests, this body must continue to take action to protect our homeland. Further, these threats will likely expand as foreign fighters flee places like Raqqa and Mosul.

Mr. Speaker, the world is witnessing the greatest convergence of radical Islamic threats in its history. More than 40,000 jihadists fighters, many of whom came from the West, have traveled to

the battlefield in Syria and Iraq. With this threat environment in mind, I have introduced H.R. 526.

Initially established at the end of 2010, the Counterterrorism Advisory Board brings together the Department of Homeland Security's top echelon counterterrorism decisionmakers to quickly respond to threats.

While my colleagues and I were conducting the bipartisan Task Force on Combating Terrorists and Foreign Fighter Travel, we found that the Counterterrorism Advisory Board, or CTAB as it is referred to, had neither been codified nor had its charter kept pace with evolving terrorist threats.

That is why we need to pass this bill: to ensure that DHS is effectively integrating intelligence, operations, and policy to better compile and understand threat information to successfully fight terrorism.

This legislation formally establishes the CTAB in law and makes it the Department's central coordination body for counterterrorism activities.

□ 1500

The bill also updates the Board's charter to effectively respond to tomorrow's challenges and requires the Secretary to appoint a coordinator for counterterrorism to oversee the Board's activities.

Additionally, this legislation requires the CTAB to advise the Secretary of Homeland Security on the issuance of terrorism alerts, ensuring that top counterterrorism intelligence officials play a key role in developing these critical notices and providing them to the public.

Finally, this bill ensures continued congressional oversight by requiring DHS to report on the status and activities of the CTAB so that they can be certain it is meeting its mandate.

I thank Chairman MCCAUL from the Homeland Security Committee for appointing me to lead the bipartisan Task Force on Combating Terrorist and Foreign Fighter Travel last year. This task force produced 32 key findings and more than 50 recommendations, one of which serves as a basis of the legislation before us today.

I am proud to say we have now acted legislatively on more than half of the task force's findings, largely thanks to the hard work of the members of the task force and their willingness to work across the aisle in a bipartisan manner.

I also thank Mr. THOMPSON, my colleague in the minority, for working in a bipartisan manner on this and many other bills that we have before us today.

I will end by urging my colleagues to support this measure.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of H.R. 526, the Counterterrorism Advisory Board Act of 2017.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 526 authorizes, within the Department of Homeland Security, the Counterterrorism Advisory Board, or CTAB, to coordinate and integrate the Department's intelligence policies and activities as related to counterterrorism.

Since 2010, this internal body, comprised of top DHS officials, has helped to harmonize counterterrorism programs and activities across DHS.

H.R. 526 directs the Board to meet on a regular basis to coordinate and integrate the Department's counterterrorism efforts and set forth the leadership and composition of the Board.

H.R. 526 also requires DHS to report to Congress on the Board's status and activities.

To ensure that the Board remains an integral part of counterterrorism policy recommendations and responses across the Department, H.R. 526 would codify it in law.

At this time, when the Homeland Security challenges we face are, in many ways, more complex and diverse than ever before, it is essential that the new DHS Secretary and any successors have a mature, stable mechanism for counterterrorism decisionmaking just as his predecessors had.

Mr. Speaker, again, H.R. 526 will authorize, within the Department of Homeland Security, the Counterterrorism Advisory Board to coordinate and integrate the Department's intelligence activities and policies as related to counterterrorism.

This Board already plays a central and necessary role within DHS.

Enactment of H.R. 526 will ensure that the Counterterrorism Advisory Board will remain in place for years and decades to come.

Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of H.R. 526.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I urge Members to support this bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MCCLINTOCK). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. KATKO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 526, 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.

AIRPORT PERIMETER AND ACCESS CONTROL SECURITY ACT OF 2017

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 665) to modernize and enhance airport perimeter and access control security by requiring updated risk assessments and the development of security strategies, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 665

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 ''Airport Perimeter and Access Control Security Act of 2017''.

SEC. 2. RISK ASSESSMENTS OF AIRPORT SECURITY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) shall—

(1) not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, update the Transportation Sector Security Risk Assessment (TSSRA) for the aviation sector; and

(2) not later than 90 days after such date—

(A) update with the latest and most currently available intelligence information the Comprehensive Risk Assessment of Perimeter and Access Control Security (in this Act referred to as the ''Risk Assessment of Airport Security'') and determine a regular timeframe and schedule for further updates to such Risk Assessment of Airport Security; and

(B) conduct a system-wide assessment of airport access control points and airport perimeter security.

(b) CONTENTS.—The security risk assessments required under subsection (a)(2) shall—

(1) include updates reflected in the TSSRA and Joint Vulnerability Assessment (JVA) findings;

(2) reflect changes to the risk environment relating to airport access control points and airport perimeters;

(3) use security event data for specific analysis of system-wide trends related to airport access control points and airport perimeter security to better inform risk management decisions; and

(4) take into consideration the unique geography of and current best practices used by airports to mitigate potential vulnerabilities.

(c) REPORT.—The Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall report to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate, relevant Federal departments and agencies, and airport operators on the results of the security risk assessments required under subsection (a).

SEC. 3. AIRPORT SECURITY STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall update the 2012 National Strategy for Airport Perimeter and Access Control Security (in this section referred to as the ''National Strategy'').

(b) CONTENTS.—The update to the National Strategy required under subsection (a) shall include—

(1) information from the Risk Assessment of Airport Security; and

(2) information on—

(A) airport security-related activities;

(B) the status of TSA efforts to address the goals and objectives referred to in subsection (a);

(C) finalized outcome-based performance measures and performance levels for each relevant activity and goal and objective under subparagraphs (A) and (B); and

(D) input from airport operators.

(c) UPDATES.—Not later than 90 days after the update is completed under subsection (a), the Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration shall implement a

process for determining when additional updates to the strategy referred to in such subsection are needed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. KATKO) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KEATING) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous materials on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 665, the Airport Perimeter and Access Control Security Act, sponsored by my good friend and colleague, Congressman KEATING.

Over the course of the last year, we have seen a disturbing number of attacks against airports and aircrafts overseas and around the world. And in every instance, the integrity of the airport security infrastructure and the insider threat have been of serious concern.

It is critical that we scrutinize the security effectiveness of our Nation's airports and ensure that the public can have confidence that their travels will be safe and secure during the high-threat environment.

This important piece of legislation requires that the TSA's comprehensive risk assessment of perimeter and access control security is more regularly updated and that TSA conducts a sector-wide assessment of airport access control vulnerabilities and mitigation efforts, something TSA has not done across the board since 2012, despite multiple security breaches at airports across the country.

We cannot solely focus on the effectiveness of our passenger screening checkpoints, while allowing lapses in security around the airport perimeter and within the sterile area of airport. A dead bolt on a front door does no good if the back door is left wide open.

As partners on the Transportation and Protective Security Subcommittee, Congressman KEATING and I have seen firsthand disturbing vulnerabilities at airports across the United States. I commend his efforts to help enhance security for the American people.

While there may be gridlock and partisan bickering at times in other places here in Washington, on the Homeland Security Committee, we all share an unshakable commitment to ensuring the security of the traveling public because we know that the consequence of failure is too great.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman KEATING for introducing this important legislation.

I urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I rise today in strong support of my legislation H.R. 665, the Airport Perimeter and Access Control Security Act.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to be joined by my colleague from New York (Mr. KATKO), as well as my colleagues, Ranking Member THOMPSON, and Members RICE, RICHMOND, and SWALWELL.

Since I first was elected to Congress in 2010, I have worked to secure our Nation's airports from porous perimeters and unsecure access control points.

Last year, at my request, the Government Accountability Office released an independent report of all airports within the Transportation Security Administration's presence.

While TSA has made some progress in assessing risks at airport perimeters and access control security points, the GAO report revealed that the agency had not taken emerging threats or the unique makeup and design of individual airports into consideration.

More and more, we have seen that terrorists are targeting the soft areas in our airport perimeters and within the airport itself. Terrorists are looking for these soft targets. We have seen it in Europe. We have seen these tragedies in Brussels. We have seen it in Istanbul. And, sadly, we have seen it here at home in Fort Lauderdale.

Updating the risk assessment of airport secured with information that reflects the current threat ensures that TSA bases its decision on the latest information, enabling it to focus limited resources to the highest priority risks to airport security.

The TSA's efforts to access, really, our entire airport security around the country, has been, frankly, inadequate. The numbers are startling. From 2009 to 2015, TSA conducted comprehensive risk assessments at only 81 of the 437 commercial airports nationwide—or 19 percent. Some years, this really represented only 3 percent of the airports that were assessed at all.

The Airport Perimeter and Access Control Security Act will make law the recommendations from the independent report and increase safety at airports nationwide. Further, this bill incorporates the input of major airport operators—whose concerns for lack of individualized security strategy we heard from firsthand.

Last year, the Associated Press revealed that there had been at least 268 perimeter security breaches at 31 major U.S. airports. From 2004 to 2015, their investigation found that intruders breached airport fences, on average, every 13 days.

This figure includes a fatal incident, a tragic incident that I investigated before I came to Congress as a district attorney when Delvonte Tisdale, a teenager from North Carolina, snuck onto the tarmac at Charlotte-Douglas International Airport and stowed away undetected in a wheel well of a commercial 737 on a flight to Boston.

The figures I mentioned really don't account for the many unreported instances of perimeter breaches, including things like trespassers or people that scale the fences around the perimeter.

We are lucky that all of these individuals did not harbor nefarious intentions. But that does not mitigate the risk posed by such behavior at airports, employees and others, and the passengers and travelers who rely on TSA officers and the airport operators for their security.

As you may recall, this legislation passed the House of Representatives with the support of my colleagues last year and has been a long time coming.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KATKO. Mr. Speaker, before I close, I commend my colleague for his unwavering dedication to this issue. His passion has shown through in the committee hearings and throughout my time with him in Congress and I commend him for it. I look forward to working on this and other issues with him moving forward.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 665.

I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I thank everyone that worked so hard to make this bill a reality, and to have the success it did last year, and, hopefully, go all the way and get enacted into law this year.

The recent tragedies demonstrated at airports remain a steady target for terrorists and nefarious actors. This bipartisan legislation will close loops in the airport security practices and procedures and bring us closer to ensuring that the access control points and the perimeters of all of the unique designs are as secure as possible.

Passage of H.R. 665 is an important step in the safety of passengers, pilots, and the airport employees.

I thank the chairman of the Transportation Subcommittee again, Mr. KATKO; the full committee ranking member, Mr. THOMPSON; and Representatives RICE, RICHMOND, and SWALWELL for joining me in requesting this report and in supporting this legislation.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 665.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. KATKO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 665.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

BORDER SECURITY TECHNOLOGY ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 2017

Ms. MCSALLY. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 505) to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to strengthen accountability for deployment of border security technology at the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 505

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 ''Border Security Technology Accountability Act of 2017''.

SEC. 2. BORDER SECURITY TECHNOLOGY ACCOUNTABILITY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle C of title IV of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 231 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

''SEC. 434. BORDER SECURITY TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM MANAGEMENT.

''(a) PLANNING DOCUMENTATION.—For each border security technology acquisition program of the Department that is determined to be a major acquisition program, the Secretary shall—

''(1) ensure that each such program has a written acquisition program baseline approved by the relevant acquisition decision authority;

''(2) document that each such program is meeting cost, schedule, and performance thresholds as specified in such baseline, in compliance with relevant departmental acquisition policies and the Federal Acquisition Regulation; and

''(3) have a plan for meeting program implementation objectives by managing contractor performance.

''(b) ADHERENCE TO STANDARDS.—The Secretary, acting through the Under Secretary for Management and the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection, shall ensure border security technology acquisition program managers who are responsible for carrying out this section adhere to relevant internal control standards identified by the Comptroller General of the United States. The Commissioner shall provide information, as needed, to assist the Under Secretary in monitoring proper program management of border security technology acquisition programs under this section.

''(c) PLAN.—The Secretary, acting through the Under Secretary for Management, in coordination with the Under Secretary for Science and Technology and the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection, shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a plan for testing and evaluation, as well as the use of independent verification and validation resources, for border security technology so that new border security technologies are evaluated through a series of assessments, processes, and audits to ensure compliance with relevant departmental acquisition policies and the Federal Acquisition Regulation, as well as the effectiveness of taxpayer dollars.

''(d) MAJOR ACQUISITION PROGRAM DEFINED.—In this section, the term 'major acquisition program' means a Department acquisition program that is estimated by the Secretary to require an eventual total expenditure of at least $300,000,000 (based on fiscal year 2017 constant dollars) over its life cycle cost.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 433 the following new item:

''Sec. 434. Border security technology program management.''.

SEC. 3. PROHIBITION ON ADDITIONAL AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

No additional funds are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this Act and the amendments made by this Act. This Act and such amendments shall be carried out using amounts otherwise authorized for such purposes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Arizona (Ms. MCSALLY) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KEATING) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Arizona.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. MCSALLY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include any extraneous material in the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Arizona?

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 505, the Border Security Technology Accountability Act.

This bill seeks to improve the management of border security technology projects, safeguard taxpayer dollars, and increase accountability for some of the Department of Homeland Security's largest acquisition programs.

As a subcommittee chair with responsibility for the entire 2,000-mile Southern border, and as a Member whose district in southern Arizona represents 80 miles of the border, I have spent countless hours meeting with border residents, local law enforcement, ranchers, and men and women who tirelessly patrol the border every day.

I know firsthand that when our border technology projects lack the proper oversight and accountability, it is bad for taxpayers, those who defend our border, and those who live along our border.

That is why this bill is so important.

The Government Accountability Office has repeatedly included DHS acquisition management activities on its high-risk list, demonstrating that these programs are highly susceptible to waste, fraud, abuse, or mismanagement.

□ 1515

The Secure Border Initiative, also known as SBInet, is a prime example of acquisition mismanagement. Initial plans developed in 2005 and 2006 call for SBInet to extend across the entire U.S.-Mexico land border; however, SBInet deployment in Arizona was fraught with mismanagement, including a failure to adequately set requirements so the system would meet the needs of its users: our border patrol agents.

After spending nearly $1 billion of taxpayers' money with minimal results, DHS canceled SBInet in 2011, showing the high cost of failing to properly oversee new border acquisitions. With a renewed focus from the administration and this Congress on improving border security, this bill helps ensure Americans' dollars are used as efficiently and effectively as possible. It requires that border security technology programs at the Department have an acquisition program baseline: a critical document that lays out what a program will do, what it will cost, and when it will be completed.

The bill also requires programs to adhere to internal control standards and have a plan for testing and evaluation, as well as the use of independent verification and validation resources. Being proper stewards of our limited resources requires that programs are on time, on budget, and follow sound management procedures. We cannot afford to waste another minute or another dollar. We must put into place strong, effective technology programs to secure our border.

I urge all Members to join me in supporting these basic commonsense cost-control mechanisms so that we can responsibly secure our border.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I rise in support of H.R. 505.

I would like to thank the gentlewoman from Arizona (Ms. MCSALLY) for her work on this bill.

Over the past several years, the Government Accountability Office has examined various Department of Homeland Security programs and concluded that the Department has not followed standard best practices for acquisitions management. Though DHS has taken steps to improve its performance, there remains specific deficiencies in how it carries out major acquisitions.

When a DHS acquisition program falls short in terms of effectiveness or efficiency, this not only risks undermining that program, but also risks wasting the limited homeland security dollars that are available to us. We owe it to the American public not to repeat our mistakes.

This bill is intended to strengthen accountability for the acquisition and use of border security technology by the Department of Homeland Security. This bill would require all major acquisitions for border security technology to have written documentation of costs, schedule, and performance thresholds and demonstrate that the program is meeting these thresholds.

The bill also requires coordination and submission to Congress of a plan for testing and evaluation, as well as the use of independent verification and validation of resources for border security technology.

Addressing border security technology acquisitions is an important step toward bettering acquisitions and

management overall. We owe it to the American taxpayer to make sure we are managing these investments wisely and preventing wasteful spending.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 505 aims to focus and improve the way we invest and manage border security technology by providing a specific framework for accountability and oversight on behalf of the American taxpayer. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I once again urge my colleagues to support H.R. 505 to have transparency, accountability, and efficiency of vital border security technology projects.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Arizona (Ms. MCSALLY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 505, 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.

CBRN INTELLIGENCE AND INFORMATION SHARING ACT OF 2017

Ms. MCSALLY. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 677) to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear intelligence and information sharing functions of the Office of Intelligence and Analysis of the Department of Homeland Security and to require dissemination of information analyzed by the Department to entities with responsibilities relating to homeland security, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 677

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 ''CBRN Intelligence and Information Sharing Act of 2017''.

SEC. 2. CHEMICAL, BIOLOGICAL, RADIOLOGICAL, AND NUCLEAR INTELLIGENCE AND INFORMATION SHARING.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle A of title II of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 121 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

''SEC. 210G. CHEMICAL, BIOLOGICAL, RADIOLOGICAL, AND NUCLEAR INTELLIGENCE AND INFORMATION SHARING.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The Office of Intelligence and Analysis of the Department of Homeland Security shall—

''(1) support homeland security-focused intelligence analysis of terrorist actors, their claims, and their plans to conduct attacks involving chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear materials against the United States;

''(2) support homeland security-focused intelligence analysis of global infectious disease, public health, food, agricultural, and veterinary issues;

''(3) support homeland security-focused risk analysis and risk assessments of the homeland security hazards described in paragraphs (1) and (2), including the transportation of chemical, biological, nuclear, and radiological materials, by providing relevant quantitative and nonquantitative threat information;

''(4) leverage existing and emerging homeland security intelligence capabilities and structures to enhance prevention, protection, response, and recovery efforts with respect to a chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear attack;

''(5) share information and provide tailored analytical support on these threats to State, local, and tribal authorities, other Federal agencies, as well as relevant national biosecurity and biodefense stakeholders, as appropriate; and

''(6) perform other responsibilities, as assigned by the Secretary.

''(b) COORDINATION.—Where appropriate, the Office of Intelligence and Analysis shall coordinate with other relevant Department components, including the National Biosurveillance Integration Center, other agencies within in the intelligence community, including the National Counter Proliferation Center, and other Federal, State, local, and tribal authorities, including officials from high-threat urban areas, State and major urban area fusion centers, and local public health departments, as appropriate, and enable such entities to provide recommendations on optimal information sharing mechanisms, including expeditious sharing of classified information, and on how such entities can provide information to the Department.

''(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY.—The term 'intelligence community' has the meaning given such term in section 3(4) of the National Security Act of 1947 (50 U.S.C. 401a(4)).

''(2) NATIONAL BIOSECURITY AND BIODEFENSE STAKEHOLDERS.—The term 'national biosecurity and biodefense stakeholders' means officials from Federal, State, local, and tribal authorities and individuals from the private sector who are involved in efforts to prevent, protect against, respond to, and recover from a biological attack or other phenomena that may have serious health consequences for the United States, including infectious disease outbreaks.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in section 1(b) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 201F the following new item:

''Sec. 210G. Chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear intelligence and information sharing.''.

(c) REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act and annually thereafter, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall report to the appropriate congressional committees on—

(A) the intelligence and information sharing activities under section 210G of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (as added by subsection (a) of this section) and of all relevant entities within the Department of Homeland Security to counter the threat from attacks using chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear materials; and

(B) the Department's activities in accordance with relevant intelligence strategies.

(2) ASSESSMENT OF IMPLEMENTATION.—The reports required under paragraph (1) shall include—

(A) an assessment of the progress of the Office of Intelligence and Analysis of the Department of Homeland Security in implementing such section 210G; and

(B) a description of the methods established to carry out such assessment.

(3) TERMINATION.—This subsection shall terminate on the date that is five years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(4) DEFINITION.—In this subsection, the term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and any committee of the House of Representatives or the Senate having legislative jurisdiction under the rules of the House of Representatives or Senate, respectively, over the matter concerned.

SEC. 3. DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION ANALYZED BY THE DEPARTMENT TO STATE, LOCAL, TRIBAL, AND PRIVATE ENTITIES WITH RESPONSIBILITIES RELATING TO HOMELAND SECURITY.

Paragraph (8) of section 201(d) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 121(d)) is amended by striking ''and to agencies of State'' and all that follows through the period at the end and inserting ''to State, local, tribal, and private entities with such responsibilities, and, as appropriate, to the public, in order to assist in preventing, deterring, or responding to acts of terrorism against the United States.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Arizona (Ms. MCSALLY) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KEATING) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Arizona.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. MCSALLY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Arizona?

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 677, the CBRN Intelligence and Information Sharing Act of 2017.

We know that terrorist groups have long sought to employ chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear, or CBRN, materials in their attacks. In his 2016 Worldwide Threat Assessment, Director of National Intelligence James Clapper noted that weapons of mass destruction continue to pose a threat to the United States, whether from North Korea's nuclear tests or the dual-use nature of biological materials that make threats difficult to detect.

In addition, last year, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons completed a year-long investigation that found both Syria and ISIS have used chemical weapons. ISIS' interest in using weapons of mass destruction material in its attack against the West is also well documented.

H.R. 677 will enhance intelligence analysis and information sharing and will work to ensure that State and

local officials get the actionable intelligence information necessary to stop or mitigate a CBRN attack.

As the previous chairwoman of the Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications Subcommittee, I held a number of hearings on the threat posed by terrorist attacks using CBRN agents. Many national security experts, first responders, and members of the law enforcement community have testified to the need of increased information sharing with appropriate State and local officials and emergency responders.

This budget-neutral bill seeks to address these findings. It requires the Office of Intelligence and Analysis at DHS to support homeland security-focused intelligence analysis of CBRN threats, including emerging infectious diseases. It directs the Office of Intelligence and Analysis to share information with State, local, tribal, and private entities and get their feedback to improve two-way sharing of information. Finally, H.R. 677 directs the Secretary of DHS to report annually for 5 years on the Department's intelligence and information sharing activities and DHS' activities in accordance with relevant intelligence strategies.

The House passed a nearly identical bill I introduced last Congress by a vote of 420–2. I urge Members to join me in supporting this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I rise in support of H.R. 677, the CBRN Intelligence and Information Sharing Act of 2017.

Mr. Speaker, last Congress, the Committee on Homeland Security held several hearings to evaluate Federal, State, and local capabilities to prevent, identify, and respond to a chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear attack, a CBRN threat.

Although the State and local stakeholders we heard from were generally aware of the evolving CBRN threat, there was a consistent message from everyone who testified—from public health professionals to emergency managers, to first responders—improved information sharing would make our communities safer.

H.R. 677 would facilitate improved CBRN information sharing by directing DHS to analyze CBRN-related terrorist threats and share relevant threat information with Federal, State, and local stakeholders. These activities will both improve situational awareness at all levels of government and help DHS grant recipients better target their limited grant dollars to address this particular threat.

The CBRN Intelligence and Information Sharing Act passed the House overwhelmingly last Congress, and I urge my colleagues to support the measure once again.

Information sharing is at the core of our ability to prevent, thwart, and respond to threats posed by bad actors. H.R. 677 would facilitate information sharing in the CBRN space where the threats are constantly evolving. This commonsense legislation costs next to nothing but will reap significant benefits.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 677.

I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I once again urge my colleagues to support H.R. 677, this legislation that will enhance the sharing of CBRN-related threat information.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Arizona (Ms. MCSALLY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 677.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY SUPPORT TO FUSION CENTERS ACT OF 2017

Ms. MCSALLY. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 678) to require an assessment of fusion center personnel needs, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 678

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 ''Department of Homeland Security Support to Fusion Centers Act of 2017''.

SEC. 2. FUSION CENTER PERSONNEL NEEDS ASSESSMENT.

Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct an assessment of Department of Homeland Security personnel assigned to fusion centers pursuant to subsection (c) of section 210A of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 124h), including an assessment of whether deploying additional Department personnel to such fusion centers would enhance the Department's mission under section 101(b) of such Act and the National Network of Fusion Centers. The assessment required under this subsection shall include the following:

(1) Information on the current deployment of the Department's personnel to each fusion center.

(2) Information on the roles and responsibilities of the Department's Office of Intelligence and Analysis intelligence officers, intelligence analysts, senior reports officers, reports officers, and regional directors deployed to fusion centers.

(3) Information on Federal resources, in addition to personnel, provided to each fusion center.

(4) An analysis of the optimal number of personnel the Office of Intelligence and Analysis should deploy to fusion centers, including a cost-benefit analysis comparing deployed personnel with technological solutions to support information sharing.

(5) An assessment of fusion centers located in jurisdictions along land and maritime borders of the United States, and the degree to which deploying personnel, as appropriate, from U.S. Customs and Border Protection, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and the Coast Guard to such fusion centers would enhance the integrity and security at such borders by helping Federal, State, local, tribal, and territorial law enforcement authorities to identify, investigate, and interdict persons, weapons, and related contraband that pose a threat to homeland security.

(6) An assessment of fusion centers located in jurisdictions with large and medium hub airports, and the degree to which deploying, as appropriate, personnel from the Transportation Security Administration to such fusion centers would enhance the integrity and security of aviation security.

SEC. 3. PROGRAM FOR STATE AND LOCAL ANALYST CLEARANCES.

(a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that any program established by the Under Secretary for Intelligence and Analysis of the Department of Homeland Security to provide eligibility for access to information classified as Top Secret for State, local, tribal, and territorial analysts located in fusion centers shall be consistent with the need to know requirements pursuant to Executive Order No. 13526 (50 U.S.C. 3161 note).

(b) REPORT.—Not later than two years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Under Secretary of Intelligence and Analysis of the Department of Homeland Security, in consultation with the Director of National Intelligence, shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate a report on the following:

(1) The process by which the Under Secretary of Intelligence and Analysis determines a need to know pursuant to Executive Order No. 13526 to sponsor Top Secret clearances for appropriate State, local, tribal, and territorial analysts located in fusion centers.

(2) The effects of such Top Secret clearances on enhancing information sharing with State, local, tribal, and territorial partners.

(3) The cost for providing such Top Secret clearances for State, local, tribal, and territorial analysts located in fusion centers, including training and background investigations.

(4) The operational security protocols, training, management, and risks associated with providing such Top Secret clearances for State, local, tribal, and territorial analysts located in fusion centers.

SEC. 4. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT.

The Under Secretary of Intelligence and Analysis of the Department of Homeland Security, in collaboration with the Chief Information Officer of the Department and representatives from the National Network of Fusion Centers, shall conduct an assessment of information systems (as such term is defined in section 3502 of title 44, United States Code) used to share homeland security information between the Department and fusion centers in the National Network of Fusion Centers and make upgrades to such systems, as appropriate. Such assessment shall include the following:

(1) An evaluation of the accessibility and ease of use of such systems by fusion centers in the National Network of Fusion Centers.

(2) A review to determine how to establish improved interoperability of departmental information systems with existing information systems used by fusion centers in the National Network of Fusion Centers.

(3) An evaluation of participation levels of departmental components and offices of information systems used to share homeland security information with fusion centers in the National Network of Fusion Centers.

SEC. 5. MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING.

Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Under Secretary of Intelligence and Analysis of the Department of Homeland Security shall enter into a memorandum of understanding with each fusion center in the National Network of Fusion Centers regarding the type of information such fusion centers will provide to the Department and whether such information may be subject to public disclosure.

SEC. 6. AMENDMENTS.

Section 210A of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 124h) is amended—

(1) in subsection (d), by striking ''and tribal'' each place it appears and inserting ''tribal, and territorial'';

(2) in subsection (e), by striking ''and tribal'' each place it appears and inserting ''tribal, and territorial'';

(3) in subsection (g)(1), by striking ''or tribal'' and inserting ''tribal, or territorial'';

(4) in subsection (i)—

(A) in paragraph (3), by striking ''and tribal'' and inserting ''tribal, territorial''; and

(B) in paragraph (6), by inserting ''territorial,'' after ''tribal,''; and

(5) in subsection (j)(1), by striking ''or tribal'' and inserting ''tribal, or territorial''.

SEC. 7. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) FUSION CENTER.—The term ''fusion center'' has the meaning given such term in subsection (j) of section 210A of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 124h).

(2) NATIONAL NETWORK OF FUSION CENTERS.—The term ''National Network of Fusion Centers'' means a decentralized arrangement of fusion centers intended to enhance individual State and urban area fusion centers' ability to leverage the capabilities and expertise of all such fusion centers for the purpose of enhancing analysis and homeland security information sharing nationally.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Arizona (Ms. MCSALLY) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KEATING) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Arizona.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. MCSALLY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Arizona?

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 678, the Department of Homeland Security Support to Fusion Centers Act of 2017.

Ensuring that the Federal Government is sharing intelligence and homeland security information with State and local officials is a vital component of U.S. national security and our counterterrorism efforts.

I have seen firsthand the important work of fusion centers, which disseminate Federal threat and intelligence information to local law enforcement and emergency responders. These centers also collect State and local information and fuse it with Federal intelligence. There is no doubt that this effort enhances terrorist investigations and creates a more complete domestic threat picture.

To help break down information sharing stovepipes, my State's fusion center, the Arizona Counter Terrorism Intelligence Center, or the ACTIC, and the 77 other fusion centers across the country need greater access to information, particularly from the Department of Homeland Security and its components.

While personnel from the DHS Office of Intelligence and Analysis have been deployed to most fusion centers, one remaining challenge is access to DHS component personnel and information, particularly ICE, CBP, and TSA. To address this issue, this bill requires GAO, the Government Accountability Office, to conduct an assessment of the DHS personnel detailed to fusion centers and whether deploying additional personnel will enhance threat and homeland security information sharing. This third-party assessment of DHS personnel deployments will be valuable when making staffing decisions moving forward.

Additionally, this bill supports ongoing DHS efforts to sponsor top secret clearances to appropriate State and local analysts in fusion centers. The committee has received countless testimony from State and local law enforcement about the value additional clearances will provide.

The bill also directs the DHS to review current information technology systems used to share information with fusion centers and make enhancements to ensure systems, such as the Homeland Security Information Network, are user friendly and meeting the needs of States and locals.

Lastly, the bill requires the Under Secretary of the Office of Intelligence and Analysis to sign a memorandum of understanding with each fusion center. The purpose of the MOU is to lay out what type of information will be shared between DHS and the fusion centers and how that information will be protected. A critical element of the Department's relationship with the thousands of State and local first responders working in fusion centers is trust. The MOU process will help improve this important connection.

Our country is at its highest threat posture this 9/11 given the large number of foreign fighters and ISIS-inspired plots. This bill will help ensure our State and local law enforcement officers as well as fire and EMS personnel are getting access to the information needed to protect our communities.

I urge all Members to support this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I rise in support of H.R. 678, and I would like to thank the gentlewoman from Arizona (Ms. MCSALLY).

I rise in strong support as a cosponsor of H.R. 678, the Department of Homeland Security Support to Fusion Centers Act of 2017.

Since coming to Congress, I have worked to enhance and secure intelligence information sharing among both domestic and international partners. A key mechanism to fostering such information sharing has been the development of a network of fusion centers across the Nation. These centers allow Federal intelligence and homeland security information to be shared with State and local law enforcement and other key stakeholders.

For fusion centers to realize their full promise, it remains critical that personnel assigned to fusion centers be able to access Department of Homeland Security information, data, and personnel.

In the course of conducting oversight of fusion centers, the committee has learned that not enough State and local analysts and officials assigned to these centers have the TS/SCI clearances necessary to foster the timely sharing of homeland security information and intelligence.

□ 1530

H.R. 678 would authorize the DHS to sponsor such State and local analysts for security clearances. Last Congress, this bill passed unanimously by our committee.

I urge the passage of H.R. 678, the Department of Homeland Security Support to Fusion Centers Act of 2017. This is legislation that will help ensure that key fusion center personnel have access to the security clearances they need to keep our communities secure.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, one of the core missions of the Department of Homeland Security is to share threat information with State and local first responders. Fusion centers are a key mechanism for that process. As fusion centers continue to mature into national assets, Congress must ensure that the Department of Homeland Security is supporting fusion centers with the resources that are needed to keep our communities safe.

I urge my colleagues to vote for H.R. 678.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Arizona (Ms. MCSALLY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 678.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

DHS STOP ASSET AND VEHICLE EXCESS ACT

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 366) to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to direct the Under Secretary for Management of the Department of Homeland Security to make certain improvements in managing the Department's vehicle fleet, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 366

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 ''DHS Stop Asset and Vehicle Excess Act'' or the ''DHS SAVE Act''.

SEC. 2. DHS VEHICLE FLEETS.

Section 701 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 341) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(5), by inserting ''vehicle fleets (under subsection (c)),'' after ''equipment,'';

(2) by redesignating subsections (c) and (d) as subsections (d) and (e), respectively; and

(3) by inserting after subsection (b) the following new subsection:

''(c) VEHICLE FLEETS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out responsibilities regarding vehicle fleets pursuant to subsection (a)(5), the Under Secretary for Management shall be responsible for overseeing and managing vehicle fleets throughout the Department. The Under Secretary shall also be responsible for the following:

''(A) Ensuring that components are in compliance with Federal law, Federal regulations, executive branch guidance, and Department policy (including associated guidance) relating to fleet management and use of vehicles from home to work.

''(B) Developing and distributing a standardized vehicle allocation methodology and fleet management plan for components to use to determine optimal fleet size in accordance with paragraph (4).

''(C) Ensuring that components formally document fleet management decisions.

''(D) Approving component fleet management plans, vehicle leases, and vehicle acquisitions.

''(2) COMPONENT RESPONSIBILITIES.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Component heads—

''(i) shall—

''(I) comply with Federal law, Federal regulations, executive branch guidance, and Department policy (including associated guidance) relating to fleet management and use of vehicles from home to work;

''(II) ensure that data related to fleet management is accurate and reliable;

''(III) use such data to develop a vehicle allocation tool derived by using the standardized vehicle allocation methodology provided by the Under Secretary for Management to determine the optimal fleet size for the next fiscal year and a fleet management plan; and

''(IV) use vehicle allocation methodologies and fleet management plans to develop annual requests for funding to support vehicle fleets pursuant to paragraph (6); and

''(ii) may not, except as provided in subparagraph (B), lease or acquire new vehicles or replace existing vehicles without prior approval from the Under Secretary for Management pursuant to paragraph (5)(B).

''(B) EXCEPTION REGARDING CERTAIN LEASING AND ACQUISITIONS.—If exigent circumstances warrant such, a component head may lease or acquire a new vehicle or replace an existing vehicle without prior approval from the Under Secretary for Management. If under such exigent circumstances a component head so leases, acquires, or replaces a vehicle, such component head shall provide to the Under Secretary an explanation of such circumstances.

''(3) ONGOING OVERSIGHT.—

''(A) QUARTERLY MONITORING.—In accordance with paragraph (4), the Under Secretary for Management shall collect, on a quarterly basis, information regarding component vehicle fleets, including information on fleet size, composition, cost, and vehicle utilization.

''(B) AUTOMATED INFORMATION.—The Under Secretary for Management shall seek to achieve a capability to collect, on a quarterly basis, automated information regarding component vehicle fleets, including the number of trips, miles driven, hours and days used, and the associated costs of such mileage for leased vehicles.

''(C) MONITORING.—The Under Secretary for Management shall track and monitor component information provided pursuant to subparagraph (A) and, as appropriate, subparagraph (B), to ensure that component vehicle fleets are the optimal fleet size and cost effective. The Under Secretary shall use such information to inform the annual component fleet analyses referred to in paragraph (4).

''(4) ANNUAL REVIEW OF COMPONENT FLEET ANALYSES.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—To determine the optimal fleet size and associated resources needed for each fiscal year beginning with fiscal year 2018, component heads shall annually submit to the Under Secretary for Management a vehicle allocation tool and fleet management plan using information described in paragraph (3)(A). Such tools and plans may be submitted in classified form if a component head determines that such is necessary to protect operations or mission requirements.

''(B) VEHICLE ALLOCATION TOOL.—Component heads develop a vehicle allocation tool in accordance with subclause (III) of paragraph (2)(A)(i) that includes an analysis of the following:

''(i) Vehicle utilization data, including the number of trips, miles driven, hours and days used, and the associated costs of such mileage for leased vehicles, in accordance with such paragraph.

''(ii) The role of vehicle fleets in supporting mission requirements for each component.

''(iii) Any other information determined relevant by such component heads.

''(C) FLEET MANAGEMENT PLANS.—Component heads shall use information described in subparagraph (B) to develop a fleet management plan for each such component. Such fleet management plans shall include the following:

''(i) A plan for how each such component may achieve optimal fleet size determined by the vehicle allocation tool required under such subparagraph, including the elimination of excess vehicles in accordance with paragraph (5), if applicable.

''(ii) A cost benefit analysis supporting such plan.

''(iii) A schedule each such component will follow to obtain optimal fleet size.

''(iv) Any other information determined relevant by component heads.

''(D) REVIEW.—The Under Secretary for Management shall review and make a determination on the results of each component's vehicle allocation tool and fleet management plan under this paragraph to ensure each such component's vehicle fleets are the optimal fleet size and that components are in compliance with applicable Federal law, Federal regulations, executive branch guidance, and Department policy (including associated guidance) pursuant to paragraph (2) relating to fleet management and use of vehicles from home to work. The Under Secretary shall use such tools and plans when reviewing annual component requests for vehicle fleet funding in accordance with paragraph (6).

''(5) GUIDANCE TO DEVELOP FLEET MANAGEMENT PLANS.—The Under Secretary for Management shall provide guidance, pursuant to paragraph (1)(B) on how component heads may achieve optimal fleet size in accordance with paragraph (4), including processes for the following:

''(A) Leasing or acquiring additional vehicles or replacing existing vehicles, if determined necessary.

''(B) Disposing of excess vehicles that the Under Secretary determines should not be reallocated under subparagraph (C).

''(C) Reallocating excess vehicles to other components that may need temporary or long-term use of additional vehicles.

''(6) ANNUAL REVIEW OF VEHICLE FLEET FUNDING REQUESTS.—As part of the annual budget process, the Under Secretary for Management shall review and make determinations regarding annual component requests for funding for vehicle fleets. If component heads have not taken steps in furtherance of achieving optimal fleet size in the prior fiscal year pursuant to paragraphs (4) and (5), the Under Secretary shall provide rescission recommendations to the Committee on Appropriations and the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Appropriations and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate regarding such component vehicle fleets.

''(7) ACCOUNTABILITY FOR VEHICLE FLEET MANAGEMENT.—

''(A) PROHIBITION ON CERTAIN NEW VEHICLE LEASES AND ACQUISITIONS.—The Under Secretary for Management and component heads may not approve in any fiscal year beginning with fiscal year 2019 a vehicle lease, acquisition, or replacement request if such component heads did not comply in the prior fiscal year with paragraph (4).

''(B) PROHIBITION ON CERTAIN PERFORMANCE COMPENSATION.—No Department official with vehicle fleet management responsibilities may receive annual performance compensation in pay in any fiscal year beginning with fiscal year 2019 if such official did not comply in the prior fiscal year with paragraph (4).

''(C) PROHIBITION ON CERTAIN CAR SERVICES.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no senior executive service official of the Department whose office has a vehicle fleet may receive access to a car service in any fiscal year beginning with fiscal year 2019 if such official did not comply in the prior fiscal year with paragraph (4).

''(8) MOTOR POOL.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Under Secretary for Management may determine the feasibility of operating a vehicle motor pool to permit components to share vehicles as necessary to support mission requirements to reduce the number of excess vehicles in the Department.

''(B) REQUIREMENTS.—The determination of feasibility of operating a vehicle motor pool under subparagraph (A) shall—

''(i) include—

''(I) regions in the United States in which multiple components with vehicle fleets are located in proximity to one another, or a significant number of employees with authorization to use vehicles are located; and

''(II) law enforcement vehicles;

''(ii) cover the National Capital Region; and

''(iii) take into account different mission requirements.

''(C) REPORT.—The Secretary shall include in the Department's next annual performance report required under current law the results of the determination under this paragraph.

''(9) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

''(A) COMPONENT HEAD.—The term 'component head' means the head of any component of the Department with a vehicle fleet.

''(B) EXCESS VEHICLE.—The term 'excess vehicle' means any vehicle that is not essential to support mission requirements of a component.

''(C) OPTIMAL FLEET SIZE.—The term 'optimal fleet size' means, with respect to a particular component, the appropriate number of vehicles to support mission requirements of such component.

''(D) VEHICLE FLEET.—The term 'vehicle fleet' means all owned, commercially leased, or Government-leased vehicles of the Department or of a component of the Department, as the case may be, including vehicles used for law enforcement and other purposes.''.

SEC. 3. GAO REPORT AND INSPECTOR GENERAL REVIEW.

(a) GAO REPORT.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate a report on the following:

(1) The status of efforts at achieving a capability to collect automated information as required under subsection (c)(3) of section 701 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 341), as added by section 2 of this Act, and any challenges that remain with respect to achieving the capability to collect, assess, and report vehicle fleet (as such term in defined in subsection (c)(9) of such section 701) data for the purpose of determining vehicle utilization.

(2) The extent to which the Under Secretary for Management has identified and addressed any relevant security concerns, including cybersecurity risks, related to such automation.

(3) The extent to which the Under Secretary collects, assesses, and reports on vehicle fleet event data recorder data.

(b) INSPECTOR GENERAL REVIEW.—The Inspector General of the Department of Homeland Security shall—

(1) review implementation of subsection (c)(4) of section 701 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 341), as added by section 2 of this Act, for fiscal years 2018 and 2020, and shall provide, upon request, to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate information regarding any such review; and

(2) submit to the committees specified in paragraph (1) a report, not later than six months after completion of the second review required under such paragraph, regarding the effectiveness of such subsection with respect to cost avoidance, savings realized, and component operations.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PERRY) and the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to include any extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

I stand before you in support of H.R. 366, the DHS Stop Asset and Vehicle Excess, or DHS SAVE, Act of 2016.

In October of 2015, the DHS inspector general released a scathing report of the Federal Protective Service's management of their vehicle fleet, a report that reads like a laundry list of poor management decisions. The IG found that the FPS had more vehicles than officers, and officers were authorized to drive from home to work with government-owned vehicles and, actually, put more miles on the vehicles in driving from home and back to work than they did on the job, among many other things. Additionally, the report stated that the FPS was not in compliance with Federal and departmental compliance, which is why I introduced the DHS SAVE Act.

This bill improves the management of DHS' vehicle fleets by authorizing the Under Secretary for Management at the headquarters level to oversee the components' vehicle fleets, requires the components to evaluate their fleets on an ongoing basis, includes penalties for the mismanagement of component fleets, and requires the DHS to identify alternative methods for the management of component fleets. With the second largest civilian vehicle fleet in the Federal Government, the DHS simply must have stricter controls in place at the headquarters level in order to rein in rogue components.

As the new administration scrutinizes the DHS' operations, this bill will provide important authorities to root out waste, fraud, and abuse from the Department.

I urge all Members to join me in supporting this bill.

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

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of H.R. 366, the DHS Stop Asset and Vehicle Excess Act.

H.R. 366 seeks to improve the Department of Homeland Security's management, acquisition, and oversight of its fleet of roughly 53,000 vehicles. H.R. 366 requires the Under Secretary for Management to provide departmental components with a standardized vehicle allocation methodology for components to utilize to develop fleet management plans.

This legislation was informed by oversight that was conducted by the Department's inspector general. The inspector general found that, in 2014 and 2015, the DHS did not adequately manage or have the enforcement authority over components to ensure that the composition of its motor vehicle fleet was right sized. This lack of effective management led to the overuse of sports utility vehicles, unnecessary discretionary equipment packages, and overpayments to the GSA.

Further, the Committee on Homeland Security received testimony from the Director of the Federal Protective Service that roughly half of the 1,100 vehicles in FPS' fleet were underutilized or had fewer than 12,000 miles. H.R. 366 grants authority to the DHS headquarters over components with respect to managing vehicle fleets.

Specifically, under H.R. 366, the DHS is directed to establish requirements for components to more rigorously evaluate their fleets on an ongoing basis. Additionally, this bill directs the DHS to identify alternative methods for managing component fleets, such as a shared motor pool. The DHS has the second largest civilian vehicle fleet in the Federal Government at an operating cost of about $462 million.

There is a critical linkage between the Department's operational effectiveness in national security missions and the effective management of the resources and requirements by the DHS leadership. As such, enhancing oversight and management should help the Department more effectively spend limited taxpayer dollars on what the Department actually needs to carry out its mission.

H.R. 366 seeks to improve the management of DHS' vehicle fleet by strengthening the oversight and management of the Department's fleet by the Under Secretary for Management. It is also worth noting that H.R. 366 includes language that I authored to ensure that the inspector general's oversight of the DHS' management of its vehicle fleet continues.

I commend the OIG for its robust and ongoing oversight of the Department's vehicle fleet. I also commend my colleague on the Homeland Security Committee, Mr. PERRY, for introducing this legislation and working in a bipartisan fashion to advance it.

I urge the passage of H.R. 366.

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

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, I commend my colleague for her hard work on this bill and for her bipartisan spirit in getting it to the floor with me.

I, once again, urge my colleagues to support H.R. 366.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PERRY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 366.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

DHS ACQUISITION DOCUMENTATION INTEGRITY ACT OF 2017

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 347) to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to provide for requirements relating to documentation for major acquisition programs, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 347

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 ''DHS Acquisition Documentation Integrity Act of 2017''.

SEC. 2. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY ACQUISITION DOCUMENTATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Title VII of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 341 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

''SEC. 708. ACQUISITION DOCUMENTATION.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—For each major acquisition program, the Secretary, acting through the Under Secretary for Management, shall require the head of a relevant component or office to—

''(1) maintain acquisition documentation that is complete, accurate, timely, and valid, and that includes, at a minimum—

''(A) operational requirements that are validated consistent with departmental policy and changes to such requirements, as appropriate;

''(B) a complete lifecycle cost estimate with supporting documentation;

''(C) verification of such lifecycle cost estimate against independent cost estimates, and reconciliation of any differences;

''(D) a cost-benefit analysis with supporting documentation; and

''(E) a schedule, including, as appropriate, an integrated master schedule;

''(2) prepare cost estimates and schedules for major acquisition programs, as required under subparagraphs (B) and (E), in a manner consistent with best practices as identified by the Comptroller General of the United States; and

''(3) submit certain acquisition documentation to the Secretary to produce an annual comprehensive report on the status of departmental acquisitions for submission to Congress.

''(b) WAIVER.—On a case-by-case basis with respect to any major acquisition program under this section, the Secretary may waive the requirement under paragraph (3) of subsection (a) for a fiscal year if either—

''(1) such program has not—

''(A) entered the full rate production phase in the acquisition lifecycle;

''(B) had a reasonable cost estimate established; and

''(C) had a system configuration defined fully; or

''(2) such program does not meet the definition of capital asset, as such term is defined by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

''(c) CONGRESSIONAL OVERSIGHT.—At the same time the President's budget is submitted for a fiscal year under section 1105(a) of title 31, United States Code, the Secretary shall make information available, as applicable, to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate regarding the requirement described in subsection (a) in the prior fiscal year that includes the following specific information regarding each major acquisition program for which the Secretary has issued a waiver under subsection (b):

''(1) The grounds for granting a waiver for such program.

''(2) The projected cost of such program.

''(3) The proportion of a component's or office's annual acquisition budget attributed to such program, as available.

''(4) Information on the significance of such program with respect to the component's or office's operations and execution of its mission.

''(d) MAJOR ACQUISITION PROGRAM DEFINED.—In this section, the term 'major acquisition program' means a Department acquisition program that is estimated by the Secretary to require an eventual total expenditure of at least $300,000,000 (based on fiscal year 2017 constant dollars) over its lifecycle cost.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in section 1(b) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 101 et seq.) is amended by adding after the item related to section 707 the following new item:

''Sec. 708. Acquisition documentation.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PERRY) and the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to include any extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

I rise in support of H.R. 347, the Department of Homeland Security Acquisition Documentation Integrity Act. This legislation requires the Department of Homeland Security to improve the management of its major purchases of systems to secure the border, better screen travelers, protect our shores, and other vital missions.

Too often, the DHS has failed to document what these programs will cost, when they will be complete, and what they actually will deliver. It is unacceptable to spend billions of taxpayer dollars and not document this very basic but important information. H.R. 347 will help our committee and congressional watchdogs hold the Department accountable and ensure taxpayer dollars are being spent in both an efficient and effective manner. Safeguarding Americans' hard-earned tax dollars is why our constituents sent us here in the first place.

I commend Ranking Member WATSON COLEMAN for her leadership on this issue, and I ask all Members to join me in supporting this legislation.

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

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of H.R. 347, the DHS Acquisition Documentation Integrity Act of 2017.

I reintroduced H.R. 347, a measure that the House unanimously approved on February 23, 2016, to ensure that the progress that the Department of Homeland Security has made with respect to how it manages acquisitions continues.

H.R. 347 requires complete, accurate, timely, and valid documentation to be maintained for each of the Department's major acquisition programs, which is defined as one with a life cycle cost estimate of $300 million or more. The required documentation includes information regarding operational requirements, a complete life cycle cost estimate, a cost-benefit analysis, and a schedule.

Under this legislation, the DHS component heads would also be required to submit certain documentation to the DHS Secretary for inclusion in an annual status report on the Department's acquisitions. While there have been improvements to acquisitions management under former Secretary Jeh Johnson, the Department has struggled when it comes to delivering a specific program on time and at an established cost.

Most of the DHS' major acquisition programs continue to cost more than expected, take longer to deploy than planned, or deliver less capability than promised. For example, the DHS' efforts to deliver a Department-wide human resources IT system—HR-IT—have spanned almost 14 years and have cost millions of dollars with little to show for it. As can be seen with the case of HR-IT, anything less than up-to-date acquisition documentation increases the odds of cost and schedule overruns, risks delayed delivery of critical capabilities, and depletes resources needed to address future requirements.

As such, H.R. 347 codifies ''best practices'' already embodied in the DHS' acquisition policy and necessary for the success of the DHS' mission. H.R. 347 requires the DHS Secretary, through the Under Secretary for Management, to require components to maintain specific types of acquisition documentation.

Representatives MCCAUL and THOMPSON, the chairman and ranking member of our committee, and Representative PERRY, the chairman of the Subcommittee on Oversight and Management Efficiency, cosponsored this legislation, which reflects a strong commitment to bolstering the effectiveness of the DHS' acquisition programs in a bipartisan fashion.

I urge the passage of H.R. 347, a bill that will help ensure that the DHS is a good steward of taxpayer dollars and can provide the DHS' operators in the field with the tools they need to protect the American people.

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

□ 1545

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, I, once again, commend my good friend and

colleague from New Jersey (Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN) on her hard work in offering this viable and meaningful solution.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 347.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PERRY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 347.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

TRANSIT SECURITY GRANT PROGRAM FLEXIBILITY ACT

Mr. DONOVAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 549) to amend the Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007 to clarify certain allowable uses of funds for public transportation security assistance grants and establish periods of performance for such grants, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 549

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 ''Transit Security Grant Program Flexibility Act''.

SEC. 2. ALLOWABLE USES OF FUNDS FOR PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SECURITY ASSISTANCE GRANTS.

Subparagraph (A) of section 1406(b)(2) of the Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007 (6 U.S.C. 1135(b)(2); Public Law 110–53) is amended by inserting ''and associated backfill'' after ''security training''.

SEC. 3. PERIODS OF PERFORMANCE FOR PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SECURITY ASSISTANCE GRANTS.

Section 1406 of the Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007 (6 U.S.C. 1135; Public Law 110–53) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (m) as subsection (n); and

(2) by inserting after subsection (l) the following new subsection:

''(m) PERIODS OF PERFORMANCE.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), funds provided pursuant to a grant awarded under this section for a use specified in subsection (b) shall remain available for use by a grant recipient for a period of not fewer than 36 months.

''(2) EXCEPTION.—Funds provided pursuant to a grant awarded under this section for a use specified in subparagraph (M) or (N) of subsection (b)(1) shall remain available for use by a grant recipient for a period of not fewer than 55 months.''.

SEC. 4. GAO REVIEW.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a review of the transit security grant program under section 1406 of the Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007 (6 U.S.C. 1135; Public Law 110–53).

(b) SCOPE.—The review required under paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(1) An assessment of the type of projects funded under the transit security grant program referred to in such paragraph.

(2) An assessment of the manner in which such projects address threats to transportation infrastructure.

(3) An assessment of the impact, if any, of this Act (including the amendments made by this Act) on types of projects funded under the transit security grant program.

(4) An assessment of the management and administration of transit security grant program funds by grantees.

(5) Recommendations to improve the manner in which transit security grant program funds address vulnerabilities in transportation infrastructure.

(6) Recommendations to improve the management and administration of the transit security grant program.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act and again not later than five years after such date of enactment, the Comptroller General shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate a report on the review required under this section.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. DONOVAN) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DONOVAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

I rise today in support of H.R. 549, the Transit Security Grant Program Flexibility Act. With more than 10 billion riders using surface transportation annually and limited security screening, it should not be surprising to us that terrorists have an interest in targeting mass transit. We saw it in London, Madrid, Brussels, and when a terrorist left a backpack of IEDs at a transit station in Elizabeth, New Jersey, last fall.

Given the repeated calls from ISIS and other radical Islamic terrorist groups for lone wolves and sympathizers to plan smaller attacks where larger crowds gather, we must ensure that the first responders and transit agencies have the tools they need to secure our transit systems.

That is why, last Congress, I introduced the Transit Security Grant Program Flexibility Act. This bill addresses concerns raised during a field hearing the Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications held last year in Ranking Member PAYNE's district on preparedness for incidents impacting surface transportation. As chairman of that subcommittee, I introduced this legislation to ensure action follows our subcommittee's oversight, and that is why I reintroduced this commonsense legislation in the 115th Congress.

Witnesses at last year's field hearing testified about the importance of the transit security grant program, but found that the period of performance was a challenging timeframe to meet, especially for completing vital, large-scale capital security projects. These projects are vital to transit agencies to help enhance their security features systemwide and harden infrastructure.

H.R. 549 addresses this challenge by codifying the period of performance for transit security grant program awards at 36 months for the majority of eligible projects and extending the period of performance for large-scale capital security projects to 55 months.

Additionally, transit security grant program awards can be used to provide personnel with effective security training. Unfortunately, recipients of these awards are not currently permitted to use transit security grant program funds to pay for backfilling personnel attending such training. In some cases, that extra cost at the transit agency has resulted in an inability to send staff for vital security training. My bill will permit transit security grant program funds to be used for this purpose, consistent with other Homeland Security grant programs.

The current threat environment is evolving and complex, which makes it even more imperative that the transit security grant program provide flexible solutions for grant recipients. I am proud to sponsor this bipartisan legislation, which passed the House by voice vote last year.

I urge all Members to join me in supporting H.R. 549.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I rise in support of H.R. 549, the Transit Security Grant Program Flexibility Act.

As the threats to our homeland continue to evolve, transit systems, domestically and abroad, have become a leading target for terrorists. Last year, the Committee on Homeland Security's Subcommittee for Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications held field hearings in New Jersey to assess how transit owners and operators and local first responders were coordinating efforts to secure domestic mass transit and to determine what the Federal Government could do to assist those efforts.

At the hearing, transit operators repeatedly praised the transit security grant program, although they raised serious concerns about funding, which has decreased dramatically since its peak in 2009. Witnesses also testified that the period of the performance for the transit safety grant program was too short to support infrastructure-hardening projects.

Under H.R. 549, the period of performance for security-hardening projects would be extended from 36 months to 55

months in order to make it possible for transit agencies to complete projects that may take longer than the time period allowed under current law.

This bipartisan bill was passed in the House last Congress, and I urge my colleagues to again support this measure.

It is very important that we give transit professionals the flexibility that they need to keep our transit systems safe and secure. H.R. 549 will allow transit security grant program grantees to use the funds designated for security-hardening projects more efficiently and within a more reasonable timeframe.

I urge my colleagues to support this important measure.

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

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

I, once again, urge my colleagues to support H.R. 549.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. DONOVAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 549.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

FIRST RESPONDER ACCESS TO INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGIES ACT

Mr. DONOVAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 687) to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish a process to review applications for certain grants to purchase equipment or systems that do not meet or exceed any applicable national voluntary consensus standards, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 687

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 ''First Responder Access to Innovative Technologies Act''.

SEC. 2. APPROVAL OF CERTAIN EQUIPMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 2008 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 609) is amended—

(1) in subsection (f)—

(A) by striking ''If an applicant'' and inserting the following:

''(1) APPLICATION REQUIREMENT.—If an applicant''; and

(B) by adding at the end the following new paragraphs:

''(2) REVIEW PROCESS.—The Administrator shall implement a uniform process for reviewing applications that, in accordance with paragraph (1), contain explanations to use grants provided under section 2003 or 2004 to purchase equipment or systems that do not meet or exceed any applicable national voluntary consensus standards developed under section 647 of the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006.

''(3) FACTORS.—In carrying out the review process under paragraph (2), the Administrator shall consider the following:

''(A) Current or past use of proposed equipment or systems by Federal agencies or the Armed Forces.

''(B) The absence of a national voluntary consensus standard for such equipment or systems.

''(C) The existence of an international consensus standard for such equipment or systems, and whether such equipment or systems meets such standard.

''(D) The nature of the capability gap identified by the applicant and how such equipment or systems will address such gap.

''(E) The degree to which such equipment or systems will serve the needs of the applicant better than equipment or systems that meet or exceed existing consensus standards.

''(F) Any other factor determined appropriate by the Administrator.''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(g) REVIEW PROCESS.—The Administrator shall implement a uniform process for reviewing applications to use grants provided under section 2003 or 2004 to purchase equipment or systems not included on the Authorized Equipment List maintained by the Administrator.''.

(b) INSPECTOR GENERAL REPORT.—Not later than three years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Inspector General of the Department of Homeland Security shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate a report assessing the implementation of the review process established under paragraph (2) of subsection (f) of section 2008 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (as added by subsection (a) of this section), including information on the following:

(1) The number of requests to purchase equipment or systems that do not meet or exceed any applicable consensus standard evaluated under such review process.

(2) The capability gaps identified by applicants and the number of such requests granted or denied.

(3) The processing time for the review of such requests.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. DONOVAN) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DONOVAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

As chairman of the Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications, I rise today in support of H.R. 687. This legislation would establish a review process for grant applicants seeking to purchase equipment or systems that do not meet or exceed national voluntary consensus standards.

With threats consistently evolving, it is reassuring to see new technology emerge which will promote the safety of our communities and first responders. However, emerging technology is frequently developed faster than voluntary consensus standards can be implemented.

Recipients of grants under FEMA's State Homeland Security Grant Program and the Urban Area Security Initiative must procure equipment that meets these standards. Unfortunately, if emerging technology or equipment does not have a voluntary consensus standard and a grant recipient would like to use those funds to purchase such technology, FEMA does not have a uniform process to consider applications for that equipment.

H.R. 687 requires FEMA to develop such a process for reviewing these requests. Previously, this bill was introduced in the 114th Congress by the subcommittee's ranking member, Mr. PAYNE, and subsequently received bipartisan support by my subcommittee and the Committee on Homeland Security as well as the House when it was passed under suspension of the rules in September of 2016.

I thank the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE) for reintroducing this commonsense bill. I am proud to be an original cosponsor of H.R. 687 because it will ensure our first responders have the ability to purchase equipment and emerging technology needed to effectively adapt to the current threat landscape.

Earlier this month, the Committee on Homeland Security released the January Terror Threat Snapshot, which found that the United States remains a top target for terrorists. It is clear that the threat to our communities is not going away.

Congress has the responsibility to make America safer and stronger. We can do so by ensuring commonsense measures are in place to ensure first responders have the tools that they need to address these threats.

I urge all Members to join me in supporting H.R. 687.

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

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

I rise in support of H.R. 687, the First Responder Access to Innovative Technologies Act.

Mr. Speaker, in my time serving as ranking member of the Committee on Homeland Security's Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications, I have come to learn a great deal about the very important, very challenging job of first responders. These brave men and women run toward danger with our safety as their number one priority.

Since the September 11 attacks, the private sector has redoubled its efforts to develop innovative technologies for first responders to use and to carry out their vital missions.

Yet, through our subcommittee's oversight, we have seen where, in some instances, industry standards have

failed to keep the pace with breakthroughs in technology. As a result, we have found that first responders cannot always access the most up-to-date equipment because they cannot use Homeland Security grant funds to purchase equipment and technology that does not meet or exceed voluntary industry standards.

H.R. 687 would require FEMA to develop a transparent process for reviewing requests to use grant funds to purchase technologies that do not meet or exceed voluntary industry standards and/or that are not on the authorized equipment list.

The bill has the support of the Security Industry Association and unanimously passed the House last September. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a letter from the Security Industry Association.

SECURITY INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION,
Silver Spring, MD, January 27, 2017.

Hon. DAN DONOVAN,
Chairman, House Homeland Security Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response and Communications, Washington, DC.

Hon. DONALD PAYNE,
Ranking Member, House Homeland Security Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response and Communications, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN DONOVAN AND RANKING MEMBER PAYNE: On behalf of the Security Industry Association (SIA), I would like to express our strong support for H.R. 687, the First Responder Access to Innovative Technologies Act, which would streamline the existing process for first responders utilizing homeland security grants to purchase innovative equipment. SIA is a non-profit international trade association representing nearly 700 global security and life safety solutions providers, and our members develop, manufacture and integrate equipment that is vital to carrying out a variety of homeland security missions.

Under current law, equipment purchased with homeland security grants must meet or exceed ''national voluntary consensus standards,'' unless an explanation as to why an exception is necessary is provided to, reviewed and approved by the Department. For some products, including first responder equipment, technology innovations have outpaced the process of developing voluntary consensus standards, and no such standards may yet exist. Among other provisions, H.R. 687 directs FEMA to develop a more consistent and transparent process for reviewing these requests, which would expedite consideration and provide more certainty to stakeholders.

Like you, we believe that first responders must be able to choose the most appropriate and advanced equipment to meet urgent and changing needs as they work to protect the public. SIA and its members stand ready to serve as a resource to you as you continue work on this critical issue. Thank you for your leadership and attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

DON ERICKSON,
CEO, Security Industry Association.

□ 1600

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, our first responders are on the front lines of emergency response. In recognition of their bravery and sacrifices they make every day, in and out, we must make sure that they have the access to the most up-to-date technologies to help them do their jobs better and safer. To that end, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 687.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I once again urge my colleagues to support H.R. 687, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. DONOVAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 687.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CYBER PREPAREDNESS ACT OF 2017

Mr. DONOVAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 584) to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to enhance preparedness and response capabilities for cyber attacks, bolster the dissemination of homeland security information related to cyber threats, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 584

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 ''Cyber Preparedness Act of 2017''.

SEC. 2. INFORMATION SHARING.

Title II of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 is amended—

(1) in section 210A (6 U.S.C. 124h)—

(A) in subsection (b)—

(i) in paragraph (10), by inserting before the semicolon at the end the following: '', including, in coordination with the national cybersecurity and communications integration center under section 227, access to timely technical assistance, risk management support, and incident response capabilities with respect to cyber threat indicators, defensive measures, cybersecurity risks, and incidents (as such terms are defined in such section), which may include attribution, mitigation, and remediation, and the provision of information and recommendations on security and resilience, including implications of cybersecurity risks to equipment and technology related to the electoral process'';

(ii) in paragraph (11), by striking ''and'' after the semicolon;

(iii) by redesignating paragraph (12) as paragraph (14); and

(iv) by inserting after paragraph (11) the following new paragraphs:

''(12) review information relating to cybersecurity risks that is gathered by State, local, and regional fusion centers, and incorporate such information, as appropriate, into the Department's own information relating to cybersecurity risks;

''(13) ensure the dissemination to State, local, and regional fusion centers of information relating to cybersecurity risks; and'';

(B) in subsection (c)(2)—

(i) by redesignating subparagraphs (C) through (G) as subparagraphs (D) through (H), respectively; and

(ii) by inserting after subparagraph (B) the following new subparagraph:

''(C) The national cybersecurity and communications integration center under section 227.'';

(C) in subsection (d)—

(i) in paragraph (3), by striking ''and'' after the semicolon;

(ii) by redesignating paragraph (4) as paragraph (5); and

(iii) by inserting after paragraph (3) the following new paragraph:

''(4) assist, in coordination with the national cybersecurity and communications integration center under section 227, fusion centers in using information relating to cybersecurity risks to develop a comprehensive and accurate threat picture; and''; and

(D) in subsection (j)—

(i) by redesignating paragraphs (1) through (5) as paragraphs (2) through (6), respectively; and

(ii) by inserting before paragraph (2), as so redesignated, the following new paragraph:

''(1) the term 'cybersecurity risk' has the meaning given that term in section 227;''; and

(2) in section 227 (6 U.S.C. 148)—

(A) in subsection (c)—

(i) in paragraph (5)(B), by inserting '', including State and major urban area fusion centers, as appropriate'' before the semicolon at the end;

(ii) in paragraph (7), in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking ''information and recommendations'' each place it appears and inserting ''information, recommendations, and best practices''; and

(iii) in paragraph (9), by inserting ''best practices,'' after ''defensive measures,''; and

(B) in subsection (d)(1)(B)(ii), by inserting ''and State and major urban area fusion centers, as appropriate'' before the semicolon at the end.

SEC. 3. HOMELAND SECURITY GRANTS.

Subsection (a) of section 2008 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 609) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (4) through (14) as paragraphs (5) through (15), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (3) the following new paragraph:

''(4) enhancing cybersecurity, including preparing for and responding to cybersecurity risks and incidents (as such terms are defined in section 227) and developing statewide cyber threat information analysis and dissemination activities;''.

SEC. 4. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

It is the sense of Congress that to facilitate the timely dissemination to appropriate State, local, and private sector stakeholders of homeland security information related to cyber threats, the Secretary of Homeland Security should, to the greatest extent practicable, work to share actionable information related to cyber threats in an unclassified form.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. DONOVAN) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DONOVAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to

revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. DONOVAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 584, the Cyber Preparedness Act of 2017.

Cybersecurity is a major national security issue and the threat is real and immediate. Day in and day out nation-states or criminal actors target the United States' critical infrastructure, the private sector, and everyday Americans, and they are succeeding. However, even with the heightened awareness on cybersecurity, it appears that the United States is not adequately prepared to prevent and respond to cyber attacks.

Since 2012, FEMA has released an annual National Preparedness Report, which highlights States' progress in meeting 32 core capabilities, as defined by the National Preparedness Goal. Every year, States have ranked their cybersecurity capabilities as one of their lowest.

I found these facts very alarming and wanted to learn more about the current state of cyber preparedness. That is why, last Congress, my subcommittee, the Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications Subcommittee, held a joint hearing with the committee's Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Protection Subcommittee to look at cyber preparedness and how the Federal Government can help States address some of the challenges they face.

We heard from a Homeland Security adviser, a fusion center representative, the Center for Internet Security, a chief information officer, and a chief technology officer, who explained the great progress the United States has made in enhancing their security capabilities. However, they cautioned that challenges still remain, especially with regard to information sharing of cyber threats and risks, and whether Homeland Security grants may be used for cybersecurity enhancements.

Last Congress, I introduced this bill to address the findings from that hearing. I introduced this bill in this Congress to ensure that States and first responders have the resources needed to prepare for and protect against cyber attacks.

This commonsense legislation will: Enhance cyber risk information sharing with State and major urban area fusion centers; authorize representatives from State and urban area fusion centers to be assigned to the National Cybersecurity and Communications Integration Center; and permit the NCCIC personnel to be deployed to the fusion centers.

It will allow information sharing on cyber preparedness best practices with State and local stakeholders. It will clarify the eligibility of State Homeland Security Grant Program and Urban Area Security Initiative funding for cybersecurity enhancements; and it will work to combat the overclassification of cyber risk information so that it can be shared more broadly with stakeholders who have a need to know.

I appreciate that Chairman MCCAUL, Chairman RATCLIFFE, and Ranking Member PAYNE joined me again as original cosponsors of H.R. 584. This bipartisan legislation passed the House by voice vote last Congress. I am pleased that the House is willing to take up this measure again in the new Congress.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this bipartisan bill.

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

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 584, the Cyber Preparedness Act of 2017, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, since I became ranking member of the Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications 4 years ago, States have repeatedly expressed concern about the ability to confront the cyber threat and have rated cybersecurity among the core capabilities in which they had the least confidence.

Last Congress, the subcommittee held a hearing on State and local efforts to counter the cyber threat where State emergency managers and chief information officers testified about activities they were undertaking to secure their networks and infrastructure.

For example, my home State of New Jersey has begun developing its own cyber information-sharing capability, similar to DHS' National Cybersecurity and Communications Integration Center.

Since the subcommittee held its hearing last year, the Federal Government has made significant progress in providing cybersecurity guidance to Federal, State, and local stakeholders.

In December of 2016, the Department of Homeland Security issued its national Cyber Incident Response Plan, which describes roles and responsibilities among stakeholders with respect to preventing, disrupting, and responding to a cyber event.

Additionally, the plan also provides guidance on information sharing related to cyber threats.

H.R. 584 would help facilitate implementation of the National Cyber Incident Response Plan by promoting the sharing of cyber threat indicators and information, as well as cybersecurity's best practices, with State and major urban area fusion centers.

The bill also designates ''cybersecurity'' as an allowable use of State Homeland Security grants and Urban Area Security Initiative funds, which would help other States replicate the cyber threat information-sharing capabilities developed in New Jersey.

This is commonsense legislation, passed by the House last Congress, and I urge my colleagues to support the measure once again.

Mr. Speaker, last fall, the range of cyber threats we faced came into focus when a foreign government attempted to interfere and undermine the integrity of our Presidential election by hacking into the campaign and political party databases.

H.R. 584 includes language to address this threat by directing DHS to share cyber threat information regarding election equipment and technology with fusion centers.

H.R. 584 seems to secure our critical cyber networks by improving cyber information sharing with fusion centers on the full spectrum of cyber threats.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 584, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I, once again, urge my colleagues to support H.R. 584, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. DONOVAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 584.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GAINS IN GLOBAL NUCLEAR DETECTION ARCHITECTURE ACT

Mr. DONOVAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 690) to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to enhance certain duties of the Domestic Nuclear Detection Office, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 690

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 ''Gains in Global Nuclear Detection Architecture Act''.

SEC. 2. DUTIES OF THE DOMESTIC NUCLEAR DETECTION OFFICE.

Section 1902 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 592) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (b) as subsection (c); and

(2) by inserting after subsection (a) the following new subsection:

''(b) IMPLEMENTATION.—In carrying out paragraph (6) of subsection (a), the Director of the Domestic Nuclear Detection Office shall—

''(1) develop and maintain documentation, such as a technology roadmap and strategy, that—

''(A) provides information on how the Office's research investments address—

''(i) gaps in the enhanced global nuclear detection architecture, as developed pursuant to paragraph (4) of such subsection; and

''(ii) research challenges identified by the Director; and

''(B) defines in detail how the Office will address such research challenges;

''(2) document the rational for prioritizing and selecting research topics; and

''(3) develop a systematic approach, which may include annual metrics and periodic qualitative evaluations, for evaluating how the outcomes of the Office's individual research projects collectively contribute to addressing the Office's research challenges.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. DONOVAN) and the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. RICHMOND) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DONOVAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 690, the Gains in Global Nuclear Detection Architecture Act of 2016, sponsored by Representative RICHMOND. H.R. 690 directs the Department of Homeland Security's Domestic Nuclear Detection Office to develop and maintain documentation that provides information on how the office's research investments align with gaps in the Global Nuclear Detection Architecture and the research challenges identified by the Domestic Nuclear Detection Office.

It further directs the Domestic Nuclear Detection Office to document the rationale for selecting research topics and to develop a systematic approach for evaluating how the outcomes of the office's individual research projects collectively contribute to addressing the research challenges.

ISIS has declared its intention to develop weapons of mass destruction, which include nuclear devices, as well as radiological dispersal devices. The key to preventing this from happening is to make sure that nuclear material never falls into terrorist hands.

According to data compiled by the International Atomic Energy Agency, there were nearly 1,150 incidents involving theft, criminal possession, or loss of radiological material reported between 1993 and 2014. The James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies in California identified 325 instances alone between 2013 and 2014 in 38 different countries where nuclear or radioactive material was stolen, lost, or outside of regulatory control.

The amount of nuclear material in peaceful uses in the world has risen by 70 percent since 1999. It will continue to grow in the coming decades as global use of nuclear power increases.

Just last summer, six men were convicted in Tbilisi, Georgia, for trying to sell uranium-238; and in January of 2016, three members of a criminal group were detained for trying to sell caesium-137, which could be used to make a dirty bomb.

We must ensure that terrorists never get their hands on radioactive materials. This bill will enhance the Domestic Nuclear Detection Office's ability to provide radiation detection devices specifically aimed at preventing terrorists from being able to obtain enough radioactive material to construct a dirty bomb.

This bill will ensure that the research topics it chooses to invest in to enhance our ability to detect smuggled nuclear materials are aligned with the gaps that have been identified in the Global Nuclear Detection Architecture, a multiagency framework for detecting, analyzing, and reporting on nuclear and other radioactive materials that are out of regulatory control.

Requiring the Domestic Nuclear Detection Office to document their rationale for choosing research topics will ensure that the most important gaps in the Global Nuclear Detection Architecture are addressed.

□ 1615

I would like to thank Mr. RICHMOND for the work that he and his staff have done on this legislation. I believe this will better enable this country to detect smuggling of nuclear materials and prevent ISIS and other terrorists from carrying out a nuclear or radiological attack on American soil.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all Members to join me in supporting this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE, SPACE AND TECHNOLOGY,
Washington, DC, January 30, 2017.

Hon. MICHAEL MCCAUL,
Chairman, Committee on Homeland Security, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: I am writing concerning H.R. 690, the ''Gains in Global Nuclear Detection Architecture Act,'' which was introduced on January 24, 2017.

H.R. 690 contains provisions within the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology's Rule X jurisdiction. In order to expedite this bill for floor consideration, the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology will forego action on the bill. This is being done on the basis of our mutual understanding that doing so will in no way diminish or alter the jurisdiction of the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology with respect to the appointment of conferees, or to any future jurisdictional claim over the subject matters contained in the bill or similar legislation.

I would appreciate your response to this letter confirming this understanding, and would request that you include a copy of this letter and your response in the Congressional Record during the floor consideration of this bill. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

LAMAR SMITH,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY,
Washington, DC, January 30, 2017.

Hon. LAMAR SMITH,
Chairman, Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN SMITH: Thank you for your letter regarding H.R. 690, the ''Gains in Global Nuclear Detection Architecture Act.'' I appreciate your support in bringing this legislation before the House of Representatives, and accordingly, understand that the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology will not seek a sequential referral on this legislation.

The Committee on Homeland Security concurs with the mutual understanding that by foregoing further action on this bill at this time, the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology does not waive any jurisdiction over the subject matter contained in this bill or similar legislation in the future. In addition, should a conference on this bill be necessary, I would support your request to have the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology represented on the conference committee.

I will insert copies of this exchange in the Congressional Record during consideration of this bill on the House floor. I thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL T. MCCAUL,
Chairman, Committee on Homeland Security.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 690. I would like to thank the gentleman from New York, Congressman DONOVAN, for his help and support and his bipartisanship.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 690 is based on a bipartisan bill I introduced last year, H.R. 5391, which passed the House in September.

For decades, security experts have warned of the danger that radioactive materials could be smuggled within and across our borders and used in an act of nuclear terrorism. The DHS Domestic Nuclear Detection Office, or DNDO, brings together expertise from across the Federal Government to detect and prevent the illicit transport, storage, and assembly of nuclear and radiological weapons. These interagency partners coordinate their efforts using a multilayered framework—the Global Nuclear Detection Architecture, or GNDA. GNDA describes Federal programs, guidelines, and detection technologies and identifies research challenges and security gaps.

In 2015, GAO looked at how DNDO manages its $350 million research and development program. The report found that DNDO needs to do a better job of documenting how it chooses which projects to fund and how these investments align with security gaps and research challenges—especially for vulnerabilities identified in the GNDA.

H.R. 690 would resolve these issues by requiring DNDO to document the rationale it uses to prioritize research topics, explain how selected investments align with gaps and research challenges, and develop a systematic approach to evaluate the outcomes for individual projects. Such documentation is essential to ensure that DNDO is making the right research investments to keep the Nation secure.

Mr. Speaker, my bill, H.R. 690, would help DNDO use its limited resources toward projects that actually close the vulnerability gaps. Preventing and detecting nuclear smuggling is a complex endeavor. It requires seamless coordination between law enforcement and intelligence officials across the Federal Government.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 690, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I once again urge my colleagues to support H.R. 690.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. DONOVAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 690.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SECURING THE CITIES ACT OF 2017

Mr. DONOVAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 655) to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish the Securing the Cities program to enhance the ability of the United States to detect and prevent terrorist attacks and other high consequence events utilizing nuclear or other radiological materials that pose a high risk to homeland security in high-risk urban areas, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 655

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 ''Securing the Cities Act of 2017''.

SEC. 2. SECURING THE CITIES PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Title XIX of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 591 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

''SEC. 1908. SECURING THE CITIES PROGRAM.

''(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Director for Domestic Nuclear Detection shall establish the 'Securing the Cities' ('STC') program to enhance the ability of the United States to detect and prevent terrorist attacks and other high consequence events utilizing nuclear or other radiological materials that pose a high risk to homeland security in high-risk urban areas. Through the STC program the Director shall—

''(1) assist State, local, tribal, and territorial governments in designing and implementing, or enhancing existing, architectures for coordinated and integrated detection and interdiction of nuclear or other radiological materials that are out of regulatory control;

''(2) support the development of a regionwide operating capability to detect and report on nuclear and other radioactive materials out of regulatory control;

''(3) provide resources to enhance detection, analysis, communication, and coordination to better integrate State, local, tribal, and territorial assets into Federal operations;

''(4) facilitate alarm adjudication and provide subject matter expertise and technical assistance on concepts of operations, training, exercises, and alarm response protocols;

''(5) communicate with, and promote sharing of information about the presence or detection of nuclear or other radiological materials among appropriate Federal, State, local, tribal, and territorial governments, in a manner that ensures transparency with the jurisdictions served by such program;

''(6) provide augmenting resources, as appropriate, enabling State, local, tribal, and territorial governments to sustain and refresh their capabilities developed under the STC program; and

''(7) provide any other assistance the Director determines appropriate.

''(b) DESIGNATION OF JURISDICTIONS.—In carrying out the program under subsection (a), the Director shall designate jurisdictions from among high-risk urban areas under section 2003, and other cities and regions, as appropriate.

''(c) CONGRESSIONAL NOTIFICATION.—The Director shall notify the Committee on Homeland Security and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate not later than three days before the designation of new jurisdictions under subsection (b) or other changes to participating jurisdictions.''.

(b) GAO REPORT.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate an assessment, including an evaluation of the effectiveness, of the Securing the Cities program under section 1908 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002, as added by subsection (a) of this section.

(c) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in section 1(b) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 1907 the following new item:

''Sec. 1908. Securing the Cities program.''.

SEC. 3. MODEL EXERCISES.

Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Director for Domestic Nuclear Detection of the Department of Homeland Security shall report to the Committee on Homeland Security and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate on the feasibility of the Director developing model exercises to test the preparedness of jurisdictions participating in the Securing the Cities program under section 1908 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (as added by section 2 of this Act) in meeting the challenges that may be posed by a range of nuclear and radiological threats.

SEC. 4. NO ADDITIONAL FUNDS AUTHORIZED.

No additional funds are authorized to carry out the requirements of this Act and the amendments made by this Act. Such requirements shall be carried out using amounts otherwise authorized.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. DONOVAN) and the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. RICHMOND) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DONOVAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, as the chairman of the Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications, I rise in support of H.R. 655, the Securing the Cities Act of 2017.

Representing New York's 11th Congressional District, which includes Staten Island and Brooklyn, and as a former district attorney, I fully understand the importance of protecting our major cities from catastrophic terrorist attacks. In keeping our pledge to never forget 9/11, it is our duty to ensure that such an attack never happens again. This legislation underscores our commitment and gives the Department of Homeland Security the tools it needs to carry out this mission.

In 2015, the Committee on Homeland Security held a hearing at Ground Zero in lower Manhattan. At that hearing, we heard from Commissioner Bratton of the New York City Police Department who described the current threat environment facing New York City. In his testimony, he specifically referenced the risk that terrorists may introduce illicit nuclear materials into the city to conduct an attack. Similarly, Secretary of Homeland Security Kelly recently stated: The United States must prepare for the eventuality of a catastrophic attack given the potential impact and consequences.

This bill establishes the Securing the Cities program at the Department of Homeland Security to enhance the ability of the United States to detect and prevent terrorist attacks and other high-consequence events using nuclear and other radiological materials in high-risk urban areas.

The Securing the Cities program within the Domestic Nuclear Detection Office provides training, equipment, and other resources to State and local law enforcement in high-risk urban areas to prevent a terrorist group from carrying out an attack using a radiological or nuclear device.

The Securing the Cities program began in 2006 as a pilot program in the New York City region which included Jersey City and Newark. Since 2007, the New York City region has purchased nearly 14,000 radiation detectors and trained nearly 20,000 personnel. The pilot program has been so successful it was expanded to the Los Angeles/Long Beach region in fiscal year 2012, the National Capital Region in fiscal year 2014, and to the cities of Houston and Chicago in 2016. Once the Securing

the Cities program is fully implemented, it will protect nearly 100 million people across this country.

I would like to thank the Department of Homeland Security for its hard work and commitment to this program. Given the alarming terrorist threat from ISIS and al Qaeda and their willingness to carry out an attack using a weapon of mass destruction, this program could not be more vital.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 655.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 655.

For over a decade, the Securing the Cities program has provided a growing number of first responders from New York City and Newark, New Jersey to Los Angeles and Long Beach to Washington, D.C., Houston, and Chicago with the tools they need to detect radiological and nuclear threats.

Securing the Cities is administered by the Department of Homeland Security's Domestic Nuclear Detection Office, DNDO, which houses the Department's experts on preparing for and responding to rad/nuc events.

The program makes funding available to participating jurisdictions for planning and analysis related to radiological and nuclear threats, as well as equipment purchases, training, and exercises.

Through this program, DNDO supports grantees by providing subject matter expertise, training, coordination, and technological support. H.R. 655 would formally authorize the existing Securing the Cities program and improve it by directing the Government Accountability Office to assess the program and offer recommendations for how it could become more effective.

Mr. Speaker, this bill passed the House last Congress by a vote of 441–4.

Mr. Speaker, the Securing the Cities program plays a critical role in protecting communities across America from the threat posed by radiological and nuclear weapons.

H.R. 655 will ensure that this important program continues and becomes more robust in future years. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 655.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I once again urge my colleagues to support H.R. 655, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. DONOVAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 655.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MEDICAL PREPAREDNESS ALLOWABLE USE ACT

Mr. DONOVAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 437) to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to codify authority under existing grant guidance authorizing use of Urban Area Security Initiative and State Homeland Security Grant Program funding for enhancing medical preparedness, medical surge capacity, and mass prophylaxis capabilities.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 437

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 ''Medical Preparedness Allowable Use Act''.

SEC. 2. USE OF CERTAIN HOMELAND SECURITY GRANT FUNDS FOR ENHANCING MEDICAL PREPAREDNESS, MEDICAL SURGE CAPACITY, AND MASS PROPHYLAXIS CAPABILITIES.

Section 2008 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 609) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) by redesignating paragraphs (10) through (14) as paragraphs (11) through (15), respectively; and

(B) by inserting after paragraph (9) the following new paragraph (10):

''(10) enhancing medical preparedness, medical surge capacity, and mass prophylaxis capabilities, including the development and maintenance of an initial pharmaceutical stockpile, including medical kits, and diagnostics sufficient to protect first responders, their families, immediate victims, and vulnerable populations from a chemical or biological event;''; and

(2) in subsection (b)(3)(B), by striking ''subsection (a)(10)'' and inserting ''subsection (a)(11)''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. DONOVAN) and the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. RICHMOND) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DONOVAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, as chairman of the Committee on Homeland Security's Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications, I rise today in support of H.R. 437, the Medical Preparedness Allowable Use Act. H.R. 437 was introduced by Congressman BILIRAKIS, a former chairman of the Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications Subcommittee.

This bill amends the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to make it clear that State Homeland Security Grant Program and Urban Area Security Initiative Grant funds may be used to enhance medical preparedness and purchase medical countermeasures.

H.R. 437 codifies current grant guidance to ensure that recipients of the State Homeland Security Grant Program and Urban Area Security Initiative Grants will continue to be able to use these funds for medical preparedness equipment and activities.

Mr. Speaker, the threat of a terrorist attack using a chemical or biological agent is real. We must ensure our first responders have the tools and capabilities they need should such an event occur.

In my district, the City of New York has put their Homeland Security grants to good use for this purpose. In 2014, they held a full-scale exercise which simulated an anthrax attack on the city. Participants from agencies across the city, including the health department, the New York City Police Department, and the Office of Emergency Management worked to set up locations to quickly distribute life-saving medical countermeasures to city residents across the five boroughs.

We must ensure that the State Homeland Security Grant Program and the Urban Areas Security Initiative funds continue to be available, despite any changes to yearly grant guidance, for exercises like the one conducted by New York City and other important medical preparedness activities. This bill does just that.

Identical language to H.R. 437 passed the House last Congress by a vote of 377–2.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman BILIRAKIS for introducing this commonsense bill. I urge all Members to join me in supporting this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1630

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 437. Whether the result of a naturally occurring outbreak, like Zika or Ebola, or an intentional release of bio-pathogens, like anthrax attacks that shook Washington immediately after 9/11, we must ensure that our public health and medical response communities are prepared to respond to events that may stretch their capabilities.

In recent years, the Metropolitan Medical Response System Program has been eliminated, and grants supported by the Department of Health and Human Services, such as the Hospital Preparedness Program, have been cut. As a result, many jurisdictions have been forced to make tough choices and, in many cases, divert other limited funding to support medical preparedness.

Under current law, the Urban Area Security Initiative and the State Homeland Security Grant Program funding can be used to bolster medical preparedness capabilities, but the ability to use funds for that purpose is contingent on the grant guidance issued

every year. H.R. 437 would make enhancing medical preparedness and medical surge capacity and capabilities eligible uses of Homeland Security Grant funds under the law.

This measure passed in the House last Congress, and I urge my colleagues to again support this measure.

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

Mr. DONOVAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS).

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the ranking member for his support.

I rise today in support of critical legislation to support public safety and first responders, the Medical Preparedness Allowable Use Act, H.R. 437.

My bill will help secure medical countermeasures for first responders, ensuring we are prepared for any type of emergency. For instance, last year, in Florida, we faced the outbreak of the Zika virus.

The Medical Preparedness Allowable Use Act means that reliable grant funding would be available to conduct medical preparedness activities such as planning, training, and purchasing protective equipment to combat Zika or other public health threats going forward nationwide. When the worst occurs, our first responders are there for us on the front lines.

I consistently find myself in awe of these brave men and women and the sacrifices they make on the public's behalf. They are heroes. The least we can do is make sure they have the tools they need to do their jobs and keep us safe. That is what my bill seeks to accomplish. We want to keep them safe as well, Mr. Speaker.

The legislation authorizes grant funds for the stockpiling of countermeasures, including medical kits, protective gear, ventilators, and more. This should give us all peace of mind to know this vital equipment will be there in case of a crisis.

Importantly, the grant fund used in H.R. 437 already exists. The bill does not require new or additional funding. Also significant, this bill has received strong bipartisan support.

I thank my colleagues, Representatives SUSAN BROOKS and PETER KING, for being original cosponsors of H.R. 437.

I was inspired to write this legislation during my time as subcommittee chairman on the Homeland Security Committee after a series of hearings with folks from the emergency response community. They expressed the urgent need for stockpiling these medical countermeasures and for providing first responders the assurance that grant funding may be used to support them now and in the future. They need certainty, Mr. Speaker.

I am proud to have the support of the Emergency Services Coalition for Medical Preparedness and the International Association of Fire Chiefs on this issue. The Medical Preparedness Allowable Use Act is going to make a difference to protect the public and protect our protectors. I strongly urge passage today.

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

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support H.R. 437. Developing and maintaining medical preparedness is an important part of national preparedness. State and local governments should not have to wonder whether they will be able to use DHS grant funds for this purpose from year to year.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 437.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I once again urge my colleagues to support H.R. 437.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. DONOVAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 437.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

UNITED STATES-ISRAEL CYBERSECURITY COOPERATION ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2017

Mr. RATCLIFFE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 612) to establish a grant program at the Department of Homeland Security to promote cooperative research and development between the United States and Israel on cybersecurity.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 612

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 ''United States-Israel Cybersecurity Cooperation Enhancement Act of 2017''.

SEC. 2. UNITED STATES-ISRAEL CYBERSECURITY COOPERATION.

(a) GRANT PROGRAM.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary, in accordance with the agreement entitled the ''Agreement between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the State of Israel on Cooperation in Science and Technology for Homeland Security Matters'', dated May 29, 2008 (or successor agreement), and the requirements specified in paragraph (2), shall establish a grant program at the Department to support—

(A) cybersecurity research and development; and

(B) demonstration and commercialization of cybersecurity technology.

(2) REQUIREMENTS.—

(A) APPLICABILITY.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, in carrying out a research, development, demonstration, or commercial application program or activity that is authorized under this section, the Secretary shall require cost sharing in accordance with this paragraph.

(B) RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in clause (ii), the Secretary shall require not less than 50 percent of the cost of a research, development, demonstration, or commercial application program or activity described in subparagraph (A) to be provided by a non-Federal source.

(ii) REDUCTION.—The Secretary may reduce or eliminate, on a case-by-case basis, the percentage requirement specified in clause (i) if the Secretary determines that such reduction or elimination is necessary and appropriate.

(C) MERIT REVIEW.—In carrying out a research, development, demonstration, or commercial application program or activity that is authorized under this section, awards shall be made only after an impartial review of the scientific and technical merit of the proposals for such awards has been carried out by or for the Department.

(D) REVIEW PROCESSES.—In carrying out a review under subparagraph (C), the Secretary may use merit review processes developed under section 302(14) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 182(14)).

(3) ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS.—An applicant shall be eligible to receive a grant under this subsection if the project of such applicant—

(A) addresses a requirement in the area of cybersecurity research or cybersecurity technology, as determined by the Secretary; and

(B) is a joint venture between—

(i)(I) a for-profit business entity, academic institution, National Laboratory (as defined in section 2 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 15801)), or nonprofit entity in the United States; and

(II) a for-profit business entity, academic institution, or nonprofit entity in Israel; or

(ii)(I) the Federal Government; and

(II) the Government of Israel.

(4) APPLICATIONS.—To be eligible to receive a grant under this subsection, an applicant shall submit to the Secretary an application for such grant in accordance with procedures established by the Secretary, in consultation with the advisory board established under paragraph (5).

(5) ADVISORY BOARD.—

(A) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall establish an advisory board to—

(i) monitor the method by which grants are awarded under this subsection; and

(ii) provide to the Secretary periodic performance reviews of actions taken to carry out this subsection.

(B) COMPOSITION.—The advisory board established under subparagraph (A) shall be composed of three members, to be appointed by the Secretary, of whom—

(i) one shall be a representative of the Federal Government;

(ii) one shall be selected from a list of nominees provided by the United States-Israel Binational Science Foundation; and

(iii) one shall be selected from a list of nominees provided by the United States-Israel Binational Industrial Research and Development Foundation.

(6) CONTRIBUTED FUNDS.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary may accept or retain funds contributed by any person, government entity, or organization for purposes of carrying out this subsection. Such funds shall be available, subject to appropriation, without fiscal year limitation.

(7) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of completion of a project for which a grant is provided under this subsection, the

grant recipient shall submit to the Secretary a report that contains—

(A) a description of how the grant funds were used by the recipient; and

(B) an evaluation of the level of success of each project funded by the grant.

(8) CLASSIFICATION.—Grants shall be awarded under this subsection only for projects that are considered to be unclassified by both the United States and Israel.

(b) TERMINATION.—The grant program and the advisory board established under this section terminate on the date that is seven years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(c) NO ADDITIONAL FUNDS AUTHORIZED.—No additional funds are authorized to carry out the requirements of this Act. Such requirements shall be carried out using amounts otherwise authorized.

(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

(1) the term ''cybersecurity research'' means research, including social science research, into ways to identify, protect against, detect, respond to, and recover from cybersecurity threats;

(2) the term ''cybersecurity technology'' means technology intended to identify, protect against, detect, respond to, and recover from cybersecurity threats;

(3) the term ''cybersecurity threat'' has the meaning given such term in section 102 of the Cybersecurity Information Sharing Act of 2015 (enacted as title I of the Cybersecurity Act of 2015 (division N of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016 (Public Law 114–113)));

(4) the term ''Department'' means the Department of Homeland Security; and

(5) the term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of Homeland Security.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. RATCLIFFE) and the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. LANGEVIN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RATCLIFFE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous materials on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 612, the United States-Israel Cybersecurity Cooperation Enhancement Act of 2017.

I was grateful for the opportunity to work closely with my colleague, Mr. LANGEVIN from Rhode Island, on this vitally important legislation that will build upon the existing collaboration between the United States and the State of Israel on critical cybersecurity issues.

Following our successful congressional delegation to Israel in May of last year to discuss homeland security and cybersecurity issues, Mr. LANGEVIN and I worked closely to champion two important pieces of legislation.

Last year, I introduced H.R. 5877, the United States-Israeli Advanced Partnership Act of 2016, which was signed into law on December 16 with Mr. LANGEVIN's help and support. That legislation expanded a current cooperative research program between the two countries by adding cybersecurity to a program that had previously focused only on border security, explosives detection, and emergency services.

Today, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have H.R. 612, the United States-Israel Cybersecurity Cooperation Enhancement Act of 2017 come before the House. This bill would expand the memorandum of agreement already in place between our Department of Homeland Security and the State of Israel by authorizing the Secretary to carry out a grant program at DHS to support cybersecurity research and development as well as the demonstration and commercialization of cybersecurity technologies.

During our congressional delegation, Mr. LANGEVIN and I were able to meet with top Israeli officials, including Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, to discuss how the United States and Israel can better cooperate in these vital areas. We also had the opportunity to meet with many of Israel's cybersecurity companies and technology startups.

Over the past several years, Israel has become a leader in cybersecurity and has developed a deep and talented cyber workforce, something we need greater focus on here in the United States. To that end, much of our discussion with Israeli officials and private companies revolved around how the United States and Israel can work more closely together and learn from each other as we combat growing cybersecurity threats. This legislation is a product of those successful discussions.

Mr. Speaker, the United States and Israel are both under constant threat from nation-state and other actors that wish to do our countries harm, so it is vitally important that the United States and Israel work hand-in-hand to build our cyber defenses to combat these cyber threats together.

Mr. Speaker, it is also vital that in the House both parties work hand-in-hand on America's national security vulnerabilities. Given the current political environment, I would like to commend and thank my colleague, Mr. LANGEVIN, for his willingness to do just that, as demonstrated by his partnership on this issue. I very much look forward to continuing to work with him on more cybersecurity issues during the 115th Congress.

I urge all my colleagues to support this legislation.

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

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

I rise in strong support of H.R. 612, the United States-Israel Cybersecurity Cooperation Enhancement Act of 2017.

Mr. Speaker, let me start by thanking Chairman RATCLIFFE for his leadership on the subcommittee and, in particular, on the issue of cybersecurity. I have greatly enjoyed our partnership on this and many issues. I appreciate his due diligence and his hard work on many national security issues.

Let me also start by expressing my deep gratitude to Chairman MCCAUL and Ranking Member THOMPSON in acting so quickly to bring this bill to the floor. Both the chairman and ranking member led a very productive committee last Congress, and I am very pleased that their commitment to protect our national security has extended to swift action this year as well. That urgency is particularly relevant to this bill, the United States-Israel Cybersecurity Cooperation Enhancement Act.

As Chairman RATCLIFFE mentioned, last May, he and I traveled to Israel to meet with public and private cybersecurity officials. I think I can speak for my friend when I say that we were very impressed by the Israeli's efforts in this space. Israel was one of the first countries to recognize the potential threat posed by interconnected computer systems, and they have been leaders in cybersecurity now for decades.

For instance, the first stateful firewall technology was first developed by an Israeli firm. Today, these firewalls are ubiquitous across the information security landscape. In fact, despite its size, Israel is the second largest exporter of cybersecurity goods and services, behind only the United States. U.S. companies have certainly taken notice. Mr. RATCLIFFE and I, as he mentioned, met with some of their representatives during our trip.

Just last week, Reuters reported that one of the components of Microsoft's $1 billion per year cybersecurity strategy is acquisition of three Israeli corporations.

Collaboration with our closest Middle East ally only makes sense from a national security perspective. Preserving Israeli security is essential to stability in the region.

We clearly have a lot to learn from each other as well, which is why I have championed government-to-government interaction on cybersecurity, such as the recent letter of intent for more information-sharing between DHS and Israel that was championed by former Deputy Secretary Mayorkas.

Beyond our governments working together, Chairman RATCLIFFE and I also believe the government can do more to encourage collaboration between our private sector and nonprofit entities on issues directly relevant to homeland security. That is why, upon our return, we worked in close collaboration to develop two bills to enhance these cooperative relationships.

I could not have asked for a better partnership in this effort. I was thrilled that our first bill, the United States-Israel Advanced Research Partnership Act, was signed into law last month. It is our second bill, which passed the House in November, but failed to make

it through the Senate before Congress adjourned last year, that we are discussing today.

Specifically, this bill creates a cybersecurity grant program for joint research and development ventures between Israeli and American entities. Projects would be selected after a merit review process and would have to address requirements in cybersecurity determined by the Secretary of Homeland Security. The grants would also be subject to a cost-sharing requirement, with at least 50 percent of project funds coming from a non-Federal source.

Importantly, H.R. 612 leverages existing United States-Israel R&D infrastructure, specifically the Binational Industrial Research and Development, or BIRD Foundation, and the Binational Science Foundation, or BSF. Both organizations have a proven track record of encouraging joint research ventures.

□ 1645

BIRD, for instance, has financed R&D and commercialization projects that have led to a cumulative $8 billion in commercial sales since its founding, while BSF regularly funds collaborations between the top scientists in our respective countries as 45 Nobel laureates have received support from the Foundation.

Now, using the existing infrastructure, as was done in 2007 when Congress passed the Energy Independence and Security Act that led to the creation of BIRD Energy, also allows us to capitalize on both foundations' robust networks of United States and Israeli entities to help seed these joint ventures. All of these factors are particularly critical in the fast-moving cybersecurity domain where offensive and defensive tactics and techniques change on a monthly or even weekly basis.

As such, advances in the discipline require a near constant reexamining of assumptions, and having people from different backgrounds and security cultures working together engenders an environment where such reexamination is encouraged. While both the U.S. and Israel have robust cybersecurity communities, further collaboration will spur more advances to combat the threats that we face.

Although some of these advances are technological in nature, basic cybersecurity research, such as investigations into the psychology of secure interface design and social engineering, is also supported by the bill. All told, the programs authorized in H.R. 612 will both address urgent homeland security needs and build capacity for further transnational collaboration on cybersecurity, all while matching Federal investment with private sector dollars and funds from the Israeli Government.

Mr. Speaker, I normally preface my remarks on cybersecurity with an explanation of the threat our country faces. I would hope that, given recent events, I don't have to remind my colleagues of the dangers that we face in this sphere which, as I see it, is one of the key national security challenges of the 21st century.

I would hope that incidents like the recent attack on the Ukrainian power grid demonstrate the power of a computer keyboard to affect our critical infrastructure. I would hope that the breach of hundreds of millions of accounts at Yahoo, which affected around 10 percent of the world's population, demonstrates how pervasive data collection is and its vulnerabilities. I would certainly hope that the Russian information warfare operations targeting the very foundations of our democracy, our elections, demonstrate the stakes that we face.

In the face of these threats, we must join together with our allies to protect a free and open internet and ensure that the amazing benefits of technology are not overshadowed by the new vulnerabilities that they open up. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 612 is an important step to driving the innovation we need in the security space to meet these two goals.

As with any bills that make it to the floor, this bill owes much to the dedicated staff on both sides of the aisle who spent countless hours behind the scenes reviewing this legislation. I thank them for their extraordinary and exceptional work.

I am also very grateful, again, to Chairman MCCAUL, Ranking Member THOMPSON, and Subcommittee Ranking Member RICHMOND for their continued leadership on cybersecurity and, in particular, Chairman RATCLIFFE for his work and for their assistance in quickly actualizing the lessons that we have learned on our trip to Israel.

Finally, in closing, I owe, once again, a debt of gratitude to my friend across the aisle, Chairman RATCLIFFE, who, in his first term, immediately had a substantial impact on our Nation's cybersecurity and with whom it has been a great pleasure to work. I look forward to our continued work in this Congress and beyond.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 612 does three things: it encourages innovative approaches to address top priorities in homeland security R&D; it strengthens ties with Israel, one of our closest allies; and it does so in a public-private partnership that matches Federal investment.

Mr. Speaker, if you indulge me for a moment, I would like to read something the Saudi Arabian Computer Emergency Response Team put out last week: ''Following a recent cyberattack which targeted several national organizations, this is an urgent call for your cybersecurity team to be on the alert for Shamoon 2 and ransomware attacks that could possibly cripple your organization's systems.''

For those of my colleagues who are not aware, the Shamoon attacks of 2012 took down tens of thousands of computers at the Saudi state oil company, Saudi Aramco. The Shamoon 2 variant has been targeting Saudi Government agencies and private industry since November.

I bring this up, Mr. Speaker, because open source intelligence reports point to Iran as being responsible for the original Shamoon attack. I believe there is a good chance that Iranian-aligned actors are behind the recent incidents as well. Our Israeli partners live under this threat every day, and, to be frank, so do we.

Last year, the Justice Department indicted seven Iranian hackers for attacks on the U.S. financial sector and for probing the networks of a New York dam. The same threats that leave me unable to sleep keep my friend Dr. Matania, head of the Israel National Cyber Bureau, up at night as well.

Closing our aperture of vulnerability will be difficult, Mr. Speaker, but it is possible if we work together to bring our countries' unique perspectives to bear on the problem. I know my colleagues in the Senate share these sentiments, and I hope they will move quickly to take this bill up and start fostering further collaboration as soon as possible.

Let me again thank Chairman RATCLIFFE for his leadership and his outstanding work on this bill. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 612.

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

Mr. RATCLIFFE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Rhode Island for his kind words. I also thank him and commend him for his leadership on cybersecurity issues for many years in this House. I look forward to working with him for many years, hopefully, to come. I thank him for his friendship and collaboration in helping to make America safer.

Mr. Speaker, I again urge all my colleagues to support H.R. 612.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. RATCLIFFE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 612.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

Votes will be taken in the following order:

Ordering the previous question on House Resolution 70; and adoption of House Resolution 70, 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.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.J. RES. 38, DISAPPROVING A RULE SUBMITTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on ordering the previous question on the resolution (H. Res. 70) providing for consideration of the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 38) disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of the Interior known as the Stream Protection Rule, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

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

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 236, nays 183, not voting 13, as follows:

[Roll No. 68]

YEAS—236

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Arrington
Babin
Bacon
Banks (IN)
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Bergman
Biggs
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Budd
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Cheney
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comer
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davidson
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Dunn
Emmer
Farenthold
Faso
Ferguson
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Flores
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gaetz
Gallagher
Garrett
Gibbs
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guthrie
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins (LA)
Hill
Holding
Hollingsworth
Hudson
Huizenga
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger
Knight
Kustoff (TN)
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
Lewis (MN)
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Marshall
Massie
Mast
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mitchell
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Murphy (PA)
Newhouse
Noem
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peterson
Pittenger
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Posey
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Rice (SC)
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney, Francis
Rooney, Thomas J.
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce (CA)
Russell
Rutherford
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smucker
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Taylor
Tenney
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Zeldin

NAYS—183

Adams
Aguilar
Barragán
Bass
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (MD)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capuano
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Correa
Costa
Courtney
Crist
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Demings
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Ellison
Eshoo
Espaillat
Esty
Evans
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Gonzalez (TX)
Gottheimer
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hanabusa
Hastings
Heck
Higgins (NY)
Himes
Hoyer
Huffman
Jackson Lee
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Khanna
Kihuen
Kilmer
Kind
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster (NH)
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham, M.
Luján, Ben Ray
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn B.
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McEachin
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Halleran
O'Rourke
Pallone
Panetta
Pascrell
Payne
Perlmutter
Peters
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Raskin
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Rosen
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Soto
Speier
Suozzi
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—13

Clark (MA)
Engel
Kildee
Lofgren
Mulvaney
Pelosi
Price, Tom (GA)
Quigley
Rush
Sewell (AL)
Smith (TX)
Titus
Zinke

□ 1718

Messrs. NORCROSS and SCHIFF changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

So the previous question was ordered.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

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

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

RECORDED VOTE

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

A recorded vote was ordered.

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

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 236, noes 186, not voting 10, as follows:

[Roll No. 69]

AYES—236

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Arrington
Babin
Bacon
Banks (IN)
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Bergman
Biggs
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Budd
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Cheney
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comer
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davidson
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Dunn
Emmer
Farenthold
Faso
Ferguson
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Flores
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gaetz
Gallagher
Garrett
Gibbs
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guthrie
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins (LA)
Hill
Holding
Hollingsworth
Hudson
Huizenga
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger
Knight
Kustoff (TN)
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
Lewis (MN)
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Marshall
Massie
Mast
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mitchell
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Murphy (PA)
Newhouse
Noem
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Pittenger
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Posey
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Rice (SC)
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney, Francis
Rooney, Thomas J.
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce (CA)
Russell
Rutherford
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smucker
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Taylor
Tenney
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Zeldin

NOES—186

Adams
Aguilar
Barragán
Bass
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (MD)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capuano
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Correa
Costa
Courtney
Crist
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Demings
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Espaillat
Esty
Evans
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Gonzalez (TX)
Gottheimer
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hanabusa
Hastings
Heck
Higgins (NY)
Himes
Hoyer
Huffman
Jackson Lee
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Khanna
Kihuen
Kilmer
Kind
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster (NH)
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham, M.
Luján, Ben Ray
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn B.
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McEachin
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Halleran
O'Rourke
Pallone
Panetta
Pascrell
Payne
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Raskin
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Rosen
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Soto
Speier
Suozzi
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—10

Clark (MA)
Kildee
Lofgren
Mulvaney
Pelosi
Price, Tom (GA)
Quigley
Rush
Titus
Zinke

□ 1725

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I was detained at a classified briefing with the Secretary of Homeland Security causing me to miss these two votes. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay" on rollcall No. 68 and "nay" on rollcall No. 69.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.J. RES. 36, PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL OF A FINAL RULE OF THE BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.J. RES. 37, DISAPPROVING A RULE SUBMITTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE, THE GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION, AND THE NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION

Mr. COLE, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 115–8) on the resolution (H. Res. 74) providing for consideration of the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 36) providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the final rule of the Bureau of Land Management relating to ''Waste Prevention, Production Subject to Royalties, and Resource Conservation'', and providing for consideration of the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 37) disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of Defense, the General Services Administration, and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration relating to the Federal Acquisition Regulation, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

□ 1730

STOP THE INTRUSION OF POLITICAL ROBOCALLS

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

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, every campaign season, like clockwork, families are bombarded by an endless stream of political robocalls. There is little voters can do to stop the annoyance, which all too often comes right in the middle of family dinners and bedtimes, because politicians made sure to exempt themselves from the power of the Do Not Call Registry.

That is why I have introduced legislation, H.R. 740, to stop the intrusion of political robocalls in homes across America.

The Robo Calls Off Phones Act, or Robo COP Act, directs the Federal Trade Commission to revise its regulations regarding the National Do Not Call Registry and prohibit prerecorded campaign messages from being sent to telephone numbers on the national registry. It gives the American people the opportunity to opt out of these bothersome interruptions.

Removing the exemption for political robocalls is a matter of fairness that will help bring some peace and quiet to homes throughout the campaign season.

RECOGNIZING FORMER-REPRESENTATIVE XAVIER BECERRA

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

Mr. CÁRDENAS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the incredible work of former-Congressman and now California State Attorney General Xavier Becerra.

Attorney General Becerra holds nearly three decades of elected public service as a State legislator, a Member of Congress, and now as California's attorney general.

I am proud to call Xavier Becerra my friend. It has been a pleasure to work alongside him as he courageously fought for all Americans, for women, LGBTQ communities, minorities, and comprehensive immigration reform.

He is the first Latino to serve as a member of one of the powerful committees in our House, and he is also the first Latino chairman of the Democratic Caucus. Through his leadership and guidance, our priorities have become more defined and have driven the legislative process.

Attorney General Becerra, thank you for your tireless service and commitment to our country as you have certainly become one of the most influential leaders of our time.

THANKING REPRESENTATIVE XAVIER BECERRA

(Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico. Madam Speaker, I stand here today to recognize the extraordinary leadership of Xavier Becerra who for the last 24 years proudly served the people of Los Angeles, California, as a Member of the United States House of Representatives.

Xavier's career in public service began as a call to fight for people like his parents, a clerical worker and a construction worker, who were often neglected in the policymaking process.

He was elected to Congress in 1992. He most recently served as the first Hispanic member of the Committee on Ways and Means. During his tenure, he was also the chairman of the House Democratic Caucus and chairman of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus.

He worked with his colleagues to increase opportunities for working families, to improve Social Security, and to strengthen Medicare. He fought for a Tax Code that was fair to hardworking families and small businesses. He stood for immigrants of all communities in his support of the DREAM Act and comprehensive immigration reform.

He continues this important work now as the attorney general of California, where he is already using his position, knowledge, and experience to uphold our values by rejecting policies that this administration hopes to exact on the American people.

Representative Becerra, thank you and your family for your service. Your

community, your colleagues, your country, and I thank you for your service.

NO WALL ON OUR SOUTHERN BORDER

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

Mr. O'ROURKE. Madam Speaker, we have the lowest levels of northbound apprehension coming across our southern border in modern history. We have more Mexican nationals going south to Mexico today than coming north to the United States. We have less than zero migration from Mexico.

In El Paso, Texas, the border community is the safest city in the United States. On top of that, there has been not a terrorist, terrorist plot, or terrorist organization that is connected to our border with Mexico.

But just in case, we are being vigilant. We are spending $19 billion a year to secure that border. There are 20,000 brave members of the Border Patrol who patrol every inch of that 2,000-mile border.

Madam Speaker, we do not need a wall on our southern border. It is a waste of time. It is a waste of resources, and it takes our eye off of the real threats to this country.

Madam Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in opposing a wall from this new administration.

CONGRATULATING XAVIER BECERRA

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

Mr. CARBAJAL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to thank my friend and former colleague, Xavier Becerra, for his long and effective record of service on behalf of California in Congress.

Attorney General Xavier Becerra has been a true mentor and a friend to me, especially during this transition serving as a new Member of Congress.

His support and his service reaffirm that the children of immigrants and immigrants themselves have a crucial role to play in our Federal Government.

I want to congratulate Xavier Becerra on his well-deserved appointment to serve as California's attorney general. While he is no longer with us in the House, I know that his new appointment will be even greater felt across our country during these troubling political times.

I have no doubt that, as attorney general, Xavier will defend our Constitution and fight for families in California and help our State serve as a beacon of hope and progress in America.

IMMIGRATION EXECUTIVE ORDER AND CONFLICT OF BUSINESS INTEREST

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

Ms. KAPTUR. Madam Speaker, I rise to focus on President Trump's curious executive action to deny U.S. entry of certain refugees and travelers who were cleared and properly vetted. The arbitrary and discriminatory nature of his order is odd in that he only identified seven countries to be included.

One must ask: Why were other nations excluded? Yes, excluded from the executive order are several Middle Eastern, African, and other nations where The Trump Organization has business interests, including Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, Azerbaijan, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia, where the majority of 9/11 terrorists originated.

We know Mr. Trump has failed to divest from his company, as ethics experts have duly noted. Every American should wonder whether he designed this executive order with his own business interests, at least, partly in mind. This is the purpose of divestiture, to eliminate any possible question of doubt or possible mal intent.

Without divesting from management and ownership, President Trump's circumstance threatens the basic tenet of the rule of law that the government and all of its actors will discharge duties in the best interest of the American people, not their self-interest or the interests of their cronies or the interest of their brand.

TRUMP'S REFUGEE ACTIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. CHENEY). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GOHMERT. Madam Speaker, I might say it is great seeing you in the chair. You are a natural fit. Maybe we can do something about that at some point.

It is an honor to speak in this hallowed Hall. There has been much ado made about contrived misrepresentations about what has gone on with President Trump's executive order regarding seven countries that the Obama administration designated as being problems when it comes to refugees coming from those countries.

It has been absolutely incredible. And I think some of us were talking that it really exemplifies why networks like CNN—that was the one, the only 24-hour cable news network—have lost so much to other networks. MSNBC, CNBC, and even Fox News got caught up in some of the misrepresentations, and I couldn't believe that they were spending the kind of time talking about a contrived issue.

Now, there was a problem in some innocent people being delayed and improperly handled, people who didn't deserve that. I am familiar with how that feels because I deal, like most of us do in this body, with TSA on virtually a weekly or even sometimes more often basis.

There is a great article here by John Hayward from January 29. Mr. Hayward says:

''The sober and logical reasons for President Donald Trump's executive order on refugees and visitors are rising above the noise after an evening of hysterical over-reactions and emotional meltdowns on the Nation's TV networks.

''Advocates of sane, secure immigration policy have long noted that it's almost impossible to have a reasonable discussion of the refugee and immigration issues, because it's been sentimentalized and politicized beyond the realm of rational thought.

''This weekend brings them another superb example of media-magnified shrieking about fascism, bleating about 'white nationalists,' howling about 'religious persecution,' false invocations of the Constitution, and theatrical sobbing on behalf of the Statue of Liberty.''

We do have that water coming off the Statute of Liberty being analyzed, so that we can determine whether or not it is tears or something else.

''For readers who want to wallow in the emotion, examples can be found in this handy dossier of hysteria compiled by the Washington Post. But clear-eyed adults prefer to examine plain facts about Trump's executive order:

''1. It is NOT a 'Muslim ban.' ''

I have the executive order here. Unlike those in the Senate and those in the media, who were just excoriating President Trump and anyone involved in this executive order, I actually read it, unlike those people. I read the executive order.

□ 1745

And because I read the executive order, I understood there was no ban against Muslims, no ban against Islam. It was very straightforward. And Hayward's article points that out.

He said: ''You will search the executive order in vain for mentions of Islam, or any other religion. By Sunday morning, the media began suffering acute attacks of honesty and writing headlines such as 'Trump's Latest Executive Order: Banning People From 7 Countries and More.''

And that was from CNN. And, Madam Speaker, I am very pleased that CNN finally got around to having a more truthful headline.

''Granted, CNN still slips in the phrase 'Muslim-majority countries' into every article about the order, including the post in which they reprinted its text in full, but CNN used the word 'Muslim,' not Trump. The order applies to all citizens of Iraq, Iran, Syria, Libya, Somalia, Sudan and Yemen. It does not specify Muslims. The indefinite hold on Syrian refugees

will affect Christians and Muslims alike,'' not to mention people of every other religion and people of no religion.

''As Tim Carney at the Washington Examiner points out, the largest Muslim-majority countries in the world are not named in the Executive Order.

''More countries may be added to the moratorium in the days to come, as the Secretary of Homeland Security has been instructed to complete a 30-day review of nations that don't provide adequate information for vetting applicants.

''It is also noteworthy that the ban is not absolute. Exceptions for 'foreign nationals traveling on diplomatic visas, North Atlantic Treaty Organization visas, C–2 visas for travel to the United Nations, and G–1, G–2, G–3 and G–4 visas' are expressly made in the order. The Departments of State and Homeland Security can also grant exceptions on a 'case-by-case basis' ''—that is all in the executive order—''and 'when in the national interest, issue visas or other immigration benefits to nationals of countries for which visas and benefits are otherwise blocked.'

''There is a provision in the Executive Order that says applications based on religious persecution will be prioritized 'provided that the religion of the individual is a minority religion in the individual's country of nationality.' ''

And so it is important to note here, I think from the executive order, that it says applications based on religious persecution. That means that people that have applied for visas or immigration benefits to come into the United States who, themselves, raise their religion as a reason to let them into the United States, those need to be prioritized based on whether or not their religion is actually being persecuted, those holding those religious beliefs are actually being persecuted. And I think that is a rather intelligent way to approach things.

But in those cases, it would be the applicant that would raise the issue of religion, not the Trump administration, not the State Department, not Homeland Security. It would be the foreign applicant trying to come into the United States who would be the one to raise that issue.

Now, the article goes on: ''This has been denounced as a 'stealth Muslim ban' by some of the very same people who were conspicuously silent when the Obama administration pushed Christians—who are the most savagely persecuted minority in the Middle East, with only the Yazidis offering real competition—to the back of the migration line.''

So it is important to note that, for years, this administration has been part of the discrimination and persecution against Christians in the world against whom there has been a genocide in progress.

So when the head of the U.N. was in charge of the refugee program and was asked why is there not a similar percentage of Christians coming in as refugees to other countries to the percentage that Christians make up in that nation they come from, basically, the man who is now head of United Nations said, well, it is important to leave them where they have this historical presence, basically.

So in other words, yes, there is a genocide going on. They want to kill off every Christian in those areas, every Christian in the Middle East, and so the U.N. now Secretary General says let's leave them in the area where they are being wiped off the map, brutally killed. Let's leave them there until we can say this place where they were historically has now shown there are none there. They have all been brutally murdered as the U.N. watched and didn't help. It is outrageous how uncivilized this United Nations has become.

I filed a bill, and I still think we should bring it to the floor, that would require a complete defunding by the United States of the United Nations until such time as they withdraw the resolution of the Security Council that condemned Israel.

I mean, it is like a teacher of mine in the fifth grade after I got beat up by a bully who had been held back two grades, was about 18 inches taller. She pointed to the class and said: This is what happens when little boys try to play with the big boys.

Well, that is basically what the Obama administration had been doing. It is basically what the U.N. had been doing. They took the side of the mean bullies that had been devastating the Christians in the area.

Having talked to so many Christians who were living in Syria and who the mainstream press say, oh, yeah, they are big Assad fans—no, they were not big Assad fans. They knew that he could be quite brutal, but their only point that the mainstream media in the United States and most of the world was missing is that Assad prevented Christians from being the victims of a genocide; and as Assad was weakened, the assaults and the murders and the rapes of Christians increased exponentially.

I do think that the United States may still be held to account in the ledger of world history—what I would submit is God's ledger—for having the power and the moral right to stop a genocide of Christians in the Middle East and we participated in leaving them where they were, as did the U.N., so that they could be brutally murdered.

I am going back to Mr. Hayward's article.

''2. The order''—talking about the executive order of Donald Trump. ''The order is based on security reviews conducted by President Barack Obama's deputies.''

And, Madam Speaker, for those in the mainstream media, I think it is important to repeat that line. President Trump's executive order that didn't ban Muslims but that ordered a temporary pause on people from certain countries from whom we had no information or inadequate information to vet the people that were coming in, it was based on security reviews conducted by President Barack Obama's deputies.

''As White House counselor Kellyanne Conway pointed out on 'Fox News Sunday,' the seven nations named in Trump's executive order are drawn from the Terrorist Prevention Act of 2015. The 2015 'Visa Waiver Program Improvement and Terrorist Travel Prevention Act of 2015' named Iraq, Iran, Sudan, and Syria, while its 2016 update added Libya, Somalia, and Yemen.

'' 'These are countries that have a history of training, harboring, exporting terrorists. We can't keep pretending and look the other way,' said Conway.

''3. The moratorium is largely temporary. Citizens of the seven countries''—and by the way, in this executive order that President Trump signed, there is no mention of the countries. It refers to what President Obama signed declaring, first, the four countries, and then the three countries.

It just refers to that that President Obama signed. He doesn't single out or name the countries; and I can't help but think, as intelligent as some of the people are that are assisting President Trump, that they showed a massive amount of naivete because it appears that they thought, if in the executive order President Trump refers to documents that President Obama signed designating these countries as countries where we didn't have adequate information, then even the mainstream media would have to go back to President Trump's and look above his signature and see that these are places that President Obama said were threats.

And then they would—having some semblance of a conscience—have to point out that actually Trump is just putting in an executive order of what basically Obama signed off on but didn't go ahead and carry out what needed to be done based on that law.

But, as I say, these folks were rather naive. And as the saying goes in Washington, no matter how cynical you get, it is never enough to catch up in this town. And so the Trump administration, the Trump advisers have a lot of growing to do to understand just how unfair the media can be. It is a valid presumption that if you don't name the countries, you make the mainstream media go back and look at what President Obama signed that they will understand, oh, this is what President Obama proclaimed that he is basing this on, so we can't be so mean to President Trump.

Well, it didn't turn out that way, and they are learning that just because it would make great sense, be common sense in most areas of the country—that is areas that are not the fringe

that voted for Hillary Clinton, but most of the country would say it is common sense. It isn't common within the original 10-by-10 mile boundaries of the District of Columbia, which are no longer 10 by 10 after ceding the land west of the Potomac to Virginia back in the 1840s.

But number four in this Hayward article: ''Obama banned immigration from Iraq, and Carter banned it from Iran.

''Fact-checking' website PolitiFact twists itself into knots to avoid giving a 'true' rating to the absolutely true fact that Jimmy Carter banned Iranian immigration in 1980, unless applicants could prove they were enemies of the Khomenei theocracy.

''One of PolitiFact's phony talking points states that Carter 'acted against Iranian nationals, not an entire religion.' As noted above, Trump's Executive Order is precisely the same—it does not act against an 'entire religion,' it names seven countries.''

But, you know, I had some personal experience with PolitiFact. I used the word earlier today, ''hack,'' ''political hack,'' in an interview, and that is what I think of PolitiFact. They shouldn't be called PolitiFact. They ought to be called ''PolitiHack.''

□ 1800

I know I was speaking here on the House floor—I think it was last year—and I made a statement based on data received by the Senate on the percentage of American citizens and the percentage of noncitizens—non-American citizens—who were in Federal prison for possession of a controlled substance. The reason I singled out possession was because President Obama has tried to make it appear that people in Federal prison have gotten such a bad rap because they really—just simple possession—they didn't deserve to be in prison so long. There is this whole intimation that, gee, there are people in Federal prison for possession of controlled substances who should have been let out a long time ago, and that is why we needed to have our laws changed.

Well, since the President had mentioned people in Federal prison for possession, I singularly pointed out that the huge majority of people in Federal prison for simple possession were not American citizens. I'm going from my memory, but, apparently, PolitiFact wanted to do as they normally do and cover for the Democrats and try to do a hatchet job on a Republican since they are not political fact, they are political hack. So my communications person gets an email from ''PolitiHack'' that uses the name PolitiFact and wanted to know the source of my information because they were going to rate my statement. She provided the facts as provided by this administration to the Senate.

Clearly what I had said was exactly true. I had quoted specifically from the data from the Obama administration, and it was 100 percent accurate. So then they come back—they thought they would catch me in not having proper information, and they come back to my communications person and said: Well, we have got information from the Bureau of Prisons that showed that if you look at all offenses that involved controlled substances, the percentage of noncitizens is not nearly that high. So why would he use just possession?

The point was because President Obama had used simple possession to try to make it look as if people in Federal prison were not there for very serious crimes, and there is certainly a smaller number of people in Federal prison for possession than for dealing drugs and other charges.

So in the end, after all the back and forth, they basically perpetuated a fraud upon the American people, PolitiFact—a bunch of political hacks—by not being willing to say that my statement was 100 percent true because they, in some contorted manner, did not want to point out that my statement was exactly true. They refer basically to, oh, that the number wasn't near that high of people involved in controlled substance. I didn't mention everybody with controlled substance.

So that is just a parenthetical in Hayward's article for me because I know personally PolitiFact is a political joke if what they were doing was not so serious in harming the American people by misrepresenting the true facts of what is going on. I hope that at some point being still remaining an entrepreneurial country for a little longer—at least we have got nearly 4 years to go that we can be assured of as an entrepreneurial country—at least in that time perhaps we will have an entrepreneurial group that will rise up and start scoring PolitiFact to show just how unfair they are, and, on occasion, when they are actually fair, show that as well so the American public can actually score the illegitimate scorers.

But going back to this article, it says: ''As for Barack Obama, he did indeed ban immigration from Iraq, for much longer than Trump's order bans it from the seven listed nations, and none of the people melting down today uttered a peep of protest. Richard Grenell summed it up perfectly in a Tweet: 'Obama took 6 months to review screening for 1 country. Trump will take 3 months for 7 countries. . . . ' ''

This article goes on: ''5. Trump's refugee caps are comparable to Obama's pre-2016 practices: David French, who was touted as a spoiler candidate to keep Donald Trump out of the White House during the presidential campaign—in other words, not a big Trump fan—wrote a lengthy and clear-headed analysis of the Executive Order for National Review. He noted that after the moratorium ends in 120 days''—and that is one section. It ends in 120 days, the other section is 90 days, another part says they will have 30 days to produce a report.

But it goes on to say: ''Trump caps refugee admissions at 50,000 per year . . . which is roughly the same as President Obama's admissions in 2011 and 2012, and not far below the 70,000 per year cap in place from 2013 to 2015.

''Obama had fairly low caps on refugees during the worst years of the Syrian civil war. He didn't throw open the doors to mass refugee admissions until his final year in office. Depending on how Trump's review of Syrian refugee policy turns out, he's doing little more than returning admissions to normal levels after a four-month pause for security reviews.

''6. The Executive Order is legal: Those invoking the Constitution to attack Trump's order are simply embarrassing themselves. The President has clear statutory authority to take these actions. As noted, his predecessors did so, without much controversy.

''Most of the legal arguments against Trump's order summarized by USA Today are entirely specious, such as attacking him for 'banning an entire religion,' which the order manifestly does not do. Critics of the order have a political opinion that it will in effect 'ban Muslims,' but that's not what it says. Designating specific nations as trouble spots and ordering a pause is entirely within the President's authority, and there is ample precedent to prove it.

''It should be possible to argue with the reasoning behind the order, or argue that it will have negative unintended consequences, without advancing hollow legal arguments. Of course, this is America 2017, so a wave of lawsuits will soon be sloshing through the courts.

''7. This Executive Order is a security measure, not an arbitrary expression of supposed xenophobia. Conway stressed the need to enhance immigration security from trouble spots in her 'Fox News Sunday' interview. French also addressed the subject in his post:

''When we know our enemy is seeking to strike America and its allies through the refugee population, when we know they've succeeded in Europe, and when the administration has doubts about our ability to adequately vet the refugees we admit into this nation, a pause is again not just prudent but arguably necessary. It is important that we provide sufficient aid and protection to keep refugees safe and healthy in place, but it is not necessary to bring Syrians to the United States to fulfill our vital moral obligations.''

The article goes on. It is well written, points are well made, and I would humbly submit, Madam Speaker, that we had the statistics last year that showed that for the cost of bringing one Syrian refugee to the United States for 1 year, we could help take care of 12 Syrian refugees in place in a safe zone over near their home.

Now, I am very encouraged that even though President Obama simply would not ever agree or strive to have a safe zone in areas near the refugees' homes so we can take care of 12 times more than we can possibly bring to our country for the same cost, and he is working on that, and he has got some agreements, and it looks like that may be a possibility. We give air cover, help create safe zones in areas there in the Middle East so the refugees can live without being killed and horribly brutally murdered and abused. That makes more sense. It appears that the President has worked with or talked with the Saudi authorities and perhaps will be able to get something like that worked out.

There were people just quite emotional over the fact that Saudi Arabia was not mentioned and Egypt was not mentioned. Actually, the order did not mention any nations by name. The Trump executive order simply referred to what President Obama signed off on which included seven countries. These are seven countries where it shouldn't even be arguable among people of common sense that we do not have, have not received, and cannot get adequate information from which to determine whether people wanting to come into the United States are actually refugees or if they are part of al Qaeda, al Nusra, and ISIS, and they want to come kill Americans and end our freedoms and our way of life. That is why such an executive order was entirely appropriate.

Although I supported a different candidate for President for over a year, I applaud President Trump in caring so deeply about the American public that he would take the honorable and appropriate steps to protect Americans that the last administration would not take.

A great article in Townhall from Matt Vespa is entitled: ''Friendly Reminder: Obama Selected The List Of Seven Countries in Trump's Executive Order.'' That certainly should be noted yet again.

Another great article here by Seth Frantzman says: ''Obama's Administration Made the 'Muslim Ban' Possible and the Media Won't Tell You.'' It is a good article there.

I think this article from John Hayward from January 27 on Breitbart may give us insight as to why there is so much howling by CAIR and CAIR associates because there were implications of people involved with CAIR in the Holy Land Foundation trial.

□ 1815

One just merely need to go look at the pleadings. Here in Congress, since Eric Holder and Loretta Lynch went through their entire terms as Attorneys General and continued to refuse to provide the discovery documents in the Holy Land Foundation trial that were provided in pretrial to the convicted terrorist supporters, it is pretty incomprehensible for some of us.

On one occasion, when Attorney General Holder pointed out that, well, there may be some classified issues involved, I pointed out to him—apparently, it went right over his head and he couldn't discern—the fact that the Justice Department gave the documents I am requesting to people that were then convicted of supporting terrorism.

If Justice could give them to the terrorists without concern about being classified, surely they could give them to Members of Congress. Although some of us may argue in such ways that it terrifies some people, we are not terrorists and we are authorized to receive classified information. We should have been authorized in Congress to receive the same documents that the Justice Department provided to the terrorist supporters who were convicted.

This article from John Hayward, January 27, points out that:

''According to Reuters, a 'factional' debate is under way within the Trump administration over adding the Muslim Brotherhood to the State Department and Treasury lists of foreign terrorist organizations.

''This is a measure often called for by critics of the Brotherhood as Center for Security Policy President Frank Gaffney, who once again recommended an official terrorist designation on Wednesday's edition of Breitbart News Daily.

''A source in the Trump transition team told Reuters the effort to so designate the Muslim Brotherhood is led by National Security Adviser Michael Flynn. The source was personally in agreement with Flynn.

''In Congress, a bill to add the Muslim Brotherhood to the official terrorist list was introduced this month by Senator TED CRUZ and Representative MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Secretary of State nominee Rex Tillerson denounced the Muslim Brotherhood as an 'agent of radical Islam' during his confirmation hearings, but he has not made public statements regarding adding them to the foreign terrorist organization list.

However, other Trump advisers, and members of the intelligence and law-enforcement communities, argue the Brotherhood has 'evolved peacefully in some countries,' Reuters claims.

''They also expressed the pragmatic concern that going hard on the Muslim Brotherhood could complicate diplomatic relations with nations such as Turkey. It would unquestionably, however, please such U.S. allies as Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, and Saudi Arabia, although there have been signs the Saudis might be softening on the Brotherhood as they search for allies against ISIS in Iran.

''One official familiar with the State Department's deliberations conceded that the Muslim Brotherhood's ideology has influenced such terrorist groups as Hamas, but since it is a large, loose organization spread over several nations, it could be legally difficult to apply the terrorist designation. Allied nations such as Britain have also expressed suspicions about the Brotherhood's influence, while stopping short of a formal terrorist designation.''

So this is important to note. It is a good article. But I can't help but wonder if the Council on American-Islamic Relations, or CAIR, may be getting quite concerned about the potential for designating their friends in the Muslim Brotherhood.

There may be a mutual relationship there. There may be people that are part of both groups. No doubt, CAIR is getting quite concerned about heightened talk about naming the Muslim Brotherhood as the terrorist organization they are. It is just that they don't use terrorist tactics, as some of them have indicated before, when they are making great progress without terrorism, but knowing that eventually, after they get as far as they can with peaceful methods, they will ultimately be resorting to terrorism to bring the United States and other Western civilizations, countries into the international caliphate, wherein we are ruled by a caliph.

So it is interesting times. Here, tonight, in perhaps an hour and a half or so, our new President will name the nominee to fill the Honorable Antonin Scalia's spot on the Supreme Court. He is still greatly missed. He was a great man. He was a great jurist. He was a great patriot and he was great for America and our freedoms. So we will look forward to hearing that.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SANFORD).

PRIVACY PROTECTION

Mr. SANFORD. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas for the way that, on a nightly basis, he comes down to the well and helps inform people. Jefferson, in the writings of our Founding Fathers, talked about how important it was to have an informed electorate.

I just really appreciate the way the gentleman gives people clarity and information that they can then digest and make their decisions with. That process of informing is, I think, a vital part of the politic. He does it on the daily basis, and I appreciate it. His doing so matters to me and to the people that I represent.

I appreciate so much the gentleman's yielding because I want to talk just a couple of minutes about a bill that I introduced today entitled the REAL ID Privacy Protection Act.

It is a bipartisan bill. It is supported from the Republican side by people like MARK MEADOWS. It is supported on the Democratic side by Democrats like CHELLIE PINGREE from Maine. I think they do so because it is a commonsense bill that gets at some of the deficiencies that one can find in REAL ID.

Quite specifically, what it does is eliminate the requirement that your personal documentation and documents be held and archived, in essence,

in warehouses for 10 years. It will not require your stuff to be out in government databases for 10 years. Secondly, it eliminates the requirement that the DMV databases be co-linked. Thirdly, it creates uniformity with regard to the way in which extensions are granted.

So the bottom line is your driver's license could still be used to get you in the Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort or it could be used to go into Joint Base Charleston or a whole host of other facilities around this country. More significantly, for the average flying public, you could still use your driver's license next year to be able to get on a plane in the United States of America.

Why is all this important?

It is important because individual privacy matters. It is important because equal treatment under the law matters. It is important because the 10th Amendment really matters. States have a role in which the Founding Fathers intended the Federal Government to fit with the State government, to fit with local government, and to fit with individual prerogative.

Now let's examine each one of those couple of things. One, if you look at South Carolina driver's licenses, just as an example, they are secure. We have holograms. We have barcodes. We have a whole host of different things that create security.

Yet, in the wake of 9/11, what the Federal Government, Homeland Security, and others decided at that time was that, in essence, what they wanted was a de facto national ID card and for the Federal Government to, in essence, federalize what had previously been a State function, with State's issuing driver's licenses.

There is not a Federal driver's license. Texas has driver's licenses, South Carolina has driver's licenses, Florida has driver's licenses. Each State may have a little bit different way of doing so, but it was a state prerogative.

In the wake of that Federal requirement—I was wearing a different hat at the time; I was wearing a Governor's hat—I joined with, for instance, Governor Schweitzer from Montana in saying: Wait, this doesn't make sense. The States still have a vital role here. This role does not need to be federalized. We pushed back and, long story short, we were successful with many others in that effort. Yet, what is happening is many of those deadline requirements are now reemerging and approaching.

The question we have to ask ourselves in Congress is: What are we going to do about it? Are we going to push back again? Or are we going to try and slow this again? Or are we just going to let the Federal Government come in and steamroll what has been a State function?

I think it is important that we act, and that is why we introduced this bill. It, again, gets at three important things. One, privacy matters. Quite simply, if government doesn't need your stuff, they don't get your stuff. I think that is a simple premise. Again, let me say it again. If government really doesn't need your stuff, it shouldn't get your stuff.

What do I mean by that?

What I mean is, if the requirement, as is now the case, is that the Federal Government take your personal information and they archive it for the next 10 years, do you really feel that you are more secure?

I would argue that is not at all the case. I would argue that it is much better to have a system that, when you take your birth certificate, you take your marriage license, you take your divorce papers, you take your citizenship papers, whatever it is that you have, take it all, let folks at the government level decide whether you are who you are or whether you are not who you are, and then give your stuff back to you. They don't need to house it for the next 10 years.

That is all this bill does. If you house it for the next 10 years, in fact, there is a considerable cost. The unfunded mandate to States is $17 billion.

So what we are saying is make the determination. Take, again, all your stuff, look at it, but then give it back, rather than requiring States to archive this stuff for the next 10 years.

It also matters because, again, of individual human privacy. Whether it is a divorce decree, whether it is a marriage license, whether it is citizenship papers, whatever it is, we have been in hearings over the last couple of weeks where it was proven that the Russians were quite involved in hacking of American databases.

Why do we want to open that up to Chinese hackers, Russian hackers, to whoever it is, if it isn't required and necessary from the standpoint of security?

Two, this bill simply gets at the notion that States matter. The 10th Amendment matters. Patton was once attributed with saying that, if you tell a soldier to take a hill, tell them to take the hill. Don't tell them how to attack the hill.

The same is true of the Federal Government as it relates to States. Give us a secured requirement, but then allow Texas to go about their way of taking the hill and South Carolina to come with its way of attacking the hill, as long as we take the hill, which is the necessary security requirement.

I think it is also important from the standpoint of security that one thing we have learned over time is that centralization of data does not make data more secure. We have a host of different breaches that have occurred at the Federal level that prove this point.

I think that one of the things that is interesting about Pearl Harbor is that the boats were in one spot and it was one-stop shopping for the Japanese. So, in fact, what we have seen in terms of military strategy going forward is people spread assets out. They don't want them congregated all in one spot so that an attacker would be able to take down a multitude of different assets with one particular raid. I think the same is true in the information age, as it relates to databases.

Finally, this bill is about equal treatment under the law. I think that what many States—South Carolina would be among them—are concerned about is: Is this too subjective? If you happen to be a blue State versus a red State, does that have some degree of determination in the way in which you get an extension or you don't get an extension?

□ 1830

Eighteen States and territories have been granted extensions. Seven States have been granted very limited extensions. All this bill does is say, Let's make that process transparent so that States can look one to the other and say, How was it that you got an extension but I didn't? I think that that level of uniformity would make sure that nobody suspects this system of being arbitrary or capricious by nature.

That is in simple form what the bill does. Again, it is about your privacy. We have had a long debate over the course of our country on security versus freedom, and what we don't want to do is give up certain, in essence, soul conditions, if you will, for freedom, including this notion of federalism, in our efforts to be secure. It is about recognizing that States are not wards of the Federal government, that a $7 billion unfunded liability really does matter to the taxpayers of different States. Finally, it is about equal treatment under the law.

Again, the bill is called the REAL ID Privacy Protection Act. I would ask Members to join us on that bill. I would ask folks out there listening to talk to their House Member about that bill because I think it is one that makes a whole lot of sense.

I would say, again, how much I appreciate the gentleman from Texas yielding. Most of all, I thank him for the way he comes down to the well on such a regular basis to inform the American public.

Mr. GOHMERT. I thank the gentleman from South Carolina not merely for the bill, but this gentleman's bills, just like the reasoned argument made here in this Chamber, well reasoned, well thought out. Having sat and listened to so many lawyers during my years on the bench, both trial bench and appellate bench, I would have welcomed the opportunity to hear from my friend from South Carolina in any courtroom where I was sitting. Well reasoned, a lot of good research in trying to solve problems. I look forward to a lot of us reading that bill and finding out because there is no doubt it involved just as good reasons as were used in your argument here today.

Also, we heard from another colleague of ours, the Honorable DON YOUNG from Alaska. I am actually optimistic about so many things with this

President in the Oval Office now, and one of them is that our friend, DON YOUNG from Alaska, may finally get some help.

President Carter had identified an area that really didn't have any wildlife to speak of. Yes, it was part of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, but it was an area that really didn't have wildlife to speak of. As I understand it, there are some caribou that may walk across there from time to time, but they can't stay because there is not enough to sustain them. But President Carter, as anticarbon energy as he was, realized that is an area that we can agree ought to be drilled for the production of oil and gas, and it has been fought over and over.

Who stands to gain?

Well, actually, the American public. But since so much oil has now been found out in my friend MIKE CONAWAY's district in west Texas, up in the Dakotas, we are not as needful of that as we were. But the people who will really benefit are the people of Alaska, and then additional beneficiaries will be the people of the United States and the people who want to get out from under the iron fist of Russia rising. We will be able to help them with that by not only becoming energy independent; but after energy independent, exporting oil and gas to other nations so they don't feel the pinch that nations like China and Russia are putting on them.

I thank my friend, Mr. YOUNG from Alaska, and my friend, the former Governor of South Carolina, Mr. SANFORD.

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

PEOPLE ARE WORRIED

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from California (Mr. GARAMENDI) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Madam Speaker, today is Tuesday, January 31. It has been 11 days since the inauguration of our new President; and, oh my goodness, has it been an extraordinary 11 days. I just hardly know where to begin.

Normally I come up here, and we talk about how we can grow the American economy, how we can provide jobs, how we can see a return of our manufacturing industries, but I am compelled today to pick up comments on the last 11 days.

I was at a dinner out in California on Friday evening, and a wide variety of people from multiple interest groups were there: some labor unions, some farmers, senior citizens, healthcare folks, teachers. There was an overwhelming sense of concern—deep concern—about the direction this country is going. Some of these friends of mine were Republicans and others were Democrats; some liberal, some conservative.

But to a person, they came up to me and said: Oh, my God, what is happening in Washington? Where is this going? What is he doing? What does it mean to us?

And some of them said: Will they really actually terminate the Affordable Care Act? Is ObamaCare really going to end? What about my insurance policy; will I lose it? I am on Medi-Cal. What will happen to me?

And teachers saying: How does this fit with the effort to improve our schools?

And some that had been in the military looked at some of what was going on and said: But veterans' care, this hiring freeze affects the Department of Veterans Affairs. What does it mean to me? What is happening in Washington?

Some others were concerned about, well, there is going to be this transportation bill, infrastructure bill. How are they going to fund it? Is it really going to happen?

I have been to many events in my years in public office, but I have never been to an event in which there was this overwhelming concern about what's going to happen in Washington.

I have seen changes occur. Jimmy Carter to Ronald Reagan, there was concern, but not the kind of angst, deep emotional concern about where this country is going. I have seen George H.W. Bush to Bill Clinton, and I am sure there were many Republicans concerned about where Bill Clinton would go, and then Clinton to George W. Bush, and then to Obama, but nothing like this.

It is not just last Friday night. Today, in front of my office in Davis, California, 200 people showed up to say: You have got to do something. You have got to make it clear that we can't have these shutting down our borders. You can't let them do that. Davis, California, the University of California, there are 5,000 foreign students and teachers on that campus. There are more than 200 from the countries that are affected by the immigration and by the ban on people coming in from those seven countries. What does it mean, they asked me? And what about the Affordable Care Act?

All across this Nation people are demonstrating. It is now 20 minutes to 7 here in Washington, D.C., and I suppose at 8 tonight the President is supposed to give a nationwide address on his next Supreme Court nominee. I am quite certain that tomorrow morning there will be another eruption of concern by Americans as to what does it mean if the Supreme Court throws out the role of the Federal Government in protecting voter rights? What does it mean if the Federal Government isn't there to assure that a woman's body is her own?

All across this Nation people are going: Oh, what is happening?

Executive order after executive order, starting with the repeal of the Affordable Care Act and instructions to every agency of the Federal Government to stop it, see that it doesn't work. And here in Congress, a budget resolution that calls for the elimination of the financial support for the Affordable Care Act which, if you remove the money, what happens to the subsidies, the tax subsidies that people are able to use to be able to afford healthcare insurance, the additional money that goes to the States for their Medicaid programs?

And, oh, what about the seniors? If that budget resolution actually goes through, the money that is in the Affordable Care Act to provide the seniors the opportunity to have their drug benefit costs reduced, affecting millions of American seniors, the money is gone. Will the drug benefit be gone also? Most assuredly it would unless, of course, you want to just increase the deficit.

And about that free annual visit that is available to seniors that has clearly extended the life of thousands or tens of thousands of seniors because they find out they have high blood pressure. They can take a cheap pill, get that blood pressure down and not have a stroke. Or maybe diabetes, the onset of diabetes. That free annual benefit checkup, will it still be available if the budget resolution and if Mr. Trump's attack on the Affordable Care Act actually happens?

People are worried. People are frightened. And they should be. They should be. Because this goes to the very ability of Americans to carry on their tasks, protections that are necessary to protect Americans from fraud. The House of Representatives today voted to pass a rule that would lead to the elimination of protections that Americans have in their financial services. I don't know how we repeal the Affordable Care Act.

And how are we going to protect America by building a wall? What is it going to cost? 15, 20, 30 billion dollars?

Most people who look at the immigration issue rationally would say it is not going to solve the problem. And besides that, the problem is dramatically reduced as a result of the Mexican economy growing and jobs being available there as a result of the enormous build-up that has already occurred with the Border Patrol and the immigration service. We have seen a dramatic reduction.

I was told today by some people that work in this field in California that the people who are coming into the United States illegally are mothers and children from Central America who are seeking refuge from the horrible gangs and violence in Central America. They are not sneaking over the border. They are presenting themselves at the border as refugees. We will come back to the refugee issue in a few moments.

□ 1845

How proud he looks, signing yet another executive order, this one on a wall. We are going to build a wall, 1,400 miles of wall between the United States and Mexico. So with a look of pride, he wants to spend anywhere

from $15 billion to $30 billion. So tell me what you could do with $15 billion. That is the minimum cost of the wall. Most people say it is probably closer to $30 billion.

What could you do with $15 billion? Well, I suppose you can build part of a wall, or you could start to build a wall. You are certainly not going to finish it. But let's just say you have got $15 billion and that is your down payment on a wall that most everybody says wouldn't work. That is not a joke. If you build a 50-foot-high wall, someone will get a 51-foot-tall ladder.

I am familiar with the universities in California. California State University has 460,000 students. So for $15 billion, you could fund the entire California State University system, provide tuition-free education for 3 years for 460,000 students, and pay all the faculty and the janitors and all the others. That is for $15 billion.

Now, if it is a $30 billion wall, then it is 6 years. So a junior in high school, for $30 billion, could go free, tuition free, all expenses paid. Every professor, every janitor, fully paid for 6 years—460,000 students and thousands upon thousands of professors, teachers, janitors, et cetera.

Or you could replace every pipe in Flint, Michigan, 270 times over. Do you want to solve the problem in Flint, Michigan, the lead pipe problem? 270 times for $15 billion, or that is more than 500 times, 540 times.

Or maybe you are concerned about Alzheimer's. And what American family is not concerned about Alzheimer's? If we were to spend that $15 billion on research, we would undoubtedly be able to develop a treatment—and this is what the scientists and doctors and researchers say. And we did increase the funding from around $500 million to just under $1 billion last year. But if you were able to ramp it up and develop that treatment for Alzheimer's, you could delay the onset of Alzheimer's in your family, or mine, by 5 years. And what does that mean? It means about a $220 billion in savings to the American taxpayers because that is money that will be spent for Medicare and Medicaid.

Or maybe you are just interested in national defense. Do you like submarines, the new Virginia class submarine? Well, let's see. We could build five of them. Or maybe you like aircraft carriers. For $15 billion, you could build one of the new aircraft carriers and an additional submarine.

So President Trump, what is our choice? You don't like these choices, and you want to build a wall that nobody believes will do much good dealing with illegal immigration?

Oh, I like this next one; 27,777 4-year, full-ride scholarships for an undergraduate program at the University of California. That is about the total undergraduate population at the University of California, Davis, which I have the honor of representing.

But we are going to build a wall. We are going to build a wall. For what purpose? 435 of us here and 100 Senators and one President have a task of making choices about what America is all about, choices about how we spend your tax money. You want your tax money spent on a wall?

Oh, excuse me. Mexico is going to pay for it. Do you think so?

The President has started a trade war with Mexico, has created a serious diplomatic crisis with our neighbor and our third largest trading partner, over trying to force Mexico to pay for his wall. Oh, that was really smart. But, hey, he's the President and he thinks he can do what he wants to do. Well, the Mexican President said, no, no, it is not going to be paid for by Mexico.

So who is going to pay for it? I say we have choices. I would much rather us spend our money on education, national defense, Alzheimer's, and on things that actually help Americans in so many different ways. That is just one of the issues that is in play.

Immigration? Oh, we put out a new executive order on immigration, and seven countries around the world cannot have their citizens any longer come to America for some period of time, and refugees from those countries can't come to America. What are those countries? Well, let me see. Among the seven, I believe there is this country called Iraq.

Excuse me, Mr. Trump. Isn't Iraq our ally in fighting ISIS? I think so. It is their troops plus 6,000 of our troops that are now engaged in a bitter fight to reclaim Mosul, to wipe ISIS out of Mosul. And so you are going to put a limitation on Iraqi citizens and refugees coming to the United States? I am sorry. I don't understand what sense that makes, Mr. President. Do you? Do you understand what you just did?

There is a four-star general in Iraq who is responsible for their Special Forces that are leading the fight in Mosul right now. This man's family came to the United States for safety because of the problems that existed there in Iraq. He cannot visit his family. Unless there is some sort of a waiver that has suddenly been developed for four-star Iraqi generals, he cannot go to Central Command in Tampa, Florida, to work on a strategy for the rest of the fight.

Oh, my God. What is going on here? What is happening? What sense does any of this make? Foreign policy experts, national security experts, experts on ISIS, on radical Islam all say the same thing. The ban on people traveling from those seven majority Muslim states will have a negative effect on our ability to deal with ISIS. That is what they say. Not my view, that is the view of security experts all across the spectrum, from the most conservative to the most progressive and liberal and everybody in between. This makes no sense whatsoever, Mr. President.

We sometimes use the word ''half-baked.'' This is not even beginning the process of being baked. This was put together by somebody that didn't know what they were doing. If they had consulted with policy experts outside of that little cabal in the White House, somebody might have said: Time out, time out, time out. Let's think this through. Why Iraq?

What is going to be the second step here? Easy enough, we are going to set the ban. But what does it mean? What does it mean to Muslim countries around the world that suddenly America is seen as shutting the door—or, shall we say, slamming the door—on Muslims? What does it mean here in the United States? It means that we are not safer. It means that our country is not protected, and, in fact, the action taken is counterproductive. That is what it means.

Who did this? Who is the architect of this policy? Was it the State Department? Apparently not. Was it the Justice Department? We know from the midnight firing—well, I guess it was actually 6 o'clock firing—yesterday of the acting Attorney General that it wasn't the Justice Department. They had an opportunity to review and look at the legality of the ban. They didn't involve themselves, and apparently the military didn't involve themselves.

So who was it that dreamed up this ban on men, women, children, refugees coming from seven countries?

None of the residents and refugees from those countries in the last 40 years has been responsible for one terrorist death in the United States. But those countries from which we know the terrorists came, from 9/11, were not included.

Saudi Arabia, not included in the ban. How is that, if we are worried about this problem of refugees who are citizens from those countries coming into the United States to carry out terrorist acts? Why didn't you look at Saudi Arabia? That is where most of the 9/11 folks came from. Or maybe Chechnya or Congo or Nigeria.

So who wrote it? Who is responsible? Well, two names have emerged. One, a Mr. Miller, and another, a Mr. Bannon, a Mr. Bannon who is the architect of the emergence of the alt-right. We are not talking about the conservative right. We are talking about the far right White nationalist movement in this Nation.

Mr. Bannon, who became Mr. Trump's campaign chairman, who is now the key person in the White House, not just on political policy, but on national security policy. He is said to have said, in 2013, that he is a Leninist and his goal is to blow up the system. He says he doesn't remember having said that. Well, I will take him at his word. But I do know that what he did with this ban for these seven countries is to make our Nation less safe. That, we know.

And just to double down on this issue of this superconservative fellow Mr. Bannon and his cohort Mr. Miller, just to make clear where we are headed, there has been a reorganization of the

National Security Council. These are the men and women that, over the years, have been responsible for making certain that our American policy maximizes our security that deals with international issues of great concern: what to do about China in the South China Sea, what to do about North Korea. How do we handle missile defense? How do we deal with Russia in the Ukraine? The National Security Council.

So what happened yesterday? Well, the President, which he has a right to do, reorganized the National Security Council. And two gentlemen, or two people, that have traditionally been on the National Security Council, who seem to know a little bit about national security, were previously in what is called the principles. These are the handful of people that meet with the President, the key national security leaders.

□ 1900

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is one of them and the Director of the National Intelligence organization—the two of them.

The President says: I don't need you in my little inner circle. Go away. You can be part of the larger thing, and when I want you, I will call you.

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the person responsible for the collection of our national intelligence—push him aside.

Who came in to take the place of the two people—the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Director of National Intelligence? Guess who? Mr. Bannon. Is he a national security expert? He spent a few years in the military decades ago, but now he is sitting as one of the principals on our National Security Council. What is his mindset? Read his history. I wouldn't recommend you go to Breitbart—I wouldn't spend a whole lot of time on that—but there is a history here. There is a history, and it is a dangerous history.

This man is now sitting as the principal voice, because he has the President's ear, on the National Security Council—the fellow, together with Mr. Miller, who is responsible for the ban on immigrants, travelers, and refugees from seven countries, which has become a major international, diplomatic crisis. ISIS is already using that ban—it is right here in the newspaper—to recruit in the Middle East, to recruit in Africa, and to encourage homegrown violence and terrorism here in the United States.

Well done, Mr. Miller.

Well done, Mr. Bannon.

And very bad for our country.

We are in the midst of executive orders, one after another—often two a day. My final concern is one that comes up 25 days from now. Five days ago, Trump went over to the Pentagon and signed yet another executive order. He came out of the meeting and said: We are going to have a new war plan. We are going to wipe ISIS from the face of the Earth, and the Pentagon will deliver to me in 30 days a war plan to wipe ISIS off the face of the Earth.

Action. Action. Action.

Go with care. Be slow to war.

We will see what that plan is. My guess is it will cost millions upon millions—if not billions—of dollars. It will put our troops—boots—back on the ground in Iraq and Syria, and we will start the cycle one more time. We will see. We will see what the Pentagon comes up with in a war plan. We have not been told the specific instructions that the Commander in Chief has given to the Pentagon; but I will tell you that this member of the House Armed Services Committee is very concerned. Keep in mind that our effort against ISIS and al Qaeda is based on a 2001 authorization to use military force in Afghanistan against al Qaeda and related entities. It has been stretched.

One of the things that I am quite concerned about coming out of the Obama administration is that that administration stretched the 2001—a 16-year-old—authorization to use force—a declaration of war against al Qaeda—to justify the American military actions in Iraq, Syria, Liberia, Yemen, Somalia, Afghanistan, and Pakistan.

We will see what the war plan is—we will learn soon enough—and I suspect that this Congress will be asked to finance it. We will be asked to pay for the men and women who will be sent into harm's way and for the munitions and the airplanes and the other equipment necessary.

I would hope that all of us take a long, long look at this and that we ask this question: If we do that, then what happens next? We didn't ask that question when we went to war in Afghanistan in 2001 and 2002. We didn't ask that question when we invaded Iraq a couple of years later. I am not sure we have asked that question as we reengage ourselves in the current Iraqi war and Syria; but we should always ask: What is the result of our action? What is likely to happen?

We have choices. We have choices to build a wall or to educate our children or to care for our seniors. We have choices about war or not. We have choices about how we deal with people around this world, choices about what we do with refugees—people who are fleeing persecution, fleeing death—who are doing the very, very best they can to care for their families and children in the most desperate of situations. We have a choice. We can slam the door on them and say ''tough luck,'' or we can do what ought to be the American tradition, and that is to provide comfort, to provide assistance, and to show the good part of America.

Mr. President, you have given us 10 days of the most disruptive chaos I have ever seen in my many years in public life. You have a choice, too, Mr. President. You have a choice to take a deep breath, to not try to carry out every one of your campaign promises, most of which I think were ill-founded. You don't have to do it on day 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. You can take a deep breath, and you can think, together with Mr. Bannon or with Mr. Miller or with, perhaps, somebody outside of your little inner circle.

Mr. President, you might ask other people what is the effect of what you are doing. Think about the second level of effect, and slow it down, and be aware that there are consequences. For every action, there is going to be another reaction. We are already seeing that. I am sure you have seen the millions of Americans in the streets protesting about which you have thus far done. Continue on, and you will see more because Americans are concerned. They are frightened.

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

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

For what purpose does the gentleman from California seek recognition?

Mr. GARAMENDI. I know the courtesy of this House, Mr. Speaker, and we are not supposed to direct our remarks everywhere; so let me amend my remarks.

Mr. Speaker, there are within the White House two individuals who I believe are responsible. So, Mr. Speaker——

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will suspend.

The gentleman is not recognized for debate.

PUBLICATION OF COMMITTEE RULES

RULES OF THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE 115TH CONGRESS

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
Washington, DC, January 31, 2017.

Hon. PAUL RYAN,
Speaker of the House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to clause 2(a)(2) of House Rule XI, the Committee on Appropriations adopted its rules for the 115th Congress on January 24, 2017, and I submit them now for publication in the Congressional Record.

Sincerely,

RODNEY FRELINGHUYSEN,
Chairman.

Resolved, That the rules and practices of the Committee on Appropriations, House of Representatives, in the One Hundred Fourteenth Congress, except as otherwise provided hereinafter, shall be and are hereby adopted as the rules and practices of the Committee on Appropriations in the One Hundred Fifteenth Congress.

The foregoing resolution adopts the following rules:

SEC. 1: POWER TO SIT AND ACT

(a) For the purpose of carrying out any of its functions and duties under rules X and XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee and each of its subcommittees is authorized:

(1) To sit and act at such times and places within the United States whether the House is in session, has recessed, or has adjourned, and to hold such hearings as it deems necessary; and

(2) To require, by subpoena or otherwise, the attendance and testimony of such witnesses and the production of such books, reports, correspondence, memorandums, papers, and documents as it deems necessary.

(b) The Chairman, or any Member designated by the Chairman, may administer oaths to any witness.

(c) A subpoena may be authorized and issued by the Committee or its subcommittees under subsection (a)(2) in the conduct of any investigation or activity or series of investigations or activities, only when authorized by a majority of the Members of the Committee voting, a majority being present. The power to authorize and issue subpoenas under subsection (a)(2) may be delegated to the Chairman pursuant to such rules and under such limitations as the Committee may prescribe. Authorized subpoenas shall be signed by the Chairman or by any Member designated by the Committee.

(d) Compliance with any subpoena issued by the Committee or its subcommittees may be enforced only as authorized or directed by the House.

SEC. 2: SUBCOMMITTEES

(a) The Majority Caucus of the Committee shall establish the number of subcommittees and shall determine the jurisdiction of each subcommittee.

(b) Each subcommittee is authorized to meet, hold hearings, receive evidence, and report to the Committee all matters referred to it.

(c) All legislation and other matters referred to the Committee shall be referred to the subcommittee of appropriate jurisdiction within two weeks unless, by majority vote of the Majority Members of the full Committee, consideration is to be by the full Committee.

(d) The Majority Caucus of the Committee shall determine an appropriate ratio of Majority to Minority Members for each subcommittee. The Chairman is authorized to negotiate that ratio with the Minority; Provided, however, That party representation in each subcommittee, including ex-officio members, shall be no less favorable to the Majority than the ratio for the full Committee.

(e) The Chairman and Ranking Minority Member of the full Committee are each authorized to sit as a member of all subcommittees and to participate, including voting, in all of the work of the subcommittees.

SEC. 3: STAFFING

(a) Committee Staff—The Chairman is authorized to appoint the staff of the Committee, and make adjustments in the job titles and compensation thereof subject to the maximum rates and conditions established in clause 9(c) of rule X of the Rules of the House of Representatives. In addition, he is authorized, in his discretion, to arrange for their specialized training. The Chairman is also authorized to employ additional personnel as necessary.

(b) Assistants to Members:

(1) Each chairman and ranking minority member of a subcommittee or the full Committee, including a Chairman Emeritus, may select and designate one staff member who shall serve at the pleasure of that Member.

(2) Notwithstanding (b)(1), the Chairman may prescribe such terms and conditions necessary to achieve a reduction in the number of Assistants to Members previously designated by a Member of the Committee prior to the adoption of the Rules of the House establishing the Committee for the 112th Congress.

(3) Staff members designated under this subsection shall be compensated at a rate, determined by the Member, not to exceed 75 per centum of the maximum established in clause 9(c) of Rule X of the Rules of the House of Representatives.

(4) Members designating staff members under this subsection must specifically certify by letter to the Chairman that the employees are needed and will be utilized for Committee work.

SEC. 4: COMMITTEE MEETINGS

(a) Regular Meeting Day—The regular meeting day of the Committee shall be the first Wednesday of each month while the House is in session if notice is given pursuant to paragraph (d)(3).

(b) Additional and Special Meetings:

(1) The Chairman may call and convene, as he considers necessary, additional meetings of the Committee for the consideration of any bill or resolution pending before the Committee or for the conduct of other Committee business. The Committee shall meet for such purpose pursuant to that call of the Chairman.

(2) If at least three Committee Members desire that a special meeting of the Committee be called by the Chairman, those Members may file in the Committee Offices a written request to the Chairman for that special meeting. Such request shall specify the measure or matter to be considered. Upon the filing of the request, the Committee Clerk shall notify the Chairman.

(3) If within three calendar days after the filing of the request, the Chairman does not call the requested special meeting to be held within seven calendar days after the filing of the request, a majority of the Committee Members may file in the Committee Offices their written notice that a special meeting will be held, specifying the date and hour of such meeting, and the measure or matter to be considered. The Committee shall meet on that date and hour.

(4) Immediately upon the filing of the notice, the Committee Clerk shall notify all Committee Members that such special meeting will be held and inform them of its date and hour and the measure or matter to be considered. Such notice shall also be made publicly available in electronic form and shall be deemed to satisfy paragraph (d)(3). Only the measure or matter specified in that notice may be considered at the special meeting.

(c) Vice Chairman To Preside in Absence of Chairman—A member of the majority party on the Committee or subcommittee thereof designated by the chairman of the full Committee shall be vice chairman of the Committee or subcommittee, as the case may be, and shall preside at any meeting during the temporary absence of the chairman. If the chairman and vice chairman of the Committee or subcommittee are not present at any meeting of the Committee or subcommittee, the ranking member of the majority party who is present shall preside at that meeting.

(d) Business Meetings:

(1) Each meeting for the transaction of business, including the markup of legislation, of the Committee and its subcommittees shall be open to the public except when the Committee or the subcommittee concerned, in open session and with a majority present, determines by roll call vote that all or part of the remainder of the meeting on that day shall be closed.

(2) No person other than Committee Members and such congressional staff and departmental representatives as they may authorize shall be present at any business or markup session which has been closed.

(3) The Chairman shall announce the date, place, and subject matter of each committee meeting for the transaction of business, which may not commence earlier than the third day on which members have notice thereof, unless the Chairman, with the concurrence of the Ranking Minority Member, or the Committee by majority vote with a quorum present for the transaction of business, determines there is good cause to begin the meeting sooner, in which case the Chairman shall make the announcement at the earliest possible date. An announcement shall be published promptly in the Daily Digest and made publicly available in electronic form.

(4) At least 24 hours prior to the commencement of a meeting for the markup of a bill or resolution, or at the time an announcement is made pursuant to the preceding subparagraph within 24 hours before such meeting, the Chairman shall cause the text of such bill or resolution to be made publicly available in electronic form.

(e) Committee Records:

(1) The Committee shall keep a complete record of all Committee action, including a record of the votes on any question on which a roll call is taken. The result of each roll call vote shall be available for inspection by the public during regular business hours in the Committee Offices and also made available in electronic form within 48 hours of such record vote. The information made available for public inspection shall include a description of the amendment, motion, or other proposition, and the name of each Member voting for and each Member voting against, and the names of those Members present but not voting.

(2) Committee records (including hearings, data, charts, and files) shall be kept separate and distinct from the congressional office records of the Chairman of the Committee. Such records shall be the property of the House, and all Members of the House shall have access thereto.

(3) The records of the Committee at the National Archives and Records Administration shall be made available in accordance with rule VII of the Rules of the House, except that the Committee authorizes use of any record to which clause 3(b)(4) of rule VI of the Rules of the House would otherwise apply after such record has been in existence for 20 years. The Chairman shall notify the Ranking Minority Member of any decision, pursuant to clause 3(b)(3) or clause 4(b) of rule VI of the Rules of the House, to withhold a record otherwise available, and the matter shall be presented to the Committee for a determination upon the written request of any Member of the Committee.

(f) Availability of Amendments Adopted—Not later than 24 hours after the adoption of an amendment to a bill or resolution, the Chairman shall cause the text of any amendment adopted thereto to be made publicly available in electronic form.

SEC. 5: COMMITTEE AND SUBCOMMITTEE HEARINGS

(a) Overall Budget Hearings—Overall budget hearings by the Committee, including the hearing required by section 242(c) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1970 and clause 4 (a)(1) of rule X of the Rules of the House of Representatives, shall be conducted in open session except when the Committee in open session and with a majority present, determines by roll call vote that the testimony to be taken at that hearing on that day may be related to a matter of national security; except that the Committee may by the same procedure close one subsequent day of hearing. A transcript of all such hearings shall be printed and a copy furnished to each Member, Delegate, and the Resident Commissioner from Puerto Rico.

(b) Other Hearings:

(1) All other hearings conducted by the Committee or its subcommittees shall be open to the public except when the Committee or subcommittee in open session and

with a majority present determines by roll call vote that all or part of the remainder of that hearing on that day shall be closed to the public because disclosure of testimony, evidence, or other matters to be considered would endanger the national security or would violate any law or Rule of the House of Representatives. Notwithstanding the requirements of the preceding sentence, a majority of those present at a hearing conducted by the Committee or any of its subcommittees, there being in attendance the number required under section 5(c) of these rules to be present for the purpose of taking testimony, (1) may vote to close the hearing for the sole purpose of discussing whether testimony or evidence to be received would endanger the national security or violate clause 2(k)(5) of rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives or (2) may vote to close the hearing, as provided in clause 2(k)(5) of such rule. No Member of the House of Representatives may be excluded from nonparticipatory attendance at any hearing of the Committee or its subcommittees unless the House of Representatives shall by majority vote authorize the Committee or any of its subcommittees, for purposes of a particular series of hearings on a particular article of legislation or on a particular subject of investigation, to close its hearings to Members by the same procedures designated in this subsection for closing hearings to the public; Provided, however, That the Committee or its subcommittees may by the same procedure vote to close five subsequent days of hearings.

(2) Subcommittee chairmen shall coordinate the development of schedules for meetings or hearings after consultation with the Chairman and other subcommittee chairmen with a view toward avoiding simultaneous scheduling of Committee and subcommittee meetings or hearings.

(3) Each witness who is to appear before the Committee or any of its subcommittees as the case may be, insofar as is practicable, shall file in advance of such appearance, a written statement of the proposed testimony and shall limit the oral presentation at such appearance to a brief summary, except that this provision shall not apply to any witness appearing before the Committee in the overall budget hearings.

(4) Each witness appearing in a nongovernmental capacity before the Committee, or any of its subcommittees as the case may be, shall to the greatest extent practicable, submit a written statement including a curriculum vitae and a disclosure of the amount and source (by agency and program) of any Federal grant (or subgrant thereof) or contract (or subcontract thereof), or contracts or payments originating from a foreign government, received during the current fiscal year or either of the two previous fiscal years by the witness or by an entity represented by the witness and related to the subject matter of the hearing. Such statements, with appropriate redactions to protect the privacy of witnesses, shall be made publicly available in electronic form not later than one day after the witness appears. The disclosure referred to in this paragraph shall include the amount and source of each Federal grant (or subgrant thereof) or contract (or subcontract thereof) related to the subject matter of the hearing, and the amount and country of origin of any payment or contract related to the subject matter of the hearing originating with a foreign government.

(c) Quorum for Taking Testimony—The number of Members of the Committee which shall constitute a quorum for taking testimony and receiving evidence in any hearing of the Committee shall be two.

(d) Calling and Interrogation of Witnesses:

(1) The Minority Members of the Committee or its subcommittees shall be entitled, upon request to the Chairman or subcommittee chairman, by a majority of them before completion of any hearing, to call witnesses selected by the Minority to testify with respect to the matter under consideration during at least one day of hearings thereon.

(2) The Committee and its subcommittees shall observe the five-minute rule during the interrogation of witnesses until such time as each Member of the Committee or subcommittee who so desires has had an opportunity to question the witness.

(e) Broadcasting and Photographing of Committee Meetings and Hearings—Whenever a hearing or meeting conducted by the full Committee or any of its subcommittees is open to the public, those proceedings shall be open to coverage by television, radio, and still photography, and shall be conducted in accordance with the requirements set forth in clause (4)(f) of rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives. Neither the full Committee Chairman or subcommittee chairman shall limit the number of television or still cameras to fewer than two representatives from each medium (except for legitimate space or safety, in which case pool coverage shall be authorized). To the maximum practicable, the Committee shall provide audio and video coverage of each hearing or meeting for the transaction of business in a manner that allows the public to easily listen to and view the proceedings and shall maintain the recordings of such coverage in a manner that is easily accessible to the public.

(f) Subcommittee Meetings—No subcommittee shall sit while the House is reading an appropriation measure for amendment under the five-minute rule or while the Committee is in session.

(g) Public Notice of Committee Hearings—The Chairman of the Committee shall make public announcement of the date, place, and subject matter of any Committee or subcommittee hearing at least one week before the commencement of the hearing. If the Chairman of the Committee or subcommittee, with the concurrence of the ranking minority member of the Committee or respective subcommittee, determines there is good cause to begin the hearing sooner, or if the Committee or subcommittee so determines by majority vote, a quorum being present for the transaction of business, the Chairman or subcommittee chairman shall make the announcement at the earliest possible date. Any announcement made under this subsection shall be promptly published in the Daily Digest and made publicly available in electronic form.

SEC. 6: PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

(a) Prompt Reporting Requirement:

(1) It shall be the duty of the Chairman to report, or cause to be reported promptly to the House any bill or resolution approved by the Committee and to take or cause to be taken necessary steps to bring the matter to a vote.

(2) In any event, a report on a bill or resolution which the Committee has approved shall be filed within seven calendar days (exclusive of days in which the House is not in session) after the day on which there has been filed with the Committee Clerk a written request, signed by a majority of Committee Members, for the reporting of such bill or resolution. Upon the filing of any such request, the Committee Clerk shall notify the Chairman immediately of the filing of the request. This subsection does not apply to the reporting of a regular appropriation bill or to the reporting of a resolution of inquiry addressed to the head of an executive department.

(b) Presence of Committee Majority—No measure or recommendation shall be reported from the Committee unless a majority of the Committee was actually present.

(c) Roll Call Votes—With respect to each roll call vote on a motion to report any measure or matter of a public character, and on any amendment offered to the measure of matter, the total number of votes cast for and against, and the names of those Members voting for and against, shall be included in the Committee report on the measure or matter.

(d) Compliance With Congressional Budget Act—A Committee report on a bill or resolution which has been approved by the Committee shall include the statement required by section 308(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, separately set out and clearly identified, if the bill or resolution provides new budget authority.

(e) Changes in Existing Law—Each Committee report on a general appropriation bill shall contain a concise statement describing fully the effect of any provision of the bill which directly or indirectly changes the application of existing law.

(f) Rescissions and Transfers—Each bill or resolution reported by the Committee shall include separate headings for rescissions and transfers of unexpended balances with all proposed rescissions and transfers listed therein. The report of the Committee accompanying such a bill or resolution shall include a separate section with respect to such rescissions or transfers.

(g) Listing of Unauthorized Appropriations—Each Committee report on a general appropriation bill shall contain a list of all appropriations contained in the bill for any expenditure not currently authorized by law for the period concerned (except for classified intelligence or national security programs, projects, or activities) along with a statement of the last year for which such expenditures were authorized, the level of expenditures authorized for that year, the actual level of expenditures for that year, and the level of appropriations in the bill for such expenditures.

(h) Duplicative Programs—Each Committee report on a bill or joint resolution that establishes or reauthorizes a Federal program shall contain a statement indicating whether such program is known to be duplicative of another program, pursuant to clause 3(c)(5) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives.

(i) Supplemental or Minority Views:

(1) If, at the time the Committee approves any measure or matter, any Committee Member gives notice of intention to file supplemental, minority, additional, or dissenting views, all Members shall be entitled to not less than two additional calendar days after the day of such notice (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays) in which to file such views in writing and signed by the Member, with the Clerk of the Committee. All such views so filed shall be included in and shall be a part of the report filed by the Committee with respect to that measure or matter.

(2) The Committee report on that measure or matter shall be printed in a single volume which—

(i) shall include all supplemental, minority, additional, or dissenting views which have been submitted by the time of the filing of the report, and

(ii) shall have on its cover a recital that any such supplemental, minority, additional, or dissenting views are included as part of the report.

(3) This subsection does not preclude—

(i) the immediate filing or printing of a Committee report unless timely request for

the opportunity to file supplemental, minority, additional, or dissenting views has been made as provided by such subsection; or

(ii) the filing by the Committee of a supplemental report on a measure or matter which may be required for correction of any technical error in a previous report made by the Committee on that measure or matter.

(4) If, at the time a subcommittee approves any measure or matter for recommendation to the full Committee, any Member of that subcommittee who gives notice of intention to offer supplemental, minority, additional, or dissenting views shall be entitled, insofar as is practicable and in accordance with the printing requirements as determined by the subcommittee, to include such views in the Committee Print with respect to that measure or matter.

(j) Availability of Reports—A copy of each bill, resolution, or report shall be made available to each Member of the Committee at least three calendar days (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays) in advance of the date on which the Committee is to consider each bill, resolution, or report; Provided, That this subsection may be waived by agreement between the Chairman and the Ranking Minority Member of the full Committee.

(k) Performance Goals and Objectives—Each Committee report shall contain a statement of general performance goals and objectives, including outcome-related goals and objectives, for which the measure authorizes funding.

(l) Motion to go to Conference—The Chairman is directed to offer a motion under clause 1 of rule XXII of the Rules of the House whenever the Chairman considers it appropriate.

SEC. 7: VOTING

(a) No vote by any Member of the Committee or any of its subcommittees with respect to any measure or matter may be cast by proxy.

(b) The vote on any question before the Committee shall be taken by the yeas and nays on the demand of one-fifth of the Members present.

(c) The Chairman of the Committee or the chairman of any of its subcommittees may—

(1) postpone further proceedings when a record vote is ordered on the question of approving a measure or matter or on adopting an amendment;

(2) resume proceedings on a postponed question at any time after reasonable notice.

When proceedings resume on a postponed question, notwithstanding any intervening order for the previous question, an underlying proposition shall remain subject to further debate or amendment to the same extent as when the question was postponed.

SEC. 8: STUDIES AND EXAMINATIONS

The following procedure shall be applicable with respect to the conduct of studies and examinations of the organization and operation of Executive Agencies under authority contained in section 202(b) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 and in clause (3)(a) of rule X of the Rules of the House of Representatives:

(a) The Chairman is authorized to appoint such staff and, in his discretion, arrange for the procurement of temporary services of consultants, as from time to time may be required.

(b) Studies and examinations will be initiated upon the written request of a subcommittee which shall be reasonably specific and definite in character, and shall be initiated only by a majority vote of the subcommittee, with the chairman of the subcommittee and the ranking minority member thereof participating as part of such majority vote. When so initiated such request shall be filed with the Clerk of the Committee for submission to the Chairman and the Ranking Minority Member and their approval shall be required to make the same effective. Notwithstanding any action taken on such request by the chairman and ranking minority member of the subcommittee, a request may be approved by a majority of the Committee.

(c) Any request approved as provided under subsection (b) shall be immediately turned over to the staff appointed for action.

(d) Any information obtained by such staff shall be reported to the chairman of the subcommittee requesting such study and examination and to the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member, shall be made available to the members of the subcommittee concerned, and shall not be released for publication until the subcommittee so determines.

(e) Any hearings or investigations which may be desired, aside from the regular hearings on appropriation items, when approved by the Committee, shall be conducted by the subcommittee having jurisdiction over the matter.

SEC. 9: TEMPORARY INVESTIGATIVE TASK FORCES

(a) The Chairman of the full Committee, in consultation with the Ranking Member of the full Committee, may establish and appoint members to serve on task forces of the Committee, to examine specific activities for a limited period of time in accordance with clause 5(b)2(C) of rule X of the Rules of the House.

(b) The Chairman of the full Committee shall issue a written directive, in consultation with the Ranking Member of the full Committee, delineating the specific activities to be reviewed by a task force constituted pursuant to the preceding paragraph.

(c) A task force constituted under this section shall provide a written report of its findings and recommendations to the full Committee Chairman and Ranking Member and members of the relevant subcommittees having jurisdiction over the matters reviewed. Such report shall be approved by a majority vote of the task force and shall include any supplemental, minority, additional, or dissenting views submitted by a Member of the task force or a member of a subcommittee having jurisdiction over the matter reviewed.

(d) Any information obtained during the course of such investigation, and any report produced by, a task force pursuant to this section, shall not be released until the Chairman of the full Committee has authorized such release.

(e) The Chairman is authorized to appoint such staff, and, in his discretion, arrange for the procurement of temporary services, as from time to time may be required.

SEC. 10: OFFICIAL TRAVEL

(a) The chairman of a subcommittee shall approve requests for travel by subcommittee members and staff for official business within the jurisdiction of that subcommittee. The ranking minority member of a subcommittee shall concur in such travel requests by minority members of that subcommittee and the Ranking Minority Member shall concur in such travel requests for Minority Members of the Committee. Requests in writing covering the purpose, itinerary, and dates of proposed travel shall be submitted for final approval to the Chairman. Specific approval shall be required for each and every trip.

(b) The Chairman is authorized during the recess of the Congress to approve travel authorizations for Committee Members and staff, including travel outside the United States.

(c) As soon as practicable, the Chairman shall direct the head of each Government agency concerned to honor requests of subcommittees, individual Members, or staff for travel, the direct or indirect expenses of which are to be defrayed from an executive appropriation, only upon request from the Chairman.

(d) In accordance with clause 8 of rule X of the Rules of the House of Representatives and section 502(b) of the Mutual Security Act of 1954, as amended, local currencies owned by the United States shall be available to Committee Members and staff engaged in carrying out their official duties outside the United States, its territories, or possessions. No Committee Member or staff member shall receive or expend local currencies for subsistence in any country at a rate in excess of the maximum per diem rate set forth in applicable Federal law.

(e) Travel Reports:

(1) Members or staff shall make a report to the Chairman on their travel, covering the purpose, results, itinerary, expenses, and other pertinent comments.

(2) With respect to travel outside the United States or its territories or possessions, the report shall include: (1) an itemized list showing the dates each country was visited, the amount of per diem furnished, the cost of transportation furnished, and any funds expended for any other official purpose; and (2) a summary in these categories of the total foreign currencies and/or appropriated funds expended. All such individual reports on foreign travel shall be filed with the Chairman no later than 60 days following completion of the travel for use in complying with reporting requirements in applicable Federal law, and shall be open for public inspection.

(3) Each Member or employee performing such travel shall be solely responsible for supporting the amounts reported by the Member or employee.

(4) No report or statement as to any trip shall be publicized making any recommendations on behalf of the Committee without the authorization of a majority of the Committee.

(f) Members and staff of the Committee performing authorized travel on official business pertaining to the jurisdiction of the Committee shall be governed by applicable laws or regulations of the House and of the Committee on House Administration pertaining to such travel, and as promulgated from time to time by the Chairman.

SEC. 11. ACTIVITIES REPORTS:

(a) Not later than January 2 of each odd-numbered year, the Committee shall submit to the House a report on the activities of the Committee.

(b) After adjournment sine die of a regular session of Congress, or after December 15, whichever occurs first, the Chairman may file the report with the Clerk of the House at any time and without the approval of the Committee, provided that a copy of the report has been available to each Member of the Committee for at least seven calendar days and the report includes any supplemental, minority, additional, or dissenting views submitted by a Member of the Committee.

PUBLICATION OF COMMITTEE RULES

RULES OF THE COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION FOR THE 115TH CONGRESS

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION,
Washington, DC, January 30, 2017.

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

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to clause 2(a)(2) of House Rule XI, I hereby submit the Rules of the Committee on House Administration for publication in the Congressional Record. The Rules were adopted by the Committee in its organizational meeting.

Sincerely,

GREGG HARPER,
Chairman.

RULE NO. 1

GENERAL PROVISIONS

(a) The Rules of the House are the rules of the Committee so far as applicable, except that a motion to recess from day to day is a privileged motion in the Committee.

(b) The Committee is authorized at any time to conduct such investigations and studies as it may consider necessary or appropriate in the exercise of its responsibilities under House Rule X and, subject to the adoption of expense resolutions as required by House Rule X, clause 6, to incur expenses (including travel expenses) in connection therewith.

(c) The Committee is authorized to have printed and bound testimony and other data presented at hearings held by the Committee, and to make such information available to the public. All costs of stenographic services and transcripts in connection with any meeting or hearing of the Committee shall be paid from the appropriate House account.

(d) The Committee shall submit to the House, not later than January 2 of each odd-numbered year, a report on the activities of the committee under House Rules X and XI.

(e) The Committee's rules shall be made publicly available in electronic form and published in the Congressional Record not later than 30 days after the Committee is elected in each odd-numbered year.

RULE NO. 2

REGULAR AND SPECIAL MEETINGS

(a) The regular meeting date of the Committee on House Administration shall be the second Wednesday of every month when the House is in session in accordance with Clause 2(b) of House Rule XI. If the House is not in session on the second Wednesday of a month, the regular meeting date shall be the third Wednesday of that month. Additional meetings may be called by the Chair of the Committee as she or he may deem necessary or at the request of a majority of the members of the Committee in accordance with Clause 2(c) of House Rule XI. The determination of the business to be considered at each meeting shall be made by the Chair subject to Clause 2(c) of House Rule XI. A regularly scheduled meeting may be dispensed with if, in the judgment of the Chair, there is no need for the meeting.

(b) If the Chair is not present at any meeting of the Committee, the ranking member of the majority party who is present shall preside at the meeting.

(c) The Chair, in the case of meetings to be conducted by the Committee shall make public announcement of the date, place, and subject matter of any meeting to be conducted on any measure or matter. Such meeting shall not commence earlier than the third day on which members have notice thereof. If the Chair, with the concurrence of the ranking minority member, determines that there is good cause to begin the meeting sooner, or if the Committee so determines by majority vote, a quorum being present, the Chair shall make the announcement at the earliest possible date. The announcement shall promptly be made publicly available in electronic form and published in the Daily Digest.

(d) The Chair, in the case of meetings to be conducted by the Committee shall make available on the Committee's web site the text of any legislation to be marked up at a meeting at least 24 hours before such meeting (or at the time of an announcement made within 24 hours of such meeting). This requirement shall also apply to any resolution or regulation to be considered at a meeting.

RULE NO. 3

OPEN MEETINGS

As required by Clause 2(g), of House Rule XI, each meeting for the transaction of business, including the markup of legislation of the Committee shall be open to the public except when the Committee in open session and with a quorum present determines by record vote that all or part of the remainder of the meeting on that day shall be closed to the public because disclosure of matters to be considered would endanger national security, would compromise sensitive law enforcement information, or would tend to defame, degrade or incriminate any person, or otherwise would violate any law or rule of the House. Provided, however, that no person other than members of the Committee, and such congressional staff and such other persons as the Committee may authorize, shall be present in any business or markup session which has been closed to the public. To the maximum extent practicable, the Chair shall cause to be provided audio and video coverage of each hearing or meeting that allows the public to easily listen to and view the proceedings and maintain the recordings of such coverage in a manner that is easily accessible to the public.

RULE NO. 4

RECORDS AND ROLLCALLS

(a)(1) A record vote shall be held if requested by any member of the Committee.

(2) The result of each record vote in any meeting of the Committee shall be made available for inspection by the public at reasonable times at the Committee offices, including a description of the amendment, motion, order or other proposition; the name of each member voting for and against; and the members present but not voting.

(3) The Chairman shall make the record of the votes on any question on which a record vote is demanded available on the Committee's website not later than 48 hours after such vote is taken (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays). Such record shall include a description of the amendment, motion, order, or other proposition, the name of each member voting for and each member voting against such amendment, motion, order, or proposition, and the names of those members of the Committee present but not voting.

(4) The Chairman shall make available on the Committee's website not later than 24 hours (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays) after the adoption of any amendment to a measure or matter the text of such amendment.

(b)(1) Subject to subparagraph (2), the Chairman may postpone further proceedings when a record vote is ordered on the question of approving any measure or matter or adopting an amendment. The Chair may resume proceedings on a postponed request at any time.

(2) In exercising postponement authority under subparagraph (1), the Chairman shall take all reasonable steps necessary to notify members on the resumption of proceedings on any postponed record vote.

(3) When proceedings resume on a postponed question, notwithstanding any intervening order for the previous question, an underlying proposition shall remain subject to further debate or amendment to the same extent as when the question was postponed.

(c) All Committee hearings, records, data, charts, and files shall be kept separate and distinct from the congressional office records of the member serving as Chair; and such records shall be the property of the House and all members of the House shall have access thereto.

(d) House records of the Committee which are at the National Archives shall be made available pursuant to House Rule VII. The Chairman shall notify the ranking minority member of any decision to withhold a record pursuant to the rule, and shall present the matter to the Committee upon written request of any Committee member.

(e) To the maximum extent feasible, the Committee shall make its publications available in electronic form.

RULE NO. 5

PROXIES

No vote by any member in the Committee may be cast by proxy.

RULE NO. 6

POWER TO SIT AND ACT; SUBPOENA POWER

(a) For the purpose of carrying out any of its functions and duties under House Rules X and XI, the Committee is authorized (subject to subparagraph (b)(1) of this paragraph)—

(1) to sit and act at such times and places within the United States, whether the House is in session, has recessed, or has adjourned, and to hold such hearings; and

(2) to require, by subpoena or otherwise, the attendance and testimony of such witnesses and the production of such books, records, correspondence, memorandums, papers, documents and other materials as it deems necessary, including materials in electronic form. The Chair, or any member designated by the Chair, may administer oaths to any witness.

(b)(1) A subpoena may be authorized and issued by the Committee in the conduct of any investigation or series of investigations or activities, only when authorized by a majority of the members voting, a majority being present. The power to authorize and issue subpoenas under subparagraph (a)(2) may be delegated to the Chair pursuant to such rules and under such limitations as the Committee may prescribe. Authorized subpoenas shall be signed by the Chair or by any member designated by the Committee, and may be served by any person designated by the Chair or such member.

(2) Compliance with any subpoena issued by the Committee may be enforced only as authorized or directed by the House.

RULE NO. 7

QUORUMS

No measure or recommendation shall be reported to the House unless a majority of the Committee is actually present. For the purposes of taking any action other than reporting any measure, issuance of a subpoena, closing meetings, promulgating Committee orders, or changing the rules of the Committee, one-third of the members of the Committee shall constitute a quorum. For purposes of taking testimony and receiving evidence, two members shall constitute a quorum.

RULE NO. 8

AMENDMENTS

Any amendment offered to any pending legislation before the Committee must be

made available in written form when requested by any member of the Committee. If such amendment is not available in written form when requested, the Chair will allow an appropriate period of time for the provision thereof.

RULE NO. 9

HEARING PROCEDURES

(a) The Chair, in the case of hearings to be conducted by the Committee shall make public announcement of the date, place, and subject matter of any hearing to be conducted on any measure or matter at least one (1) week before the commencement of that hearing. If the Chair, with the concurrence of the ranking minority member, determines that there is good cause to begin the hearing sooner, or if the Committee so determines by majority vote, a quorum being present, the Chair shall make the announcement at the earliest possible date. The clerk of the Committee shall promptly notify the Daily Digest Clerk of the Congressional Record as soon as possible after such public announcement is made.

(b) Unless excused by the Chair, each witness who is to appear before the Committee shall file with the clerk of the Committee, at least 48 hours in advance of his or her appearance, a written statement of his or her proposed testimony and shall limit his or her oral presentation to a summary of his or her statement.

(c) When any heating is conducted by the Committee upon any measure or matter, the minority party members on the Committee shall be entitled, upon request to the Chair by a majority of those minority members before the completion of such hearing, to call witnesses selected by the minority to testify with respect to that measure or matter during at least one day of hearings thereon.

(d) Reserved.

(e) Committee members may question witnesses only when they have been recognized by the Chair for that purpose, and only for a 5-minute period until all members present have had an opportunity to question a witness. The 5-minute period for questioning a witness by any one member can be extended as provided by House Rules. The questioning of a witness in Committee hearings shall be initiated by the Chair, followed by the ranking minority member and all other members alternating between the majority and minority. In recognizing members to question witnesses in this fashion, the Chair shall take into consideration the ratio of the majority to minority members present and shall establish the order of recognition for questioning in such a manner as not to disadvantage the members of the majority. The Chair may accomplish this by recognizing two majority members for each minority member recognized.

(f) The following additional rules shall apply to hearings of the Committee as applicable:

(1) The Chair at a hearing shall announce in an opening statement the subject of the investigation.

(2) A copy of the Committee rules and this clause shall be made available to each witness as provided by clause 2(k)(2) of Rule XI.

(3) Witnesses at hearings may be accompanied by their own counsel for the purpose of advising them concerning their constitutional rights.

(4) The Chair may punish breaches of order and decorum, and of professional ethics on the part of counsel, by censure and exclusion from the hearings; and the Committee may cite the offender to the House for contempt.

(5) If the Committee determines that evidence or testimony at a hearing may tend to defame, degrade, or incriminate any person, it shall——

(A) afford such person an opportunity voluntarily to appear as a witness;

(B) receive such evidence or testimony in executive session; and

(C) receive and dispose of requests from such person to subpoena additional witnesses.

(6) Except as provided in subparagraph (f)(5), the Chair shall receive and the Committee shall dispose of requests to subpoena additional witnesses.

(7) No evidence or testimony taken in executive session may be released or used in public sessions without the consent of the Committee.

(8) In the discretion of the Committee, witnesses may submit brief and pertinent sworn statements in writing for inclusion in the record. The Committee is the sole judge of the pertinence of testimony and evidence adduced at its hearing.

(9) A witness may obtain a transcript copy of his testimony given at a public session or, if given at an executive session, when authorized by the Committee.

RULE NO. 10

PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING MEASURES OR MATTERS

(a)(1) It shall be the duty of the Chair to report or cause to be reported promptly to the House any measure approved by the Committee and to take or cause to be taken necessary steps to bring the matter to a vote.

(2) In any event, the report of the Committee on a measure which has been approved by the Committee shall be filed within 7 calendar days (exclusive of days on which the House is not in session) after the day on which there has been filed with the clerk of the Committee a written request, signed by a majority of the members of the Committee, for the reporting of that measure. Upon the filing of any such request, the clerk of the Committee shall transmit immediately to the Chair notice of the filing of that request.

(b)(1) No measure or recommendation shall be reported to the House unless a majority of the Committee is actually present.

(2) With respect to each record vote on a motion to report any measure or matter of a public character, and on any amendment offered to the measure or matter, the total number of votes cast for and against, and the names of those members voting for and against, shall be included in the Committee report on the measure or matter.

(c) The report of the Committee on a measure or matter which has been approved by the Committee shall include the matters required by Clause 3(c) of Rule XIII of the Rules of the House.

(d) If, at the time any measure or matter is ordered reported by the Committee, any member of the Committee gives notice of intention to file supplemental, minority, additional, or dissenting views, that member shall be entitled to not less than two additional calendar days after the day of such notice, commencing on the day on which the measure or matter(s) was approved, excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays, in which to file such views, in writing and signed by that member, with the clerk of the Committee. All such views so filed by one or more members of the Committee shall be included within, and shall be a part of, the report filed by the Committee with respect to that measure or matter. The report of the Committee upon that measure or matter shall be printed in a single volume which—

(1) shall include all supplemental, minority, additional or dissenting views, in the form submitted, by the time of the filing of the report, and

(2) shall bear upon its cover a recital that any such supplemental, minority, additional, or dissenting views (and any material submitted under subparagraph (c)) are included as part of the report. This subparagraph does not preclud—

(A) the immediate filing or printing of a Committee report unless timely request for the opportunity to file supplemental, minority, additional, or dissenting views has been made as provided by paragraph (c); or

(B) the filing of any supplemental report upon any measure or matter which may be required for the correction of any technical error in a previous report made by the Committee upon that measure or matter.

(3) shall, when appropriate, contain the documents required by Clause 3(e) of Rule XIII of the Rules of the House.

(e) The Chair, following consultation with the ranking minority member, is directed to offer a motion under clause 1 of Rule XXII of the Rules of the House, relating to going to conference with the Senate, whenever the Chair considers it-appropriate.

(f) If hearings have been held on any such measure or matter so reported, the Committee shall make every reasonable effort to have such hearings published and available to the members of the House prior to the consideration of such measure or matter in the House.

(g) The Chair may designate any majority member of the Committee to act as ''floor manager'' of a bill or resolution during its consideration in the House.

RULE NO. 11

COMMITTEE OVERSIGHT

The Committee shall conduct oversight of matters within the jurisdiction of the Committee in accordance with House Rule X, clause 2 and clause 4. Not later than February 15 of the first session of a Congress, the Committee shall, in a meeting that is open to the public and with a quorum present, adopt its authorization and oversight plan for that Congress in accordance with House Rule X, clause 2(d).

RULE NO. 12

REVIEW OF CONTINUING PROGRAMS; BUDGET ACT PROVISIONS

(a) The Committee shall, in its consideration of all bills and joint resolutions of a public character within its jurisdiction, ensure that appropriation for continuing programs and activities of the Federal Government will be made annually to the maximum extent feasible and consistent with the nature, requirement, and objectives of the programs and activities involved. For the purposes of this paragraph a Government agency includes the organizational units of government listed in Clause 4(e) of Rule X of House Rules.

(b) The Committee shall review, from time to time, each continuing program within its jurisdiction for which appropriations are not made annually in order to ascertain whether such program could be modified so that appropriations therefore would be made annually.

(c) The Committee shall, on or before February 25 of each year, submit to the Committee on the Budget (1) its views and estimates with respect to all matters to be set forth in the concurrent resolution on the budget for the ensuing fiscal year which are within its jurisdiction or functions, and (2) an estimate of the total amounts of new budget authority, and budget outlays resulting there from, to be provided or authorized in all bills and resolutions within its jurisdiction which it intends to be effective during that fiscal year.

(d) As soon as practicable after a concurrent resolution on the budget for any fiscal year is agreed to, the Committee (after consulting with the appropriate committee or

committees of the Senate) shall subdivide any allocation made to it in the joint explanatory statement accompanying the conference report on such resolution, and promptly report such subdivisions to the House, in the manner provided by section 302 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974.

(e) Whenever the Committee is directed in a concurrent resolution on the budget to determine and recommend changes in laws, bills, or resolutions under the reconciliation process it shall promptly make such determination and recommendations, and report a reconciliation bill or resolution (or both) to the House or submit such recommendations to the Committee on the Budget, in accordance with the Congressional Budget Act of 1974.

RULE NO. 13

BROADCASTING OF COMMITTEE HEARINGS AND MEETINGS

Whenever any hearing or meeting conducted by the Committee is open to the public, those proceedings shall be open to coverage by television, radio, and still photography, as provided in Clause 4 of House Rule XI, subject to the limitations therein. Operation and use of any Committee Internet broadcast system shall be fair and nonpartisan and in accordance with Clause 4(b) of rule XI and all other applicable rules of the Committee and the House.

RULE NO. 14

COMMITTEE STAFF

The staff of the Committee on House Administration shall be appointed as follows:

(a) The staff shall be appointed by the Chair except as provided in paragraph (b), and may be removed by the Chair, and shall work under the general supervision and direction of the Chair;

(b) All staff provided to the minority party members of the Committee shall be appointed by the ranking minority member, and may be removed by the ranking minority member of the Committee, and shall work under the general supervision and direction of such member;

(c) The appointment of all professional staff shall be subject to the approval of the Committee as provided by, and subject to the provisions of, clause 9 of Rule X of the Rules of the House;

(d) The Chair shall fix the compensation of all staff of the Committee, after consultation with the ranking minority member regarding any minority party staff, within the budget approved for such purposes for the Committee.

RULE NO. 15

TRAVEL OF MEMBERS AND STAFF

(a) Consistent with the primary expense resolution and such additional expense resolutions as may have been approved, the provisions of this rule shall govern travel of Committee members and staff. Travel for any member or any staff member shall be paid only upon the prior authorization of the Chair or her or his designee. Travel may be authorized by the Chair for any member and any staff member in connection with the attendance at hearings conducted by the Committee and meetings, conferences, and investigations which involve activities or subject matter under the general jurisdiction of the Committee. Before such authorization is given there shall be submitted to the Chair in writing the following:

(1) The purpose of the travel;

(2) The dates during which the travel will occur;

(3) The locations to be visited and the length of time to be spent in each; and

(4) The names of members and staff seeking authorization.

(b)(1) In the case of travel outside the United States of members and staff of the Committee for the purpose of conducting hearings, investigations, studies, or attending meetings and conferences involving activities or subject matter under the legislative assignment of the committee, prior authorization must be obtained from the Chair. Before such authorization is given, there shall be submitted to the Chair, in writing, a request for such authorization. Each request, which shall be filed in a manner that allows for a reasonable period of time for review before such travel is scheduled to begin, shall include the following:

(A) the purpose of the travel;

(B) the dates during which the travel will occur;

(C) the names of the countries to be visited and the length of time to be spent in each;

(D) an agenda of anticipated activities for each country for which travel is authorized together with a description of the purpose to be served and the areas of committee jurisdiction involved; and

(E) the names of members and staff for whom authorization is sought.

(2) At the conclusion of any hearing, investigation, study, meeting or conference for which travel outside the United States has been authorized pursuant to this rule, members and staff attending meetings or conferences shall submit a written report to the Chair covering the activities and other pertinent observations or information gained as a result of such travel.

(c) Members and staff of the Committee performing authorized travel on official business shall be governed by applicable laws, resolutions, or regulations of the House and of the Committee on House Administration pertaining to such travel.

RULE NO. 16

Reserved.

RULE NO. 17

Reserved.

RULE NO. 18

OTHER PROCEDURES AND REGULATIONS

The Chair may establish such other procedures and take such actions as may be necessary to carry out the foregoing rules or to facilitate the effective operation of the committee.

RULE NO. NO. 19

DESIGNATION OF CLERK OF THE COMMITTEE

For the purposes of these rules and the Rules of the House of Representatives, the staff director of the Committee shall act as the clerk of the Committee.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 7 o'clock and 9 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, February 1, 2017, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

414. A letter from the Program Specialist, LRAD, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's final rule — Economic Growth and Regulatory Paperwork Reduction Act of 1996 Amendments [Docket ID: OCC-2016-0002] (RIN: 1557-AD95F) received January 26, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Financial Services.

415. A letter from the Chairman and President, Export-Import Bank of the U.S., transmitting the Annual Report to Congress on the operations of the Export-Import Bank of the United States for Fiscal Year 2016, pursuant to 12 U.S.C. 635g(a); July 31, 1945, ch. 341, Sec. 8(a) (as amended by Public Law 93-646, Sec. 10) (88 Stat. 2336); to the Committee on Financial Services.

416. A letter from the Chief, Satellite Division, International Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Terrestrial Use of the 2473-2495 MHz Band for Low-Power Mobile Broadband Networks; Amendments to Rules for the Ancillary Terrestrial Component of Mobile Satellite Service Systems [IB Docket No.: 13-213] (RM-11685) received January 30, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

417. A letter from the Secretary, Board of Governors, United States Postal Service, transmitting a report, by the Board of Governors, as required by Sec. 3686(c) of the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act of 2006; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

418. A letter from the Director, Congressional Budget Office, transmitting the waiver of the deduction of pay requirement for a reemployed annuitant, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 8344(k); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

419. A letter from the Chief Financial Officer and Assistant Secretary for Administration, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's FY 2016 Agency Financial Report, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 3515(a)(1); Public Law 101-576, Sec. 303(a)(1) (as amended by Public Law 107-289, Sec. 2(a)); (116 Stat. 2049); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

420. A letter from the Legal Counsel, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, transmitting a notification of a federal designation of acting officer, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 3349(a); Public Law 105-277, 151(b); (112 Stat. 2681-614); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

421. A letter from the Director, Federal Housing Finance Agency, transmitting the Agency's FY 2016, No FEAR Act report, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 2301 note; Public Law 107-174, 203(a); (116 Stat. 569); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

422. A letter from the Auditor, Office of the District of Columbia Auditor, transmitting a report entitled, ''D.C. Spent $41 Million in Emergency Contingency Funds Responding to Winter Storm Jonas, and Could Have Saved Money Through Negotiation and Improved Management of Retainer Contracts''; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

423. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, NMFS, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Atlantic Highly Migratory Species; Commercial Retention Limit for Blacknose Sharks and Non-Blacknose Small Coastal Sharks in the Atlantic Region [Docket No.: 160129062-6999-02] (RIN: 0648-BF49) received January 26, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

424. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, NMFS, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final

rule — Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Shrimp Fishery of the Gulf of Mexico; Revision of Bycatch Reduction Device Testing Manual [Docket No.: 160815740-6740-01] (RIN: 0648-BG28-X) received January 26, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

425. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, NMFS, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — International Fisheries; Tuna and Tuna-Like Species in the Eastern Pacific Ocean; Silky Shark Fishing Restrictions and Fish Aggregating Device Data Collection and Identification [Docket No.: 160801681-6999-02] (RIN: 0648-BG22) received January 26, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

426. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, NMFS, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act Provisions; Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Scup Fishery; Framework Adjustment 9 [Docket No.: 160615524-6999-02] (RIN: 0648-BG13) received January 26, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

427. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, NMFS, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Snapper-Grouper Fishery Off the Southern Atlantic States; Regulatory Amendment 16 [Docket No.: 131113952-6999-02] (RIN: 0648-BD78) received January 26, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

428. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, NMFS, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Atlantic Herring Fishery; Specification of Management Measures for Atlantic Herring for the 2016-2018 Fishing Years [Docket No.: 151215999-6960-02] (RIN: 0648-BF64) received January 26, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

429. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, NMFS, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Allow the Use of Longline Pot Gear in the Gulf of Alaska Sablefish Individual Fishing Quota Fishery; Amendment 101 [Docket No.: 151001910-6999-02] (RIN: 0648-BF42) received January 26, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

430. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, NMFS, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Crab Rationalization Program [Docket No.: 160617541-6999-02] (RIN: 0648-BG15) received January 26, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

431. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, NMFS, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Magnuson-Stevens Act Provisions; National Standard Guidelines [Docket No.: 120416013-6270-03] (RIN: 0648-BB92) received January 26, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

432. A letter from the Director, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Department of Commerce, transmitting the 2016 Report to Congress on the Disclosure of Financial Interest and Recusal Requirements for Regional Fishery Management Councils and Scientific and Statistical Committees and on Apportionment of Membership on the Regional Fishery Management Councils, pursuant to the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, Secs. 302(b)(2)(B) and 302(j)(9); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

433. A letter from the Vice Chairman and Executive Director, Administrative Conference of the United States, transmitting Recommendations Adopted by the Administrative Conference of the United States in 2016 at its 65th and 66th plenary sessions; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

434. A letter from the Staff Director, Commission on Civil Rights, transmitting a copy of the charter for the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights state advisory committees, pursuant to the Federal Advisory Committee Act, 41 C.F.R. Sec. 102-3.70; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

435. A letter from the Alternate OSD FRLO, Office of the Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule — Civil Monetary Penalty Inflation Adjustment [Docket ID: DOD-2016-OS-0045] (RIN: 0790-ZA12) received January 26, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

436. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Civil Monetary Penalty Adjustments for Inflation [Docket No.: DHS-2016-0034] (RIN 1601-AA80) received January 27, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

437. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Labor, transmitting a letter written in response to the Office of the Ombudsman's 2014 Annual Report that was filed with Congress on January 8, 2016, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 7385s-15(e)(4); Public Law 106-398, Sec. 1 (as amended by Public Law 113-291, Sec. 3141(b)); (128 Stat. 3899); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

438. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace, Blue Mesa, CO [Docket No.: FAA-2016-7043; Airspace Docket No.: 16-ANM-6] received January 26, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

439. A letter from the Chief, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Office of the Secretary (00REG), Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting the Department's interim final rule — Fertility Counseling and Treatment for Certain Veterans and Spouses (RIN: 2900-AP94) received January 27, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

440. A letter from the Acting Chief Privacy Officer, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's Privacy Office's Fiscal Year 2016 Semiannual Report to Congress, as required by Sec. 803 of the Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

441. A letter from the Deputy Inspector General for Audit Services, Office of the Inspector General, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting a report titled ''Review of Medicare Contractor Information Security Program Evaluations for Fiscal Year 2015'', pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 1395kk-1(e)(2)(C)(ii); Aug. 14, 1935, ch. 531, title XVIII, Sec. 1874A(e)(2)(C)(ii) (as amended by Public Law 108-173, Sec. 912(a)); (117 Stat. 2388); jointly to the Committees on Energy and Commerce and Ways and Means.

442. A letter from the Executive Director and Chair, World War I Centennial Commission, transmitting the Commission's periodic report for the period ended December 31, 2016, pursuant to Public Law 112-272, Sec. 5(b)(1); (126 Stat. 2450); jointly to the Committees on Oversight and Government Reform and Natural Resources.

443. A letter from the Executive Director and Chair, World War I Centennial Commission, transmitting the Commission's periodic report for the period ended June 30, 2016, pursuant to Public Law 112-272, Sec. 5(b)(1); (126 Stat. 2450); jointly to the Committees on Oversight and Government Reform and Natural Resources.

444. A letter from the Executive Director and Chair, World War I Centennial Commission, transmitting the Commission's periodic report for the period ended September 30, 2016, pursuant to Public Law 112-272, Sec. 5(b)(1); (126 Stat. 2450); jointly to the Committees on Oversight and Government Reform and Natural Resources.

445. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting the Presidential Memorandum regarding construction of the Keystone XL Pipeline; jointly to the Committees on Foreign Affairs, Natural Resources, Transportation and Infrastructure, and Energy and Commerce.

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. COLE. Committee on Rules. House Resolution 74. Resolution providing for consideration of the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 36) providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United State Code, of the final rule of the Bureau of Land Management relating to ''Waste Prevention, Production Subject to Royalties, and Resource Conservation'', and providing for consideration of the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 37) disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of Defense, the General Services Administration, and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration relating to the Federal Acquisition (Rept. 115–8). Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. SMITH of Washington (for himself, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. COOPER, Ms. BORDALLO, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. KHANNA, Mr. HECK, and Mr. VISCLOSKY):

H.R. 753. A bill to establish a fair and transparent process that will result in the timely consolidation, closure, and realignment of military installations inside the United States and will realize improved efficiencies in the cost and management of military installations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services, and in addition to the Committee on Appropriations, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. STEWART (for himself and Ms. MENG):

H.R. 754. A bill to award the Congressional Gold Medal to Anwar Sadat in recognition of his heroic achievements and courageous contributions to peace in the Middle East; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. SANFORD (for himself, Mr. MEADOWS, and Ms. PINGREE):

H.R. 755. A bill to amend the REAL ID Act of 2005 to remove the provision requiring each State to provide all other States with electronic access to information contained in the motor vehicle database of the State, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. CHAFFETZ (for himself, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. CONNOLLY, and Mr. ROSS):

H.R. 756. A bill to restore the financial solvency and improve the governance of the United States Postal Service in order to ensure the efficient and affordable nationwide delivery of mail, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and in addition to the Committees on Energy and Commerce, 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. CONNOLLY:

H.R. 757. A bill to increase the rates of pay under the statutory pay systems and for prevailing rate employees by 3.2 percent, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. SCHNEIDER (for himself and Mr. YOHO):

H.R. 758. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize veterans who are entitled to educational assistance under the Post-9/11 Educational Assistance Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs to use such entitlement to participate in a career transition internship program for veterans; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. ELLISON (for himself and Mr. RENACCI):

H.R. 759. A bill to prohibit the Secretary of Labor from enforcing any requirement that consumer reporting agencies that serve only as a secure conduit to data from State unemployment compensation agencies obtain and maintain an individual's informed consent agreement when verifying income and employment with such agencies, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. LYNCH (for himself and Mr. MCKINLEY):

H.R. 760. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide for certain index fund investments from the Postal Service Retiree Health Benefits Fund, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. RENACCI (for himself, Mr. POCAN, Mr. KILMER, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, and Mr. BUCSHON):

H.R. 761. A bill to prohibit the use of premiums paid to the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation as an offset for other Federal spending; to the Committee on Rules, and in addition to the Committee on the Budget, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN (for herself, Mr. SHERMAN, and Mr. GARAMENDI):

H.R. 762. A bill to provide for the restoration of legal rights for claimants under holocaust-era insurance policies; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. POLIQUIN (for himself and Ms. PINGREE):

H.R. 763. A bill to clarify the boundary of Acadia National Park, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Ms. VELÁZQUEZ:

H.R. 764. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide incentives for employer-provided employee housing assistance, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Financial Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. VELÁZQUEZ (for herself, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. MEEKS, and Mr. JEFFRIES):

H.R. 765. A bill to authorize programs and activities to support transportation options in areas that are undergoing extensive repair or reconstruction of transportation infrastructure, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Ms. VELÁZQUEZ:

H.R. 766. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to establish a pilot program to expand telehealth options under the Medicare program for individuals residing in public housing located in health professional shortage areas, 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. COHEN (for himself, Mr. KINZINGER, Mr. CÁRDENAS, and Mrs. WAGNER):

H.R. 767. A bill to establish the Stop, Observe, Ask, and Respond to Health and Wellness Training pilot program to address human trafficking in the health care system; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. DIAZ-BALART:

H.R. 768. A bill to require the United States Postal Service to designate a single, unique ZIP code for Miami Lakes, Florida; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Ms. GRANGER (for herself and Mr. ZELDIN):

H.R. 769. A bill to prohibit voluntary or assessed contributions to the United Nations until the President certifies to Congress that United Nations Security Council Resolution 2334 has been repealed; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. HIMES (for himself, Mr. POSEY, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. COOPER, Mr. JOYCE of Ohio, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, and Mr. ROE of Tennessee):

H.R. 770. A bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in recognition of American innovation and significant innovation and pioneering efforts of individuals or groups from each of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and the United States territories, to promote the importance of innovation in the United States, the District of Columbia, and the United States territories, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Ms. LEE (for herself, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. CONNOLLY, Miss RICE of New York, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. MOORE, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Ms. NORTON, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. FOSTER, Mr. MOULTON, Mr. QUIGLEY, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. KILDEE, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. NADLER, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Ms. MENG, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. TAKANO, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. SCHIFF, Ms. DELBENE, Mr. NORCROSS, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Ms. DELAURO, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. WELCH, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Ms. TITUS, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. ENGEL, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. TONKO, Mr. AGUILAR, Mr. CLAY, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Mr. VEASEY, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. SÁNCHEZ, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. COHEN, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. BEYER, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Ms. ADAMS, Ms. JAYAPAL, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. HECK, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. BERA, Mr. DOGGETT, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Mr. RICHMOND, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. KEATING, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. SCHNEIDER, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. KHANNA, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. POCAN, Ms. ESTY, Mr. GALLEGO, Mr. PALLONE, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. EVANS, Mr. PETERS, and Mrs. TORRES):

H.R. 771. A bill to ensure affordable abortion coverage and care for every woman, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on Ways and Means, and Oversight and Government Reform, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS (for herself, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. BARLETTA, Mr. BLUM, Mr. BUCSHON, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. COLLINS of New York, Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. HARRIS, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. HUDSON, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Mr. JONES, Mr. KIND, Mr. LATTA, Mr. MOOLENAAR, Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. NEWHOUSE, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. POE of Texas, Mr. ROTHFUS, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Ms. STEFANIK, Mr. VALADAO, Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. WALBERG, Mrs. WALORSKI, Mrs. MIMI

WALTERS of California, Mr. WALZ, Mr. WESTERMAN, and Mr. YOUNG of Iowa):

H.R. 772. A bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to improve and clarify certain disclosure requirements for restaurants and similar retail food establishments, and to amend the authority to bring proceedings under section 403A; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. MENG:

H.R. 773. A bill to require the Department of Defense to utilize managed print services; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Ms. MENG:

H.R. 774. A bill to remove the limitation on Medicaid coverage of tobacco cessation nonprescription drugs; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. MOOLENAAR:

H.R. 775. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to inflation adjust the $5,000 limitation with respect to dependent care assistance programs and flexible spending arrangements; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. SENSENBRENNER:

H.R. 776. A bill to require that until a comprehensive study is completed, the volume of cellulosic biofuel mandated under the renewable fuel program be limited to what is commercially available, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. SENSENBRENNER:

H.R. 777. A bill to provide for a comprehensive assessment of the scientific and technical research on the implications of the use of mid-level ethanol blends, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. WELCH (for himself, Mr. SIMPSON, Mr. DUFFY, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. VALADAO, and Ms. DELBENE):

H.R. 778. A bill to require enforcement against misbranded milk alternatives; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. WITTMAN:

H.R. 779. A bill to restrict United States nationals from traveling to countries in which foreign governments or anti-government forces allow foreign terrorist organizations to engage in armed conflict for purposes of participating in such armed conflict or from providing material support to entities that are engaged in such armed conflict, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. LABRADOR (for himself, Mr. BROOKS of Alabama, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. RICE of South Carolina, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. BABIN, Mr. BYRNE, Mr. BUDD, Mr. DAVIDSON, Mr. ZELDIN, Mr. HUDSON, and Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia):

H.J. Res. 50. A joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States to limit the number of terms a Representative or Senator may serve; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. ROE of Tennessee (for himself, Mr. RUIZ, Mr. ROKITA, Mr. MEEHAN, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia, Mr. TIPTON, Mrs. WALORSKI, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. PALAZZO, Mr. CARTER of Georgia, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, Mr. WILLIAMS, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. EMMER, Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. ROYCE of California, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. HILL, Mr. BARLETTA, Mr. BUCSHON, Mr. CULBERSON, Mr. MOOLENAAR, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. LONG, Mr. TURNER, Mr. MESSER, Mr. YOHO, Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mrs. COMSTOCK, Mr. YODER, Mr. FLORES, Mrs. BLACK, Mr. SMITH of Nebraska, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. LATTA, Mr. HENSARLING, Mr. GIBBS, Mr. HURD, Mr. GOWDY, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, and Mr. BARR):

H.J. Res. 51. A joint resolution approving the discontinuation of the process for consideration and automatic implementation of the annual proposal of the Independent Medicare Advisory Board under section 1899A of the Social Security Act; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. NEWHOUSE (for himself, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. CRAMER, Mrs. RADEWAGEN, Mr. SESSIONS, and Mr. BIGGS):

H.J. Res. 52. A joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the final rule of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service relating to ''Mitigation Policy''; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Ms. SPEIER (for herself, Ms. ADAMS, Ms. BARRAGÁN, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. BEYER, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Ms. BONAMICI, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. CLAY, Mr. COHEN, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. DEFAZIO, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. DELANEY, Ms. DELAURO, Ms. DELBENE, Mr. DESAULNIER, Mr. DEUTCH, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. ENGEL, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. FOSTER, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. HIGGINS of New York, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. JEFFRIES, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. KEATING, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. KILDEE, Mr. KILMER, Mr. KIND, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Ms. LEE, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Ms. MATSUI, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. MEEKS, Ms. MOORE, Mr. MOULTON, Mr. NADLER, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. NORCROSS, Ms. NORTON, Mr. PASCRELL, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. POCAN, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. QUIGLEY, Miss RICE of New York, Mr. RICHMOND, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. RUSH, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Ms. SÁNCHEZ, Mr. SARBANES, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. SCHRADER, Mr. SERRANO, Ms. SINEMA, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. TAKANO, Ms. TITUS, Mr. TONKO, Mrs. TORRES, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. VEASEY, Mr. WALZ, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. WELCH, Mr. YARMUTH, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. COURTNEY, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. EVANS, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. LEVIN, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. PETERS, Mr. HECK, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. HIMES, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire, Mr. GALLEGO, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Mr. HASTINGS, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. RUIZ, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. NOLAN, Mr. SIRES, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. KIHUEN, and Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN):

H.J. Res. 53. A joint resolution removing the deadline for the ratification of the equal rights amendment; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. ROKITA:

H.J. Res. 54. A joint resolution disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of the Treasury and the Internal Revenue Service relating to documentation requirements for certain related-party interests in a corporation to be treated as indebtedness; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. STEWART (for himself, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. GOHMERT, Mrs. RADEWAGEN, Mr. CRAMER, and Mr. BIGGS):

H.J. Res. 55. A joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the final rule of the Office of Natural Resources Revenue relating to ''Amendments to Civil Penalty Regulations''; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on 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. MAXINE WATERS of California (for herself, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Ms. LEE, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. NADLER, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Ms. BARRAGÁN, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, and Ms. JACKSON LEE):

H. Con. Res. 15. Concurrent resolution asserting that Congress should expend the resources necessary to investigate thoroughly the nature and extent of Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election, including whether there was collusion between persons associated with the Russian government and persons associated with the presidential campaign of Donald J. Trump to influence the outcome of the election; to the Committee on House Administration, 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. SHUSTER (for himself and Mr. DEFAZIO):

H. Res. 73. A resolution providing amounts for the expenses of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure in the One Hundred Fifteenth Congress; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Ms. DELAURO (for herself, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Ms. MENG, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Ms. MOORE, Ms. BORDALLO, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. TONKO, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. POCAN, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. COHEN, and Ms. BROWNLEY of California):

H. Res. 75. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives regarding sexually exploited and trafficked girls in

the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. NUNES (for himself and Mr. SCHIFF):

H. Res. 76. A resolution providing amounts for the expenses of the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence in the One Hundred Fifteenth Congress; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. THOMAS J. ROONEY of Florida (for himself and Mr. HASTINGS):

H. Res. 77. A resolution encouraging the development of best business practices to fully utilize the potential of the United States; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

PRIVATE BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 3 of rule XII,

Ms. PELOSI introduced a bill (H.R. 780) for the relief of Maria Carmen Castro Ramirez and J. Refugio Carreno Rojas; 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 Mr. SMITH of Washington:

H.R. 753.

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

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of Congress ''to provide for the common Defense'', ''to raise and support Armies'', ''to provide and maintain a Navy''' and ''to make Rules for the Government and Regulation of the land and naval Forces'' as enumerated in Article I, section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. STEWART:

H.R. 754.

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

Article one, Section eight.

By Mr. SANFORD:

H.R. 755.

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

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. CHAFFETZ:

H.R. 756.

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

Art. I, Sec. 8

To establish Post Offices and post Roads.

By Mr. CONNOLLY:

H.R. 757.

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

The ''necessary and proper'' clause of Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. SCHNEIDER:

H.R. 758.

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

Article I, Section 8.

By Mr. ELLISON:

H.R. 759.

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

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to Article I, Section 8, Clause 1.

By Mr. LYNCH:

H.R. 760.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clause 7 and Article I, Section 8, Clause 18

By Mr. RENACCI:

H.R. 761.

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

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1: The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18: To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States or in any Department or Officer thereof.

Article 1, Section 5, Clause 2: Each House may determine the Rules of its Proceedings, punish its Members for disorderly Behaviour, and, with the Concurrence of two thirds, expel a Member.

By Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN:

H.R. 762.

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

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. POLIQUIN:

H.R. 763.

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

Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2: ''The Congress shall have power to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States.

By Ms. VELÁZQUEZ:

H.R. 764.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1

The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.

By Ms. VELÁZQUEZ:

H.R. 765.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1

The Congress shall have Power to . . . provide for the . . . general Welfare of the United States; . . .

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

The Congress shall have Power . . . To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.

By Ms. VELÁZQUEZ:

H.R. 766.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

The Congress shall have Power . . . To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.

By Mr. COHEN:

H.R. 767.

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

Article 1, Section 8

By Mr. DIAZ-BALART:

H.R. 768.

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

Article 1, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution

By Ms. GRANGER:

H.R. 769.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution that the Congress shall have power to make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers, and all other powers vested by this Constitution in the government of the United States, or in any department or officer thereof.

By Mr. HIMES:

H.R. 770.

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

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 5: ''To coin Money, regulate the Value thereof, and of foreign Coin, and fix the Standard of Weights and Measures;''

By Ms. LEE:

H.R. 771.

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

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I of the United States Constitution and its subsequent amendments, and further clarified and interpreted by the Supreme Court of the United States.

By Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS:

H.R. 772.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 as applied to providing for the general welfare of the United States through the administration of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act.

By Ms. MENG:

H.R. 773.

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

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Ms. MENG:

H.R. 774.

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

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. MOOLENAAR:

H.R. 775.

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

Clause 1 of Section 8 of Article I of the United States Constitution and Amendment XVI of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. SENSENBRENNER:

H.R. 776.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

By Mr. SENSENBRENNER:

H.R. 777.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

By Mr. WELCH:

H.R. 778.

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

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18: The Congress shall have Power To . . . make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. WITTMAN:

H.R. 779.

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

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests in the preamble of the Constitution providing for the ''common defense'' and in the powers governing national security in Article I, Section 8.

By Ms. PELOSI:

H.R. 780.

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

Article I, section 8, clause 4 of the Constitution provides that Congress shall have power to ''establish an uniform Rule of Naturalization''. The Supreme Court has long found that this provision of the Constitution grants Congress plenary power over immigration policy. As the Court found in Galvan v. Press, 347 U.S. 522, 531 (1954), ''that the formulation of policies [pertaining to the entry of aliens and their right to remain here] is entrusted exclusively to Congress has become about as firmly imbedded in the legislative and judicial tissues of our body politic as any aspect of our government.'' And, as the Court found in Kleindienst v. Mandel, 408 U.S. 753, 766 (1972) (quoting Boutilier v. INS, 387 U.S. 118, 123 (1967)), ''[t]he Court without exception has sustained Congress' 'plenary power to make rules for the admission of aliens and to exclude those who possess those characteristics which Congress has forbidden.' ''

By Mr. LABRADOR:

H.J. Res. 50.

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

Article 5: The Congress, whenever two thirds of both Houses shall deem it necessary, shall propose Amendments to this Constitution, or, on the Application of the Legislatures of two thirds of the several States, shall call a Convention for proposing Amendments, which, in either Case, shall be valid to all Intents and Purposes, as part of this Constitution, when ratified by the Legislatures of three fourths of the several States, or by Conventions in three fourths thereof, as the one or the other Mode of Ratification may be proposed by the Congress;

By Mr. ROE of Tennessee:

H.J. Res. 51.

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

The repeal of this provision is consistent with the powers that are reserved to the States and to the people as expressed in Amendment X to the United States Constitution.

By Mr. NEWHOUSE:

H.J. Res. 52.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution

By Ms. SPEIER:

H.J. Res. 53.

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

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. ROKITA:

H.J. Res. 54.

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

Article I, Section VIII, Clause I

By Mr. STEWART:

H.J. Res. 55.

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

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18

To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying in Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United State, or in any Department or Officer therof.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

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

H.R. 38: Mr. ROTHFUS.

H.R. 58: Ms. LEE and Mr. PAYNE.

H.R. 76: Mr. ABRAHAM.

H.R. 80: Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas.

H.R. 82: Mr. BUDD and Mr. MARCHANT.

H.R. 165: Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico.

H.R. 166: Mr. SOTO.

H.R. 167: Mr. COHEN and Ms. MOORE.

H.R. 173: Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana, Mr. SOTO, Mrs. ROBY, and Ms. NORTON.

H.R. 202: Mr. SERRANO.

H.R. 203: Mr. COHEN.

H.R. 217: Mrs. ROBY, Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, and Mr. AMASH.

H.R. 233: Mr. BACON and Mr. KING of New York.

H.R. 257: Mrs. WALORSKI.

H.R. 275: Mr. FITZPATRICK.

H.R. 312: Ms. DELBENE.

H.R. 338: Mr. MCKINLEY.

H.R. 350: Mr. YOUNG of Alaska and Mr. BUDD.

H.R. 354: Mr. MARSHALL and Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 358: Mr. DAVIDSON and Mr. COOK.

H.R. 364: Mr. LUCAS.

H.R. 377: Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. WENSTRUP, and Mr. KELLY of Mississippi.

H.R. 390: Mr. FITZPATRICK.

H.R. 394: Mr. BISHOP of Michigan.

H.R. 398: Mr. DONOVAN.

H.R. 400: Mr. BURGESS and Mrs. NOEM.

H.R. 424: Mr. UPTON.

H.R. 426: Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas.

H.R. 428: Mr. FLORES, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. CARTER of Texas, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. CULBERSON, and Mr. HENSARLING.

H.R. 429: Mr. ALLEN.

H.R. 448: Ms. SHEA-PORTER and Mr. QUIGLEY.

H.R. 465: Mr. GROTHMAN and Mr. ROTHFUS.

H.R. 477: Mr. JOYCE of Ohio.

H.R. 486: Mr. FRANCIS ROONEY of Florida and Mr. EMMER.

H.R. 489: Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. YARMUTH, Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire, Mr. DELANEY, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. TONKO, Ms. MOORE, and Ms. MCCOLLUM.

H.R. 496: Mr. VALADAO and Mrs. TORRES.

H.R. 500: Mr. KNIGHT.

H.R. 505: Mr. RATCLIFFE.

H.R. 510: Mr. YODER.

H.R. 512: Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana and Mrs. DEMINGS.

H.R. 525: Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire.

H.R. 532: Mr. SOTO.

H.R. 539: Mr. COLLINS of New York.

H.R. 553: Mr. ISSA.

H.R. 586: Mr. LABRADOR and Mr. GOHMERT.

H.R. 592: Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. COLE, Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. YOUNG of Iowa, and Mrs. ROBY.

H.R. 613: Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia.

H.R. 630: Mr. SERRANO.

H.R. 632: Mr. VARGAS, Mr. STEWART, Mrs. ROBY, Mrs. LOVE, Mr. O'ROURKE, and Mr. YARMUTH.

H.R. 635: Mr. GARAMENDI, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. CONYERS, and Ms. JUDY CHU of California.

H.R. 640: Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia and Mrs. COMSTOCK.

H.R. 644: Mr. GRIFFITH, Mr. FLORES, Mr. EMMER, Mr. JORDAN, Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. AMASH, Mrs. LOVE, and Mr. RENACCI.

H.R. 647: Mr. POLIS.

H.R. 657: Mr. FARENTHOLD.

H.R. 662: Mr. TIBERI.

H.R. 671: Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHI and Mr. PERLMUTTER.

H.R. 678: Mr. KEATING.

H.R. 679: Mr. FARENTHOLD and Mr. LYNCH.

H.R. 682: Mr. OLSON.

H.R. 685: Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. JEFFRIES, and Ms. SLAUGHTER.

H.R. 692: Mr. ROUZER, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, and Mrs. LOVE.

H.R. 694: Mr. HENSARLING and Mrs. HARTZLER.

H.R. 696: Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. CORREA, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. KENNEDY, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, and Mr. SABLAN.

H.R. 711: Mr. SWALWELL of California.

H.R. 722: Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. VARGAS, Miss RICE of New York, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Ms. MATSUI, Ms. JAYAPAL, Mr. DOGGETT, and Mr. KIHUEN.

H.R. 724: Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. CUELLAR, Ms. GABBARD, Mr. CRIST, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Mr. KIND, Ms. Rosen, and Mr. MCEACHIN.

H.R. 732: Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana.

H.R. 743: Mr. FARENTHOLD.

H.R. 747: Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois.

H.J. Res. 1: Mr. ALLEN, Mr. EMMER, Mr. COFFMAN, Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. RICE of South Carolina, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, and Mr. UPTON.

H.J. Res. 2: Mr. ALLEN, Mr. EMMER, Mr. COFFMAN, Mr. AMODEI, Mr. COMER, Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. RICE of South Carolina, Mr. MITCHELL, and Mr. UPTON.

H.J. Res. 6: Mr. RATCLIFFE and Mr. GAETZ.

H.J. Res. 15: Mr. POLIS.

H.J. Res. 39: Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. RUTHERFORD, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mrs. NOEM, and Ms. JENKINS of Kansas.

H.J. Res. 41: Mr. WOODALL.

H.J. Res. 42: Mr. SENSENBRENNER.

H.J. Res. 47: Mr. NEWHOUSE and Mr. BIGGS.

H. Con. Res. 2: Mr. TAYLOR.

H. Con. Res. 9: Mr. BEYER, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. JEFFRIES, Mr. KHANNA, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. POCAN, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, and Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN.

H. Con. Res. 10: Mr. PERLMUTTER.

H. Res. 20: Ms. JACKSON LEE.

H. Res. 30: Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. FASO, Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, Mr. MEEKS, and Ms. BARRAGÁN.

H. Res. 31: Mr. YOUNG of Iowa, Mr. BEYER, Mr. LANCE, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. GALLEGO, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. HIGGINS of New York, Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. KILDEE, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. POCAN, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Ms. LEE, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. FOSTER, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. RUSH, Mr. LYNCH, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. SIRES, Mr. BLUMENAUER, and Mrs. NOEM.

H. Res. 43: Mr. BIGGS.

H. Res. 60: Mr. BANKS of Indiana, Mr. COLLINS of New York, Mr. RATCLIFFE, and Mr. MCCLINTOCK.

H. Res. 72: Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. SERRANO, and Mr. GONZALEZ of Texas.

CONGRESSIONAL EARMARKS, LIMITED TAX BENEFITS, OR LIMITED TARIFF BENEFITS

Under clause 9 of rule XXI, lists or statements on congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits were submitted as follows:

OFFERD BY MR. GOODLATTE.

The provisions that warranted a referral to the Committee on Judiciary in H.J. Res. 40 do not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

PETITIONS, ETC.

Under clause 3 of rule XII,

9. The SPEAKER presented a petition of the Assistant Attorney General of West Virginia on behalf of 18 States, relative to urging Congress not simply to consider legislation but to take action to ensure that agencies engage in transparent rulemaking consistent with separation of powers principles and the laws enacted by Congress; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

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Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 115th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 163 WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, JANUARY 31, 2017 No. 16

Senate

The Senate met at 12 noon and was called to order by the Honorable SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO, a Senator from the State of West Virginia.

PRAYER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Today's opening prayer will be offered by Rabbi Barry Block, leader of the Congregation B'nai Israel in Little Rock, AR.

The guest Chaplain offered the following prayer:

Divine Source of Blessing, we come before You today to ask Your blessings on the United States Senate and on the 100 men and women who serve our Nation here. Like King Solomon before them, let these Senators lead our Nation with wisdom, with Your Word and our Nation's Constitution constantly guiding them to pursue liberty and justice, opportunity and equality, for every man, woman, and child within our borders, for those who would peacefully seek refuge on our shores, and for each of Your children on Earth. Make them ever mindful of Your command to remember the heart of the stranger—the people most unlike them and the least powerful of voices—for we were all strangers in one Egypt or another. In this age of division, unite these Senators, for only when working together across party lines do they truly represent all Americans.

Temper the majority's resolve with humility. Let the minority manifest an opposition that is as loyal as it is robust. Let all come together to ask Your choicest blessings on the United States of America.

And let us say, Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer 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.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, January 31, 2017.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO, a Senator from the State of West Virginia, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ORRIN G. HATCH,
President pro tempore.

Mrs. CAPITO thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Arkansas.

WELCOMING THE GUEST CHAPLAIN

Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam President, Senator COTTON and I would like to welcome Rabbi Barry Block and thank him for delivering the opening prayer to the Senate today. I am proud that he accepted our invitation to lead the Senate with his spiritual guidance.

Rabbi Block is the leader of B'nai Israel—Arkansas's largest Jewish congregation—a position he has held since 2013. I have gotten to know Rabbi Block and his dedication to his congregants through his annual visits to Washington with the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism. He has served Reform Judaism as a member of the Board of the Central Conference of American Rabbis and chair of its Resolutions and Nominating Committee and as president of the Southwest Association of Reform Rabbis.

Serving as the guest Chaplain is an incredible honor. Today he is joined by his sons Robert and Daniel. He wished to share this experience with his congregants as well. I enjoyed meeting yesterday with him and his confirmation students to hear about their concerns on a wide variety of social issues. I appreciate his prayer for our country and its leaders.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

FILLING THE SUPREME COURT VACANCY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, yesterday the Senate voted to advance President Trump's nominee for Secretary of State. I look forward to confirming him and the rest of the President's slate of well-qualified nominees. We need them to get to work as soon as possible.

We will have more opportunities to advance nominees starting this afternoon, and later tonight, we expect the President to send us another nominee. The President said he will announce his choice for the Supreme Court shortly from a list of about 20 well-qualified Americans. It is a list he shared publicly months ago. As I said yesterday, each of those potential nominees has a distinguished background, whether on the appellate courts or trial courts, whether at the State level or the Federal level.

We look forward to the announcement of this nominee tonight, and we look forward to doing our job to fairly consider that nominee here in the Senate. Our friends across the aisle should treat this President's nominee in the same manner as previous nominees of newly elected Presidents. This is not the time for our friends to embark on another partisan crusade.

We have just been through a contentious election. It is time to bring our country together. It is disappointing

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

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that we have already started hearing some of the same tired rhetoric from the left. This is before the President even announces the nominee—disappointing but not surprising. The left has been doing this for decades. It does not matter if the President is George H.W. Bush or Gerald Ford. It does not matter if the nominee is David Souter or John Paul Stevens. They will warn of impending doom. They will claim the end is nigh. They will run through the required list of attacks: extreme this, anti that, herald the apocalypse. And then, miraculously, the Sun will rise again in the East, and the world will still keep on turning. I hope we can skip past the left's hyperbole this time.

Unfortunately, we have heard our friend the Democratic leader talk about fighting the President's nominee tooth and nail. We have heard that others in his party are preparing to mount a filibuster of this nominee. Of course, we do not even know who it is yet. That is not productive. That is not what our country needs right now.

We understand that some on the left will never be pleased with any nominee this President—or any Republican President, for that matter—puts forward. We know some will continue to refuse to accept the results of the election. But our Democratic colleagues should not follow the far left down that harmful path for our country.

We need to all remember that the Supreme Court seat does not belong to any President or any political party. I have been clear all along that the next President, regardless of party—regardless of party—would name the next nominee for this seat. It is a decision I stood by even when it seemed likely we would have a Democrat in the White House. It is worth repeating, of course, that this standard is not uniquely mine or even Senate Republicans'. There is a reason this principle has been called not only the Biden rule but also the Schumer standard.

But, look, the election season is now over. We have a new President. We each have a responsibility to be serious and move from campaign mode to governing mode. It is my sincere hope that our friends across the aisle will join us in thoughtfully reviewing and considering the next Supreme Court Justice. It is the best way forward for the Senate, for the Court, and for our country.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Democratic leader is recognized.

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, there is a theme that is beginning to define this new administration: incompetence leading to chaos. Over the weekend, the hastily constructed Executive order on immigration and refugees caused chaos in airports across America and across the world. Folks were caught in detention at airports for up to 12 hours, young children separated from their mothers, husbands from their wives, elderly travelers denied medical care, green card holders and legal residents being denied the right to see an attorney. Some folks were pressured into signing away their permanent legal status. There were scenes of utter havoc.

Nobody seemed to know the legal ramifications of the order, including the most senior officials in charge of enforcing it—at DHS, DOJ, and State. There is a reason no one knows the legal ramifications. No one asked the professionals in the Departments. Isn't it amazing—on one of the most sweeping Executive orders ever issued, the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of Homeland Security, and the head of the CIA have said through reports that they did not even know of it.

The level of incompetence of this administration already, only 10 days into the Presidency, is staggering.

The legal ramifications leading to the firing of Sally Yates last night—there is a reason no one knows the legal ramifications. No one asked the professionals in the Departments and agencies responsible for implementing the rules.

A good manager, an administration with even a low bar of confidence, would have given the Department of Justice ample time to shape this policy and review it, as well as 15 or 30 days to implement it. At Kennedy Airport, Customs, the CPB—they had no idea this was coming down.

Last night, incompetence led to chaos at the Justice Department. Deputy Attorney General Sally Yates, then-Acting Attorney General, issued a notice saying the Department of Justice will not defend President Trump's Executive order on immigrants and refugees from Muslim-majority countries because of its dubious legality and even more dubious constitutionality. To put this in perspective, this was our country's top lawyer, someone who served administrations in both parties, someone who has the reputation of doing things on the merits, of not being political, saying that the Executive order is on such shaky legal and constitutional ground that the administration's lawyers should not defend it.

I have to say that she was our country's top lawyer, because within hours of her principled statement detailing her professional legal opinion, the Trump administration fired her. An hour later, the Acting Immigration and Customs Enforcement Director was dismissed as well.

The hair-trigger response from the White House to relieve them of their duties was a Monday night massacre, eerily reminiscent of the political firing by the Nixon administration during Watergate. But instead of it happening 6 years into an administration, it happened within the first 2 weeks. How many more of these dismissals will take place over the next 4 years? How many more firings because the President and his people in the White House do not want to hear a proper legal opinion?

Sally Yates was the Acting Attorney General. Why wasn't she consulted on the Executive order? Maybe if she had been, they would have learned all of the ways it is legally and constitutionally deficient and the administration would not have issued it.

But here we are, 2 weeks into the new Trump administration. Already we are on the cusp of a constitutional crisis. We are already in a crisis of competence.

A dangerous pattern is beginning to emerge because throughout the past week, incompetence led to chaos at the State Department as well. Before the Secretary of State is confirmed, before any Deputy and Under Secretaries have been named, the President unceremoniously cleared out more than a century of experience among senior officials at the State Department. One of the top officials removed last week was in charge of management issues at the State Department, including security of our embassies and associated personnel overseas. This could potentially put our people overseas at risk and could potentially make it more difficult for our government to conduct the business of our Nation overseas. This makes America weaker, not stronger.

Another official was in charge of ensuring the compliance of nations with whom we have arms control and security treaties. This is an area where my friends from the other side of the aisle—most notably, my friend from Arkansas—demanded robust action under the previous administration, especially with respect to Russia. These important issues require continuing senior-level government attention and expertise, not a vacant office.

So, again, incompetence is astounding the American people. It is amazing how poorly done so many things that have come out of the White House in the first 2 weeks have been. It seems the President is treating our Nation's most senior and capable members of his workforce as if this is an episode of ''The Apprentice.''

Unlike on the campaign trail, the President's slapdash decisions, tweets, and the basic incompetence of his administration threatens to spread chaos across the country and across the world, undermining America's global reputation and making Americans less safe—especially the Executive order on immigrants and refugees.

The events of last night make that fact as clear as day. Our country's top lawyers think it is illegal, unconstitutional, and indefensible. An unprecedented number of senior nonpartisan State Department personnel—many of whom served under Republican administrations loyally and ably—signed

onto a letter of dissent, a memo of dissent, actually, arguing that the Executive order ''will immediately sour relations with much of the Muslim world . . . [and] increase anti-American sentiment'' from seven countries from which not a single refugee has ever committed an act of terrorism in America, not a single one.

Today, even more than yesterday and over the weekend, we have reason to overturn this Executive order. I urge my Republican colleagues to rethink their position, to join us on Senator FEINSTEIN's bill to rescind the order. Then we can actually get to work, actually protecting our country with a smart, thoughtful, and effective policy against terrorism—not with what seems good on a tweet.

I asked a unanimous consent request yesterday because this order is so bad for our safety, for our security, for our troops, for our country, and for the moral leadership that we have always held. There is even a greater need today because we saw what Sally Yates said and the President's actions.

The need to rescind this order is even greater today than it was yesterday, so I am pleading with my colleagues. I know many of you have doubts about this order. You have expressed them. Let's rescind it and really get to work on tightening up our laws and making America safe from terrorists.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 240

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Senator FEINSTEIN's bill, S. 240; that there be 2 hours of debate equally divided; and that upon the use or yielding back of time, the bill be considered read a third time and the Senate proceed to vote on passage of the bill; finally, that there be no amendments, motions, or points of order in order to the bill.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. COTTON. Reserving the right to object, I feel like Yogi Berra when he said ''It's deja vu all over again.''

Just 18 hours ago, the Senator from New York and I stood here, and he made the exact same request, and I objected to it. And I will object again. I will object tomorrow, and I will object for as long as he wants to make these requests.

I will point out, though, that the business of the people is not being done. For all of you up there in the Gallery, we just started 20 minutes ago. That is the regular order under which the Senate starts when it can't reach agreement on when to start earlier. We typically would start around 9:30 or 10, but the Democrats refused to allow us to come in earlier today to start processing some of the President's nominations.

You may have heard on TV that Democrats on the Finance Committee have boycotted their hearing this morning. They refused to show up to do their job to confirm some of the President's nominees.

I don't know how long they plan to do this. I don't know if they intend to abscond out of the district, if we are going to have to vote to have the Sergeant at Arms track them down and haul them into work to do their business. I see him standing right over there. He has a distinguished record in military and law enforcement. He could probably do that effectively.

I wish, though, that they would simply show up and have a debate and do their work and confirm the President's nominees in an orderly process.

The Senator from New York mentioned State Department officials who had left work last week. Well, there is a simple solution for getting political accountability at the State Department, and that is for this body to confirm Rex Tillerson to be the Secretary of State.

Finally, I just want to make a few points about Ms. Yates's firing last night, since that is the only thing that has changed since the Senator from New York and I were on the floor yesterday.

Ms. Yates, in her letter about the President's order, did not cite any provision of the Constitution, any Federal law that suggested the President's order was unlawful or unconstitutional, nor could she because her own Office of Legal Counsel, which provides legal guidance for the executive branch, had already reviewed the order before it was issued for its form and its legality and had signed off on it. Her decision was a policy decision, which is not a decision of the Attorney General—certainly is not a decision of a holdover Acting Attorney General—to make.

She was grandstanding. She should have been relieved. I am glad the President relieved her.

The American people deserve to have a politically accountable Attorney General to make these decisions, which we would have, yet again I say, if the Democrats would simply do their job and process these nominees in an orderly fashion.

So, as I said, on behalf of the Republican Conference, I object. I will object tomorrow. I will object for as long as we make these frivolous, dilatory requests.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CRUZ). Objection is heard.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to the consideration of the nomination of Elaine Chao to be Secretary of Transportation, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Elaine L. Chao, of Kentucky, to be Secretary of Transportation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be 20 minutes of debate, equally divided in the usual form.

The Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I have sought recognition to speak in support of Secretary Elaine Chao to be the Secretary of Transportation.

It would be hard to come up with a more qualified nominee than Secretary Chao for this important role. In addition to serving for 8 years as the U.S. Secretary of Labor, Secretary Chao has also served as the Deputy Secretary of the Department that she has now been tapped to lead. Her extensive experience also includes the United Way of America, the Peace Corps, and the Federal Maritime Commission.

The Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee, which I am honored to chair, held a hearing on Secretary Chao's nomination on January 11 of this year. To no one's surprise, she demonstrated her experience, her thoughtfulness, and her commitment to working collaboratively with Congress on the challenges facing our transportation system.

Last week, the Commerce Committee acted by voice vote to report her nomination favorably to the floor, and I am hopeful that the Senate will confirm her overwhelmingly today.

The agency Secretary Chao has been nominated to lead plays a vital role in facilitating and promoting the safe and efficient movement of goods and people throughout the country and around the world.

Our economy is truly dependent upon a thriving transportation sector. Without a robust and efficient transportation sector, rural States like mine would be unable to get their goods to the market.

Increasing the capacity and the efficiency of our Nation's highways, rail lines, pipelines, and ports is crucial and will have to be a top priority for the next Secretary of Transportation.

A continued focus on safety must also be a top priority for the next Secretary. While our Nation's pipelines, railroads, airways, and highways have a strong record of safety, improvements can and should be made. Many of the strong safety improvements the Commerce Committee advanced as part of the FAST Act and the PIPES Act last Congress are yet to be implemented, and we will expect our next Secretary of Transportation to work with us to ensure speedy implementation.

We will also have the opportunity to collaborate on safety improvements when we revisit the authorization of the Federal Aviation Administration later this year. The next Secretary of Transportation will also have a unique opportunity to show Federal leadership in the advancement of transportation innovation. V2V technology, autonomous vehicles, and unmanned aircraft systems, to name a few, have great promise to promote safety, improve efficiency, and spur economic growth in this country.

Secretary Chao will have a momentous opportunity to transform America's transportation network by promoting safety and innovation, growing our Nation's freight network, advancing needed improvements to our infrastructure, and ensuring that all users—both rural and urban—benefit equally.

Secretary Chao has consistently proved her willingness to roll up her sleeves and address the challenges facing our Nation. That is why I look forward to her confirmation as the next Secretary of Transportation, and I urge my colleagues to support her nomination.

I see my colleague from Florida, the distinguished ranking member on our committee, Senator NELSON, is here. He also participated, as did members on both sides. Frankly, I think every member of our committee, both Republicans and Democrats, had an opportunity to ask questions of Secretary Chao when she was in front of our committee.

As I said before, she has been carefully vetted, thoroughly vetted through so many different positions that she has held throughout previous administrations.

I certainly welcome the opportunity to work with her, as I know my colleague from Florida does, in meeting the transportation challenges that our Nation has as we move into the future.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I would echo what our chairman, Senator THUNE, has said about Elaine Chao. She certainly has the qualifications to be our next Secretary of Transportation. Clearly, she is a part of the Senate family; as the spouse of the majority leader, we know her well—and her government experience as the previous Secretary of Labor and Deputy Secretary of Transportation. The Office of Government Ethics, which is the independent agency that vets the nominees, has certified that she is in compliance with all the laws and regulations governing conflicts of interest.

This Senator intends to vote for her confirmation, as I did in the committee.

Since the Senator from Arkansas, in his objection to the unanimous consent request of the Democratic leader, made note of the absence of Democratic members from the Finance Committee markup of a couple of the Cabinet nominees, I want to bring to the attention of my colleagues that indeed, there was new information that came to light overnight in a publication in the Wall Street Journal of additional information about the nominee for the Department of HHS, which needs to be cleared up before the committee proceeds. So I wanted to put that on the record and make clear one of the reasons that the Finance Committee members objected to proceeding.

I think it interesting also that this Senator, as the ranking member of the Commerce Committee, had some additional questions for Secretary Chao—not questions in any kind of defensive or offensive way but additional information. Those questions were proffered Sunday night or early Monday morning. This Senator, not having heard all day from Secretary Chao, called Secretary Chao. She promptly returned the call last evening, and, lo and behold, the transition team for the Secretary of Transportation had not even given her the questions.

One of the questions that this Senator had for Secretary Chao was this: Given the chaos in the airports over the weekend, was she as Secretary of Transportation concerned about the orderly administration of those airports when such an unusual order had come down? In addition, what about the lost tickets on getting refunds for passengers and what about the changing of flight crews that might cause extra expenses? These are all items that a Secretary of Transportation would be concerned with going forward. What I found out in conversation was that the nominee to be Secretary of Transportation had not been consulted by the White House—not in advance, during, or after the implementation of those orders having to do with the entry into the United States of refugees and other immigrants.

I think we need Secretary Chao as someone who has the experience, who has common sense, and will be in a position to offer level-headed, good, experienced-based advice to the government going forward. It is just the latest example of some of the fallout from this weekend's activities.

I recommend to our Senators that we approve the nomination of Secretary Chao, and I hope that upon her confirmation today by the Senate, she will be sworn in forthwith.

I yield the floor.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, today, the Senate considers the nomination of Elaine Chao to be the Secretary of Transportation. Ms. Chao has served in a number of roles in both the public and private sectors throughout her career, ultimately serving as the Secretary of Labor during the administration of George W. Bush. I look forward to working with Secretary Chao as we find solutions to modernize and grow our country's crumbling infrastructure.

We can all agree that investment in our country's transportation infrastructure means safe bridges, paved roads, completed railways, and expanded airports. We can also all support innovative approaches to meeting these needs while guarding public health and environmental protections. With a long-term vision, Congress is not only repaving roads, but it is investing in the future of our vibrant communities. In a rural State like Vermont, it is essential that rural communities have the transportation options they need to access basic things like grocery stores, doctors' offices, schools and churches, and banks. These investments are essential to connecting rural America to the economic opportunities they need for success.

The importance of this connection was made clear in Vermont after the devastation of Tropical Storm Irene in 2011. Entire communities were isolated for days and weeks after the storm until temporary bridges and roads were able to reconnect us. It was because of substantial Federal and State commitments that Vermont rebuilt and improved our dams, roads, wastewater facilities, and rail lines across our State. As disruptive as the storm was to the rhythm of our everyday lives, it provided Vermont an opportunity to assess our State's vulnerabilities and to invest in upgrades. But it should not take a category 4 storm to allow a State the opportunity to improve its transportation services.

That is why I was encouraged by the Obama administration's continued investment in programs that were formed as a response to the financial crisis of 2008. The Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery, TIGER, grant program is providing funding to States for multimodal programs not considered under traditional transportation programs. Vermont has received several grants through this program. Under Secretary Foxx's leadership, there has also been a renewed focus on transit investment, not only in facilities, but in technology. Vermont has relied on these programs to enhance our services for the elderly and disabled, as well as to launch new programs like Green Mountain Transit's mobile phone application that delivers bus arrival times and schedule information. Finally, Vermont has 12 State-owned airports that continue to contribute to Vermont's economic engine. If not for the commitment to rural airport investment, Vermont would not have been able to fund our airports' expansions and improvements necessary to grow and add to our State's commerce and tourism.

America is starving for infrastructure investment. I hope that Secretary Chao will work with Congress to establish a long-term investment plan that propels our transportation infrastructure and technology in both urban and rural areas into the 21 Century.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I rise today in strong support of the Honorable Elaine Chao to serve as the next Secretary of Transportation. She has proven she has the experience and the drive to help her accomplish President Trump's goals to address our nation's infrastructure needs heads on. I have known Elaine for many decades as a dedicated civil servant and a talented negotiator and have no doubt she will again prove to be a highly effective asset to the Executive branch. Elaine Chao was born in Taiwan and, at the age of 8, came with her family to America by cargo ship where, at the age of 19, she became a U.S. citizen.

From those humble beginnings, she went on to receive degrees from Mount Holyoke College in Massachusetts and Harvard Business School.

Elaine Chao began her executive career at the U.S. Department of Transportation in 1986, as Deputy Administrator of the Maritime Administration, then as Deputy Secretary from 1989 to 1991. She served as the Director of the Peace Corps, in 1991, where she brought the Peace Corp programs to the liberated countries of Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania; and as president and CEO of the United Way of America where she helped restore fiscal responsibility to an organization that had been damaged by mismanagement.

In 2001, she become the 24th U.S. Secretary of Labor, the first Asian Pacific American woman to be appointed to the President's cabinet in American history, in President George W. Bush's cabinet. During her 8-year tenure at the Department of Labor Department, she proved she has the skills to manage large multifaceted organizations as well as to initiate needed reforms and new programs that help create jobs and competiveness in the workforce. Quite frankly, she was the best Secretary of Labor the United States has ever had.

During her tenure, the Department updated the white collar overtime regulations under the Fair Labor Standards Act, which has been on the agenda of every administration since 1977. The most significant regulatory tort reform of President Bush's first term, the new regulations provided millions of low-wage vulnerable workers with strengthened overtime protection.

In 2003, under her leadership, the Department achieved the first major update of union financial disclosure regulations in more than 40 years, giving rank and file members enhanced information on how their hard-earned dues are spent. The Department set new worker protection enforcement records, including recovering record back wages for vulnerable low-wage immigrant workers. The Department also launched comprehensive reform of the Nation's publicly funded worker training programs, to better serve dislocated and unemployed workers.

I have complete confidence in her abilities and look forward to working with her in her new capacity as the 18th U.S. Secretary of Transportation.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, I support the nomination of Elaine Chao to be Secretary of Transportation.

Ms. Chao has proven a capable manager. She has served in several administrations, including as Secretary of Labor and Deputy Secretary of Transportation. Her experience will serve the Transportation Department and the Cabinet well.

At the Department of Transportation, Ms. Chao will be responsible for implementing one of President Trump's most ambitious agenda items—a massive investment in infrastructure. During the campaign, Mr. Trump proposed to invest $1 trillion to rebuild infrastructure over the next decade. And on November 9, 2016, President-Elect Trump said, ''We are going to fix our inner cities and rebuild our highways, bridges, tunnels, airports, schools, hospitals. We're going to rebuild our infrastructure, which will become, by the way, second to none. And we will put millions of our people to work as we rebuild it.''

While we have received few details on the plan, I hope that Ms. Chao will work closely with Congress to identify needs within our States and invest broadly in roads, bridges, airports, rail, and transit. While I believe that public-private partnerships can be one avenue to drive transportation projects, we cannot rely on them to be the backbone of a transportation plan, as many communities would struggle to assemble the financing necessary to make such projects viable.

Our Nation's public infrastructure has historically been a bipartisan priority. It must remain so.

I appreciate Ms. Chao's commitment during her hearing to enforce the Davis-Bacon Act's requirement to pay fair wages to ensure that our Nation's construction jobs can sustain workers and their families. Commendably, Ms. Chao also emphasized her dedication to safety.

Maryland has a number of critical transportation priorities, including the Port of Baltimore, the MARC commuter rail, and increasingly congested highways like I–270 and I–81. We have also worked closely with the Federal Transit Administration on safety improvements to the Washington Metro, our Nation's subway, and have pushed for the creation of the Purple Line. I look forward to working with Secretary Chao to build a 21st century, multimodal transportation system that works for all of my constituents in Maryland.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, with respect to the pending Chao nomination, we yield back the remainder of our time so that we can proceed to the vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Time is yielded back.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, we yield back our time as well.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time is yielded back.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Chao nomination?

Mr. GRASSLEY. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL (when his name was called). Present.

The result was announced—yeas 93, nays 6, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 35 Ex.]

YEAS—93

Alexander	Fischer	Murphy
Baldwin	Flake	Murray
Barrasso	Franken	Nelson
Bennet	Gardner	Paul
Blumenthal	Graham	Perdue
Blunt	Grassley	Peters
Boozman	Harris	Portman
Brown	Hassan	Reed
Burr	Hatch	Risch
Cantwell	Heinrich	Roberts
Capito	Heitkamp	Rounds
Cardin	Heller	Rubio
Carper	Hirono	Sasse
Casey	Hoeven	Schatz
Cassidy	Inhofe	Scott
Cochran	Isakson	Sessions
Collins	Johnson	Shaheen
Coons	Kaine	Shelby
Corker	Kennedy	Stabenow
Cornyn	King	Sullivan
Cortez Masto	Klobuchar	Tester
Cotton	Lankford	Thune
Crapo	Leahy	Tillis
Cruz	Lee	Toomey
Daines	Manchin	Udall
Donnelly	Markey	Van Hollen
Duckworth	McCain	Warner
Durbin	McCaskill	Whitehouse
Enzi	Menendez	Wicker
Ernst	Moran	Wyden
Feinstein	Murkowski	Young

NAYS—6

Booker	Merkley	Schumer
Gillibrand	Sanders	Warren

ANSWERED ''PRESENT''—1

McConnell

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HELLER). Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The Senator from West Virginia.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that following disposition of the Chao nomination, the Senate resume consideration of the Tillerson nomination postcloture, and the Senate recess until 2 p.m., with the time during recess counting postcloture on the Tillerson nomination.

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

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the nomination of Rex W. Tillerson to be Secretary of State, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Rex W. Tillerson, of Texas, to be Secretary of State.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 1:11 p.m., recessed until 2 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. PORTMAN).

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I have nine unanimous consent requests for committees to meet during today's session of the Senate. I ask unanimous consent that these requests be agreed to en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. SCHUMER. I object, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business for up to 5 minutes.

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

NOMINATIONS OF STEVEN MNUCHIN AND TOM PRICE

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I rise to discuss what happened in the Finance Committee today—or what didn't happen in the Finance Committee today. Two newspapers—one, the Columbus Dispatch, one of Ohio's best and most conservative newspapers, and the Wall Street Journal, one of this country's most conservative newspapers—reported that the two nominees in front of the Senate Finance Committee had lied to the committee. Treasury Secretary-Designee Mnuchin had lied when asked if his bank, OneWest, had done robo signings; he said no.

The Columbus Dispatch investigative reporters found, in fact, that they had done robo signings, and they found that dozens—probably hundreds, maybe thousands—of Ohioans lost their homes. A woman named Miss Duncan, who had paid her mortgage month after month, was doing everything right. She was foreclosed on—not anything of her doing—and her financial life was turned upside down.

The Wall Street Journal reported that Congressman PRICE, the designee for Health and Human Services, had lied about insider information he had. He had advantages that other investors didn't have in buying health care stocks as he sat on the health care committee in the House, as he voted, as he wrote amendments and bills dealing with health care.

These are nominees for agencies—the two most important economic agencies in the Federal Government, probably, at least in the Cabinet—who have lied about things that affect people's lives. It is hundreds of people—thousands, maybe, in my State. We are not even the largest State on foreclosures caused by OneWest. Thousands, hundreds of thousands—who knows how many around the country, as he will not tell us yet—have lost homes because of his and his bank's actions, making him wealthier, to be sure, but upending people's lives in the cruelest kind of way when their homes are foreclosed on.

We are saying to Senator HATCH, the chairman of the Finance Committee: Get some answers here. Find out why these two nominees lied, and find out what they are going to do to fix it. Find out what they have in their backgrounds that they haven't disclosed to this committee.

We have no business voting on nominees before we have that kind of information. That is the reason that Democratic Senators of the Finance Committee, led by Ranking Member WYDEN, decided not to come to the committee to vote today—because it is the only way we can get Senator HATCH to bring those two forward to give us the information and to give the American public the information they need.

I might add that we probably did President Trump a favor today, because if these two nominees had been brought forward—and I assume confirmed, because Republicans are voting for every nominee, it seems, no matter what; I haven't seen a break from that yet—they may have come to the floor and have been confirmed, and there likely would have been a scandal early in the Trump Administration and in the Treasury Department and Health and Human Services Department—two incredibly important agencies.

I think that we, perhaps, in some sense, saved President Trump from himself and the damage that his nominees could do. I don't expect appreciation or thanks from the White House on this, but I do think this is an issue that should be taken care of before they head two of the most important and largest—if not largest, two of the most important—Federal agencies.

I yield back my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I rise to discuss why I intend to oppose the nomination of Rex Tillerson as the Secretary of State. This is not a decision that I make lightly. I have no doubt that Mr. Tillerson has been a successful businessman, managing one of America's largest corporations at ExxonMobil. Many have attested to his being a man of character who has given back to his community and, particularly, through his work with the Boy Scouts of America.

I have no reason to doubt that he does have the character and decency that we would applaud in any person. However, when the United States faces some of the most complex global challenges in a generation, this is not the time to appoint as our Nation's top diplomat someone who has no demonstrated experience articulating and advocating for America's interests, values, and commitment to our allies and partners.

As the events of this past week make clear, we need a Secretary of State who will speak up and candidly tell the truth to the President when he acts contrary to who we are as a nation and harms our relations with our partners and our standing in the world. Without an effective voice at the State Department for America's best interests, both within the executive branch and outside our borders, we will continue to see this administration, I fear, take steps that undermine cooperation with our closest allies and neighbors, violate our values, and ultimately make our troops and citizens less safe. I am concerned that Mr. Tillerson will not be such a voice for the American people.

Throughout the confirmation process, Mr. Tillerson has repeatedly demonstrated either his lack of preparation or his unwillingness, perhaps, to specifically declare himself on key issues. In particular, I am concerned about his views on Russia, climate change, and immigration, and how he will influence a White House that already seems determined to pursue campaign promises regardless of the impact on American foreign policy.

On Russia, Mr. Tillerson has demonstrated a familiarity with Putin and the Russian Government that is deeply concerning. Mr. Tillerson has spent his professional life advancing the interests of ExxonMobil—indeed, almost to the exclusivity of any other purpose. That is of concern, and should be of concern to all of us.

Even as the United States was reevaluating its relationship with Russia in recent years, Mr. Tillerson has deepened his personal relationship with Putin, to the point that the Russian President awarded Mr. Tillerson the Russian Order of Friendship in 2013, supposedly a very high honor for a non-Russian. It appears that Mr. Tillerson opposed U.S. sanctions against Russia after Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea in 2014 because his multinational corporation stood to lose very lucrative oil contracts if sanctions were put in place.

International sanctions against Russia, imposed by the United States and the European Union, have sent a clear and effective message to Russia that their invasion of Ukraine is unacceptable. These sanctions are absolutely critical to multilateral efforts to hold Russia to its commitments to end the violence in Ukraine and restore its sovereignty, consistent with the Minsk agreements. The Russians claimed that these are separatists, that these are Ukrainians rising up, but the truth is that this is Russian-inspired, Russian-directed, and at the behest of Putin.

Mr. Tillerson's wavering on Russian sanctions, however, could weaken the resolve of our European allies in maintaining these sanctions. It could encourage Putin in his efforts to cut a

deal for sanctions relief and cause our allies in the Baltics and elsewhere to question the U.S. and NATO commitment to their security. This ultimately will make us less safe.

On climate change, Mr. Tillerson's career up to this point has been marked by a disregard for the environment. Strong environmental policies, including coordinating global efforts to address climate change, are in the best interest of the American people and help fulfill our moral responsibility as stewards of the Earth for the next generation. That is why I have consistently supported limits on oil and gas exploration, bans on drilling in pristine areas, eliminating oil and gas tax subsidies and giveaways, increases in research into new sustainable energy technologies, and the negotiation of international climate treaties. Mr. Tillerson's time at ExxonMobil stands in stark contrast to these policy goals and makes me doubt whether, if approved, he would effectively protect our environment and work with our partners around the world to uphold our commitments as Secretary of State.

On immigration, I am concerned about whether Mr. Tillerson can be an effective advocate for policies that keep the American people safe while preserving our ties with key partners and upholding our values internationally.

President Trump's Executive order blocking immigrants from certain Muslim-majority nations is, in my view, unconstitutional, un-American, cruel to those fleeing danger and injustice, and ultimately makes us less secure. It ignores the horrific circumstances refugees are fleeing in numerous war-torn regions. It suggests the insertion of arbitrary religious and ethnic considerations and fails to account for the strict vetting procedures already in place for refugees, particularly from Syria and areas of conflict. It is also contrary to our history as a nation that, from its birth, has benefited from the contributions of hardworking and successful immigrants.

In particular, this Executive order is a betrayal of our commitment to those who risk their lives to serve as translators for our troops fighting in Iraq. Through the Special Immigrant Visa Program, we promised these brave Iraqis the opportunity to resettle in the United States in recognition of their invaluable contributions to our wartime missions. Yet this administration has effectively blocked these SIV Program recipients without a second thought.

In addition, the President's actions on immigration are making America less safe by undermining key relationships with allies and partners. The President's Executive order on immigration hands ISIS a self-inflicted propaganda victory that reinforces their claim that the United States is at war with all of Islam. It damages our diplomatic relationships with Muslim-majority nations, whether on the list or not, by undermining their willingness and ability to cooperate with U.S. law enforcement and intelligence agencies in sharing information on potential terrorist attackers. It may also compel these countries to reciprocate by prohibiting Americans from entering their borders.

Just this morning in the Armed Services Committee, we heard from an eminent expert. She indicated to us that the Iraqi Parliament has already had a meeting and has essentially resolved to reciprocate by banning Americans from Iraq.

We have examples today of Iraqi pilots training in the United States so that they can go back and work with our military personnel to attack ISIS. Had their training been scheduled—

Mrs. MCCASKILL. Mr. President, will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. REED. Yes, I will.

Mrs. MCCASKILL. It is my understanding that not only are we fighting shoulder to shoulder with Iraqis against ISIL, on the day these orders were signed, we had Iraqi pilots in the United States of America training to bomb ISIS. If they had come days after the signing of this order instead of days before, they would not have been allowed to enter the country for this important training; is that correct?

Mr. REED. The Senator from Missouri is absolutely correct. That is the point I was going to make, and she made it more distinctly and more decisively.

Mrs. MCCASKILL. Sorry. I heard you talking about Iraqis, and I wanted to make sure everyone in America understood that they were here training with our military to fight ISIS, and the President of the United States told them they were no longer welcome.

Mr. REED. This is something that has been ongoing for many years. I can recall visiting a training facility in Rhode Island—formerly Quonset Point Naval Air Station; now it is a National Guard station—where they were training Iraqi Air Force pilots to fly C–130J aircraft. Again, had this order been in effect, those pilots would not have been allowed in for the training that not only helps them but helps the thousands of American military personnel in Iraq, shoulder to shoulder, fighting together, depending on not just the presence but the confidence of the Iraqi military in the United States and that reciprocal mutual relationship. This measure sends a terrible signal to them saying: Go ahead and fight, but you won't get to the United States.

It is particularly the case I make with respect to these people who feel threatened because they helped us. We have a special visa program, but right now that is in limbo because we essentially said they can't come in, even though they risked their lives to protect our interests and the interests of their own country.

We are creating huge problems, and, again, I haven't heard the nominee speak out decisively and clearly about the problems this policy is engendering, and that is incumbent upon the individual.

We have traditionally granted nominees broad deference out of respect for the President, and I don't think this is an issue of simply stopping a nominee for the sake of stopping a nominee. But we are not a rubberstamp either. We have to come here and make the case. When we see examples of behaviors that demonstrably threaten the security of the United States, our ability to cooperate with others, our image in the world, and we are not confident that our Secretary of State will not only reject those but effectively argue within and without that we have a higher purpose, a better goal, a better policy, then it is our obligation to stand and to render a vote of no, and I intend to do that.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

TRAVEL BAN

Mrs. MCCASKILL. Mr. President, I am going to make a couple of brief comments and then yield my hour of postcloture debate.

Let me just say that nothing the President did made us safer. And one of the most outrageous claims the President made was that we don't have extreme vetting.

The Presiding Officer and I both serve on the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, and after we realized that we needed to take a closer look at refugees and making sure bad guys weren't getting into this country, we instituted an amazing array of vetting processes.

Let me first start with this important principle. Nobody applies to the United States for refugee status; they apply to the United Nations. Less than 1 percent of the people who apply for refugee status with the United Nations are granted the opportunity to go forward. So we start out with 99-plus percent of the people who apply to be a refugee turned down at the United Nations, so the less than 1 percent who come to us, come to us for another aggressive screening process. I went to Jordan and watched it. There are multiple interviews. It takes 18 months to 2 years. They are vetted through every possible intelligence agency, every possible database. And by the way, we check what they are saying even if they don't have papers. There are iris scans. It is the most extreme vet you can imagine. Of course, because it was so extreme, we realized that the hole in our system was not the refugees; it was, in fact, the Visa Waiver Program, which is why we passed a law after Paris to make sure that anybody who was in certain countries had to get a visa. Obama didn't do a travel ban. Obama never identified countries for a travel ban. All President Obama did was say: If you have been in these countries, you have to have a visa so we have information on you.

I wanted to clarify that because the misinformation that is coming out of the White House about what we currently have and what is in place is an insult. I wish they understood the vetting processes we have in place now for refugees; then maybe we could get back to really joining arms and trying to figure out what we can do for national security. One thing we need to do for national security is not give the back of our hand to the pilots and the other soldiers who are fighting shoulder to shoulder with us in Iraq against ISIS.

I yield the remainder of my hour of postclosure debate time under rule XXII to Senator SCHUMER.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has that right.

The Senator from Iowa.

REMEMBERING SARAH ROOT

Mrs. ERNST. Mr. President, I rise today on the 1-year anniversary of the tragic death of a fellow Iowan, Sarah Root. On January 31, 2016—the very same day as her college graduation—Sarah was killed by an illegal immigrant named Edwin Mejia, who was allegedly drag racing with a blood alcohol level more than three times the legal limit. Sadly, despite requests by local law enforcement, ICE failed to detain Mejia. He then posted bond, was released, and now a year later remains a fugitive, denying Sarah's loved ones any sense of closure or Justice.

As a mother and grandmother, I cannot fathom the grief her family and friends continue to feel after such a devastating loss. Just 21 years old, Sarah was bright, gifted, full of life, and ready to take on the world. Having just graduated from Bellevue University with a 4.0 grade point average, she was dedicated to her community and wanted to pursue a career in criminal justice. Sarah had a remarkably bright future ahead of her, but her opportunity to make a mark on the world was tragically cut short 1 year ago today. Yet, even in death, she touched the lives of others, saving six different individuals through organ donation. Although nothing can bring Sarah back to her family, we can ensure that ICE never makes that same mistake again.

I was encouraged to see the Trump administration take action toward addressing this issue last week by implementing parts of Sarah's Law—legislation I introduced with my Iowa and Nebraska colleagues in honor of Sarah. I remain committed to continuing to work with my colleagues to fulfill the promise I made to Sarah's loving parents: that I will do everything I can to ensure that no other parents have to go through what the Root family has faced.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Ms. HARRIS. I yield my hour of postcloture debate time under rule XXII to Senator CARDIN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has that right.

The Senator from Nevada.

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Mr. President, I yield my hour of postcloture debate time under rule XXII to Senator CARDIN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has that right.

The Senator from New Hampshire.

Ms. HASSAN. Mr. President, I yield my hour of postcloture debate time under rule XXII to Senator SCHUMER.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has that right.

Ms. HASSAN. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I rise today as the Senate begins consideration of the nomination of Mr. Rex Tillerson to serve as the 69th Secretary of State of the United States of America. I thank Mr. Tillerson for his willingness to serve our Nation and for his participation in a lengthy, wide-ranging hearing before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, where I have the honor of being the senior Democrat, the ranking Democrat on the committee.

Earlier today, I thanked Chairman CORKER for the courtesies he showed during the hearing process. However, as I stated yesterday, I remain concerned that Mr. Tillerson's demonstrated business orientation in his responses to questions during the confirmation hearing would prevent him from being a Secretary of State who forcefully promotes the values and ideals that have defined our country and our leading role in the world for more than 200 years. I, therefore, will not be supporting his nomination.

Given the events over the weekend, I believe it is important that I begin today's debate by painting a picture for the American people of the unstable, reckless foreign policy that Mr. Tillerson is going to be asked to carry out under President Trump. It is painfully obvious that when the President says ''America first,'' the cumulative result of his vision would actually lead to America alone and America at risk.

From time to time, in our Nation's history, we have heard the calls of isolationism, but isolationism did not work then and it will not work now. It is an approach that our history has taught us, time and time again, undermines our interests, makes us vulnerable to those who wish us harm, betrays our values, and leaves us less secure and less prosperous.

America's leadership, rooted in our values, makes the world a better place for all, but the first 10 days of the Trump administration shows that the President is intent on compromising our values, abandoning our allies, and using a sledgehammer instead of a scalpel to conduct the detailed, careful work of safeguarding our Nation. Some of his supporters chalk it up to inexperience. My own chairman has said on numerous occasions that he wishes the President had more flushed-out ideas on foreign policy space.

What the American people witnessed in the last 10 days goes beyond inexperience. There is a willful, dangerous campaign underway by forces in this administration to bend or potentially even break the law. More than ever, we need to reaffirm and adhere to the values that make our country so strong and so stable, the city on the hill that others look to for leadership.

In order to do that, we need leaders who will not shy away from our values, who will sound a certain trumpet for human rights, the rule of law, and bedrock American values.

Mr. Tillerson's timid equivocation on American values throughout his confirmation process, his trumpet's uncertain sound was alarming because he will be working for a President clearly willing to compromise America's values at every turn. There are many individuals who have served in both Republican and Democratic administrations who recognize this Executive order for what it is.

I have in my hand a letter from over 100 former Cabinet Secretaries, senior government officials, diplomats, military servicemembers, and intelligence community professionals who have served in the Bush and Obama administrations. The letter, to the heads of the Departments of Homeland Security, Justice, and State, expresses deep concern that the Executive order issued over the weekend jeopardizes tens of thousands of lives, has caused a crisis here in America, and will do long-term damage to our national security.

It strongly recommends the President rescind this order. I ask unanimous consent that this letter be printed in the RECORD. There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

January 30, 2017.

Hon. JOHN F. KELLY,
Secretary, Department of Homeland Security, Washington, DC.
Hon. SALLY YATES,
Acting Attorney General, Department of Justice, Washington, DC.
Hon. THOMAS A. SHANNON,
Acting Secretary, Department of State, Washington, DC.

SECRETARY KELLY, ACTING ATTORNEY GENERAL YATES, ACTING SECRETARY SHANNON: As former cabinet Secretaries, senior government officials, diplomats, military service members and intelligence community professionals who have served in the Bush and Obama administrations, we, the undersigned, have worked for many years to make America strong and our homeland secure. Therefore, we are writing to you to express our deep concern with President Trump's recent Executive Order directed at the immigration system, refugees and visitors to this country. This Order not only jeopardizes tens of

thousands of lives, it has caused a crisis right here in America and will do long-term damage to our national security.

In the middle of the night, just as.we were beginning our nation's commemoration of the Holocaust, dozens of refugees onboard flights to the United States and thousands of visitors were swept up in an Order of unprecedented scope, apparently with little to no oversight or input from national security professionals.

Individuals, who have passed through multiple rounds of robust security vetting, including just before their departure, were detained, some reportedly without access to lawyers, right here in U.S. airports. They include not only women and children whose lives have been upended by actual radical terrorists, but brave individuals who put their own lives on the line and worked side-by-side with our men and women in uniform in Iraq now fighting against ISIL. Now, because of actions taken by this White House, their lives have been disrupted and they may even be in greater danger if they are sent home. Many more thousands going through the process will now be left behind. More broadly, tens of thousands of other travelers, including dual citizens and, at one point, legal U.S. residents face deep uncertainty about whether they may even travel to the United States or risk leaving and being barred reentry.

Many of us have worked for years to keep America safe from terrorists. Many of us were on the job working for our country on 9/11 and need no reminder just how vital it is to destroy terrorist networks and bring partners to our side in that global effort. Simply put, this Order will harm our national security. Partner countries in Europe and the Middle East, on whom we rely for vital counterterrorism cooperation, are already objecting to this action and distancing themselves from the United States, shredding years of effort to bring them closer to us. Moreover, because the Order discriminates against Muslim travelers and immigrants, it has already sent exactly the wrong message to the Muslim community here at home and all over the world: that the U.S. government is at war with them based on their religion. We may even endanger Christian communities, by handing ISIL a recruiting tool and propaganda victory that spreads their horrific message that the United States is engaged in a religious war. We need to take every step we can to counter violent extremism, not to feed into it by fueling ISIL propaganda.

Perhaps the most tragic irony of this episode is that it is unnecessary. We do not need to turn America into a fortress to keep it secure. Since the 9/11 attacks, the United States has developed a rigorous system of security vetting, leveraging the full capabilities of the law enforcement and intelligence communities. This vetting is applied to travelers not once, but multiple times. Refugees receive even further scrutiny. In fact, successive administrations have worked to improve this vetting on a near continuous basis, through robust information sharing and data integration to identify potential terrorists. Since 9/11 not a single major terrorist attack has been perpetrated by travelers from the countries named in the Order.

The suddenness of this Order is also troubling. The fact that individuals cleared for admission were literally in the air as the Order went into effect speaks to the haste with which it was developed and implemented. We are concerned that this Order received little, if any scrutiny by the Departments of State, Justice, and Homeland Security or the Intelligence Community. Now that some of these individuals are here in the United States, and thousands of others are stranded, our government's response has appeared disorganized and chaotic. As lawyers take steps to protect their clients who have been detained here or stranded at many other airports, the U.S. government will continue to face a flurry of legal challenges, which could have been avoided. Additionally, by banning travel by individuals cooperating against ISIL, we risk placing our military and diplomatic efforts at risk by sending a clear message to those citizens and all Muslims that the United States does not have their backs. Already, the international pushback has been immense, and threatens to jeopardize critical counterterrorism cooperation.

Fortunately, there is a way out of this self-made crisis. We know that your agencies did not create this situation and we particularly respect that many of you are working to mitigate its damage. Effective immediately, you can apply the discretion given to you under the President's Order to admit into the country the men, women and children who are currently still stranded in airports. The process for doing this is well known to the security professionals within your departments. We urge you to execute it. While it is good to see the withdrawal of the application of the Order to legal permanent residents of the United States, your Departments can immediately work to allow other classes of people into the country, and remove the discriminatory prioritization implicit within the Order. Most critically, we urge you to draw on the insight of the professionals in your departments to recommend that the President revisit and rescind this Order. Blanket bans of certain countries or classes of people is inhumane, unnecessary and counterproductive from a security standpoint, and beneath the dignity of our great nation.

Dr. Madeleine K. Albright, Former Secretary of State; Janet Napolitano, Former Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security; Susan Rice, Former National Security Advisor to the President of the United States; Dennis Blair, Former Director of National Intelligence, Admiral, USN, Retired; Michael Hayden, Former Director, Central Intelligence Agency; Samantha Power, Former United States Ambassador to the United Nations; Bill Richardson, Former Governor of New Mexico and United States Ambassador to the United Nations; Tony Blinken, Former Deputy Secretary of State; William Burns, Former Deputy Secretary of State; Bruce Andrews, Former Deputy Secretary of Commerce; Richard Clarke, Former National Coordinator for Security, Infrastructure Protection and Counterterrorism for the United States; Rudy DeLeon, Former Deputy Secretary of Defense.

Heather Higginbottom, Former Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources; Thomas Nides, Former Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources; James Steinberg, Former Deputy Secretary of State; Michael Morrell, Former Acting Director, Central Intelligence Agency; Matthew Olsen, Former Director of the National Counterterrorism Center; Rand Beers, Former Acting Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security; John B. Bellinger III, Former Legal Advisor to the Department of State.

Ambassador (ret.) Nicholas Burns, Former Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs; Eliott Cohen, Former Counselor, Department of State; Michele Flournoy, Former Undersecretary of Defense for Policy; Marcel Lettre, Former Undersecretary of Defense for Intelligence; James Miller, Former Undersecretary of Defense for Policy; Wendy Sherman, Former Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs; Suzanne Spaulding, Former Undersecretary for National Protection and Programs, Department of Homeland Security; Michael G. Vickers, Former Undersecretary of Defense for Intelligence; Tara Sonenshine, Former Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs.

Clara Adams-Ender, Brigadier General, USA, Retired; Ricardo Aponte, Brigadier General, USAF, Retired; Alyssa Ayres, Former Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia; Donna Barbisch, Major General, USA, Retired; Jamie Barnett, Rear Admiral, USN, Retired; Jeremy Bash, Former Chief of Staff, Department of Defense; Daniel Benjamin, Former Coordinator for Counterterrorism, Department of State; Charles Blanchard, Former General Counsel, United States Air Force; Janet Blanc Former Deputy Special Representative to Afghanistan and Pakistan; Barbara Bodine, Former United States Ambassador to Yemen; Richard Boucher, Former Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs, Mike Breen, Retired United States Army Officer; John G. Castellaw, Lieutenant General, USMC, Retired; Wendy Chamberlin, Former United States Ambassador to Pakistan.

Derek Chollet, Former Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs; Christopher Cole, Rear Admiral, USN, Retired; Bathsheba Crocker, Former Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs; Abe Denmark, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for East Asia; Paul Eaton, Major General, USA, Retired; Mari K. Eder, Major General, Retired, USA; Dwayne Edwards, Brigadier General, USA, Retired; Robert Einhom, Former Assistant Secretary of State for Nonproliferation; Evelyn Farkas, Former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Russia, Ukraine, Eurasia; Gerald M. Feierstein, Former United States Ambassador to Yemen; Daniel Feldman, Former Special Representative to Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Jose W. Fernandez, Former Assistant Secretary of State for Economic, Energy, and Business Affairs; Jonathan Finer, Former Director of Policy Planning, Department of State; Robert Glace, Brigadier General, USA, Retired; Philip Gordon, Former Special Assistant to the President and White House Coordinator for the Middle East, North Africa, and the Persian Gulf Region; Kevin P. Green, Vice Admiral, USN, Retired; Caitlin Hayden, Former National Security Council Spokesperson; Richard S. Haddad, Major General, USAF, Retired; Gretchen Herbert, Rear Admiral, USN, Retired; Mark Hertling, Lieutenant General, USA, Retired; Christopher P. Hill, Former United States Ambassador to Iraq; David Irvine, Brigadier General, USA, Retired; Arlee D. Jameson, Lieutenant General, USAF, Retired; Deborah Jones, Former United States Ambassador to Libya; Colin Kahl, Former National Security Advisor to the Vice President of the United States; Claudia Kennedy, Lieutenant General, USA, Retired.

Gil Kerlikowske, Former Commissioner, United States Customs and Border Protection; Charles Kupchan, Former Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs; Jonathan Lee, Former Deputy Chief of Staff, Department of Homeland Security; George Little, Former Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs; Donald E. Loranger Jr., Major General, USAF, Retired; Kelly Magsamen, Former Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Asian and Pacific Security Affairs; Randy Manner, Major General, USA, Retired; Thomas Malinowski, Former Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor; Brian McKeon, Former Acting Undersecretary of Defense for Policy.

Philip McNamara, Former Assistant Secretary for Partnerships and Engagement, Department of Homeland Security; John G. Morgan, Lieutenant General, USA, Retired; Suzanne Nossel, Former Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for International Organizations Affairs; James C. O'Brien, Former Special Envoy for Hostage Recovery; Eric Olson, Major General, USA, Retired; Rick Olson, Former Special Representative to Afghanistan and Pakistan; W. Robert Pearson, Former United States Ambassador to Turkey; Glenn Phillips, Rear Admiral, USN, Retired; Gale Pollock, Major General, USA, Retired; Amy Pope, Former Deputy Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs; Steve Pomper, Former Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs.

Michael Posner, Former Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor; Anne C. Richard, Former Assistant Secretary of State, Population, Refugees & Migration; Leon Rodriguez, Former Director, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services; Laura Rosenberger, Former Chief of Staff to the Deputy Secretary of State; Tommy Ross, Former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Security Cooperation; John M. Schuster, Brigadier General, USA, Retired; Eric Schwartz, Former Assistant Secretary of State for Population, Refugees, and Migration; Stephen A. Seche, Former United States Ambassador to Yemen; Robert Silvers, Former Assistant Secretary for Cyber Policy, Department of Homeland Security, Vikram Singh, Former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for South and Southeast Asia; Elissa Slotkin, Former Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs; Jeffrey Smith, Former General Counsel, Central Intelligence Agency; Julianne ''Julie'' Smith, Former Deputy National Security Advisor to the Vice President of the United States; Michael Smith, Rear Admiral, USN, Retired.

Matthew Spence, Former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Middle East Policy; Andrew W. Steinfeld, Former Senior Foreign Policy Advisor to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; Seth M.M. Stodder, Former Assistant Secretary of Homeland Security for Border, Immigration & Trade Policy; Jake Sullivan, Former National Security Advisor to the Vice President of the United States; Loree Sutton, Brigadier General, USA, Retired; Antonio Taguba, Major General, USA, Retired; Jim Townsend, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for European and NATO Policy; David Wade, Former Chief of Staff, Department of State; George H. Walls, Brigadier General, USMC, Retired; William Wechsler, Former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Counterterrorism and Special Operations.

Catherine Wiesner, Former Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration; Willie Williams, Lieutenant General, USMC, Retired; Johnnie E. Wilson, General, USA, Retired; Tamara Cofman Wittes, Former Deputy Assistant Secretary of State; Moira Whelan, Former Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs; Jon Brook Wolfsthal, Former Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs; Lee Wolosky, Former Special Envoy for Guantanamo Closure; Stephen N. Xenakis, M.D., Brigadier General, USA, Retired.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Tillerson needs to answer whether he supports Mr. Trump's decision this weekend to ban Muslims, to keep green card holders out of the country, and state his view on the chaos that ensued from the terrible implementation of this terrible policy. We asked Mr. Tillerson during the confirmation hearing whether he supported a Muslim ban. He would not give us a clear answer, and he did not speak out against an unconstitutional Muslim ban.

Just today, I have sent a letter, as the ranking Democrat on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, to Mr. Tillerson asking his specific views on the President's Executive order, what impacts that will have on America's credibility, what impact that will have on America's ability to work with our strategic partners around the world. I hope he will respond to us so we know his views on the President's Executive order before we are called upon to vote on his nomination.

I ask unanimous consent that a copy of that letter be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

UNITED STATES SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,
Washington, DC, January 31, 2017.

Mr. REX TILLERSON,
CEO, Exxon Mobil Corporation,
Irving, TX.

DEAR MR. TILLERSON: As the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the full Senate consider your nomination to serve as Secretary of State, I write to seek your views about the Executive Order, ''Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States,'' signed by President Trump on January 27, 2017. I am concerned that the text of the Executive Order and its haphazard implementation over the weekend run counter to our American values and the U.S. Constitution, as well as our national security and economic interests.

Do you support the Executive Order's indefinite denial of entry to Syrian refugees and the 120-day suspension of the entire U.S. Refugee Resettlement Program, which impacts 20,000 refugees and will, in practice, grind all refugee processing to a halt for many months?

Do you agree with President Trump's assertion that our country should give preference to Christians seeking to obtain visas or admission to the U.S? If so, do you think this action is consistent with our nation's bedrock principles of liberty and religious freedom?

What process would you support to identify an individual's religion prior to receiving a visa, admission, or other immigration benefit?

In your view, what message does barring individuals that have served our military in Iraq send to our partners abroad? Does that policy harm our national security and bilateral relationships?

Given this order's deliberate targeting of certain countries and disproportionate impact on Muslims, what will be the implications for our relationships with foreign countries that are predominantly Muslim? Do you think this order give fodder to ISIL's recruitment efforts in framing the U.S. war against terrorism as really a war on Islam?

I urge you to be forthright and thorough in your answers. Many thanks for your cooperation on this matter.

Sincerely,

BENJAMIN L. CARDIN,
United States Senator.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, it remains to be seen whether Mr. Tillerson has the moral compass necessary to counsel the President toward a coherent U.S. foreign policy that advances our national security and embraces our values and ideals or if he will be another yes-man, enabling the risky, chaotic whims of a demagogue President, who is leading us on a march of folly.

The American people deserve to know because if the last 10 days are any indication, the Trump administration is on a track to be the most dangerous and divisive in history. Nothing so painfully illustrates that point as Friday's Executive order banning refugees and certain Muslim immigrants from entering the United States. As a citizen of this great Nation, I am deeply offended by and ashamed of the President's Executive actions.

When the news of this developed over the weekend, I happened to be attending a family wedding in the Miami area, a city rich in its immigrant character and its welcoming nature to people of many faiths and backgrounds.

Miami was also the city where one of the most shameful episodes in our history transpired, where in 1993, the *St. Louis*, filled with Jewish refugees trying to flee the horrors of Nazi Germany waited for days, seeing the lights of the city ashore, seeking shelter and refuge. Shamefully, we turned the *St. Louis* away and condemned many of its passengers to death in the Holocaust.

We say never again. Yet fear and uncertainty was palatable this weekend in Miami and across the country. I have heard from constituents who were temporarily detained and arrested or whose loved ones had scheduled legal travel to the United States but were unsure if they should board their planes for fear of being arrested or turned around once they arrived.

I am aware of students studying legally here in the United States who suddenly found their entire future in jeopardy because of their nationality. Maryland is proud to host world-class universities like Johns Hopkins and the University of Maryland, colleges that are enriched by the contributions and perspectives of foreign citizens.

Permanent legal residents who endured a lengthy process to acquire their green card and make the United States their home were suddenly unsure if they belonged. I was particularly troubled when two Iraqi citizens, who have played critical roles in supporting America's forces in Iraq, and were traveling on valid visas, were denied entry into New York. What do they get for helping our brave men and women with translation and security services? A big ugly ''Not Welcome'' sign at JFK Airport. Adding insult to injury, their immediate families were already here in the United States.

The cumulative effect of this Executive order is enough to make your stomach churn because what President Trump tried to do was legalize discrimination based on religion and nationality. As President Trump said, giving preference to Christians is going to be OK. As Trump adviser Rudy

Giuliani said, this is a way to legalize a Muslim ban.

So I was relieved when Federal judge Ann Donnelly issued a stay on Saturday evening to stop the madness, at least temporarily. Other judges around the Nation acted accordingly as well, affirming certain rights of green card holders and legal permanent residents, but too many innocent people remain in limbo. My staff's communications with Cabinet agencies over the weekend were extremely troubling. The left hand did not know what the right hand was doing in the Trump administration. In the zeal to play politics and inflame the fears of Americans who feel threatened, the White House revealed how little they knew or cared about governing.

It was reported that Secretary Kelly did not have a proper opportunity to view the Executive order before it was issued, a sobering lesson I hope Mr. Tillerson has paid close attention to. The Department of Homeland Security has now belatedly begun to engage on issuing guidance, but I fear the damage has been done.

Clearly, the Department of Justice was not part of developing the Executive order, as Acting Attorney General Sally Yates said, boldly, that she was not convinced that the Executive order was lawful. As a result, President Trump fired her—the Monday night massacre. Our voice must be loud and clear. Mr. Trump, this is our country, a country that stands for the highest principles, supported by the rule of law.

If Ms. Yates' firing is any indication as to how President Trump will handle different views, our Democratic institutions of checks and balances will indeed be challenged. The White House Press Secretary, Sean Spicer, said that foreign service officers using the dissent channel to express their views on the immigration Executive order should ''either get with the program or they can go.''

The dissent channel was set up during the Vietnam war as a way for foreign service officers and civil servants to raise concerns with upper management about the direction of U.S. foreign policy without fear of retribution. It is for ''consideration of responsible, dissenting and alternative views on substantive foreign policy issues that cannot be communicated in a full and timely manner through regular operating channels or procedures.''

This process for the use of dissent channels was codified in the Foreign Affairs Manual in 1971, which dictates that dissent cables are sent to the Departments' policy planning directors who distribute them to the Secretary of State and other top officials who must respond within 30 to 60 days. There are typically about four or five each year. Freedom from reprisal from dissent user channels is strictly enforced, but the President's Press Secretary said they can go.

What type of free discussion do we want to have in this country? Where are the checks and balances? Where is the willingness to listen to different views?

The President also put a 4-month freeze in place on all refugees entering the United States, singling out refugees from certain Muslim-majority countries for extra screening, failing to acknowledge or speak about the thorough 18- to 24-month screening process that refugees from dangerous countries, such as Iraq and Syria, already endure before they come to our Nation. We have the toughest screening now. I am not sure what the President is talking about when he says additional screening. We already have the toughest screening. They already go through the United Nations. They are already interviewed. Their background is checked.

Moving forward, the number of refugees entering the United States will fall by 50 percent. It is clear that the President of the United States has a fundamental misunderstanding of America's leading role on refugee resettlement. Today, I will meet with King Abdallah of Jordan, a nation that has accepted 650,000 Syrian refugees. And President Trump is holding our program to accept approximately 10,000 Syrian refugees, placing it on hold.

Jordan is one of America's global partners in fighting extremism. It will be interesting to see the reactions we get from our partners.

If we close our doors to refugees, we will not only close our doors to U.S. humanitarian values but also severely damage America's global credibility on universal values.

The United States is a nation of immigrants and refugees from all and no faiths. We learned from our mistake with the *St. Louis*, and we are the Nation that received refugees from the Holocaust after the Second World War. We are the Nation that opened our doors to hundreds of thousands of citizens fleeing conflicts and political oppression in El Salvador, Cuba, Vietnam, and Cambodia.

The United States must continue to lead by example, but President Trump's cruel Executive order on immigrants and refugees undermines our core values and traditions, threatens our national security, and demonstrates a complete lack of understanding of our strict vetting process—the most thorough in the world. It is a dangerous and shortsighted policy that erodes our moral leadership and harms our national security as well as our alliances and partnerships worldwide.

This is not the kind of America that Americans deserve.

Also over the weekend, President Trump spoke with Russian President Vladimir Putin. There has been perhaps no other issue that has so pitted President Trump against the interests of the United States than Russia. Reflexively, the President will not utter basic truths about Mr. Putin's Russia, such as these: The annexation of Crimea, Ukraine, is illegal; they committed war crimes in Syria; and they sought to create doubt about and potentially influence the election that saw him elected President, as our intelligence community has now overwhelmingly confirmed.

There is no more fundamental interest that we have as Americans than our democracy. Let's be clear: Just as with Pearl Harbor or September 11, in this past election, the United States was attacked by a foreign power. President Trump does not even seem to care that we were attacked or, worse, does not seem to believe that we need to stand up and defend our democracy and our form of government. I find that unfathomable.

The phone calls this weekend came against the backdrop of President Trump and his aides floating the idea of lifting our current sanctions on Russia. So Russia has invaded Ukraine, has committed war crimes in Syria, has attacked our free democratic system, and we are talking about easing sanctions on Russia? It is such a miscarriage of justice and accountability that they do not understand or won't acknowledge the gravity of what Russia seeks to do here in our country and around the world.

It is, therefore, incumbent on Congress to act. I am pleased to have bipartisan support for my effort to impose additional sanctions on Russia as well as require the President to seek congressional approval before he rolls back current sanctions. Sanction relief can only come when Russia has changed its behavior, and I see no indication that that will come any time soon.

The unclassified reports released by the intelligence community earlier this month says that Russia's intelligence tried to access multiple State or local election boards. They also confirmed that Russia has researched U.S. electoral procedures and related technology and equipment, though they were clear in their assessment that there was no evidence at this time that Russia interfered in the actual vote tabulation.

An America that becomes passive or willfully blind to a resurgent Russia is not the kind of America that the American people deserve, and it is imperative that the administration understand this and act accordingly. What the American people don't need is the White House focusing on a trial balloon last week that fell like a lead ball.

Some in the administration thought it would be a good idea to bring back the notorious black sites—secret prisons—from a decade ago, where our intelligence picked up foreign nationals suspected of terrorism connections, hid them, and, in some cases, tortured them or allowed the prison's host country to torture them.

Perhaps nothing did more harm to our credibility and boost terrorist recruitment during the early years of the Iraq war than the dangerous, amoral

practice of rendition, secret detention, and interrogation by torture. We cannot go back to those practices if we value maintaining the perception and the reality of the United States of America as a beacon of justice, law, and human rights for the world.

Make no mistake, this approach, like the immigration Executive order, endangers American citizens and personnel abroad and is a boon to ISIS and like-minded groups. It validates their propaganda, aids their recruitment and incitement of homegrown terrorism in the United States and the West, and encourages attacks against America abroad. General Mattis gets it; why can't the President?

President Trump must never let this Executive order see the light of day. This is not the kind of America that the American people deserve.

Let me turn now to our relationship with our neighbors, our most important international relationships.

Since entering the political arena 18 months ago, candidate Trump was consistent in his treatment of Mexican immigrants and refugees, referring to them on day one of his Presidential campaign as drug users, criminals, and rapists.

So Mr. Tillerson's job was shaping up to be difficult enough. It got even harder last week. In the last 5 days, President Trump has insulted the Mexican President and people with his Executive orders on border wall construction and the treatment of immigrants and refugees at our border, as well as stoked fear throughout sanctuary and welcoming cities in the United States that resources could be cut and innocent people could be apprehended, breaking up and devastating families.

The President's new Secretary of Homeland Security said pointedly that a wall will not work, and Mr. Trump missed a real opportunity at the outset of his Presidency to advance both comprehensive immigration reform and border security, which go hand in hand.

We did that a few years ago. That is what the President should have come in with and used his Presidency to pass comprehensive immigration reform, as we did. Instead, he wants to build a wall.

Turning away legitimate asylum seekers at the border or requiring mandatory detention of families and children will do nothing to make America safer. Such cruel actions will inevitably bring harm and potential death to survivors of violence and torture, including many women and children, while undermining America's values and damaging our relationships with our allies.

Why the President would deliberately pick a fight with the President of Mexico is truly puzzling.

Not to be outdone after being embarrassed by the President of Mexico's cancellation of his visit to Washington, the President doubled down and had the audacity to suggest that the cost of constructing a border wall should be passed on to the hardworking American families, not once but twice. The first is by inserting it in the budget. That is taxpayer dollars paying to build a wall that won't work. The second is through a tax on Mexican imports which will, in turn, be paid for by American consumers. All the while, he continues to blow smoke and say that we will continue to find a way for Mexico to ultimately pay for this dream wall.

It won't happen. This is not the kind of America that the American people deserve.

Lastly, I want to point out that, in his third day of office, just one day after the 44th anniversary of the landmark Roe v. Wade Supreme Court decision, President Trump reinstated the controversial global gag rule that would cut off U.S. family planning funding to any nonprofit group overseas that provides any information about abortion in their health care services for women and families in need.

In other words, this is not about U.S. money supporting abortion services. It is about working with organizations.

Now, Republican Presidents routinely reinstate this harmful rule, but President Trump's global gag order is even more extreme. It massively expands his already harmful policy to threaten all U.S. foreign aid assistance to nonprofit groups engaged in health in the developing world. That will significantly increase the jeopardy of cutting off U.S. funding to international health efforts.

We are talking about millions of more women and families. Without funding these organizations, we will not be able to provide HIV prevention, care and treatment services to those in need, provide integrated maternal health care with contraceptive services, or counsel women on the potential risk of Zika infection, among many other activities. This is very counterproductive to U.S. goals and interests.

This is not the kind of America the American people deserve. The American people deserve leadership that will make them safer and more secure, that will increase our prosperity, and that will advance our values and serve as an example to the world. That America, Mr. President, is also an America that can lead the world and that the world will want to work with.

The state of world affairs has been precarious for some time now. Almost single-handedly, President Trump is inflaming previously simmering situations, while creating new problems where they previously did not exist.

World leaders are chastising us. Innocent people are looking at us in fear. Terrorists are gearing up to use Trump's hate-mongering in their recruitment and anti-American propaganda. We will be less safe, not safer. He will be putting Americans at risk here at home and those traveling abroad.

As we do debate Mr. Tillerson's nomination, we cannot lose sight of the fact that he will be carrying out the foreign policy of the most dangerous, unstable, thin-skinned, and inexperienced President we have seen on foreign policy issues and other issues.

Is he up to the job? Will he be a voice of reason and stability when times call for reason and stability? Will he resist the forces of war that so easily call out, rather than engage in the hard but necessary work of diplomacy and negotiation?

These are critical questions that we must ask and seek answers to as we debate and vote on the most important official in the President's Cabinet.

It is clear to me that, unfortunately, Mr. Tillerson will not be that voice of stability, reason, and diplomatic experience that the United States so desperately needs at this time of uncertainty and instability.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

PATIENT FREEDOM ACT

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, the big debate right now, as we all know in our country, is this: How do we repeal and replace ObamaCare?

It is pretty clear that the American people want something done. They voted, ever since the bill was passed, for those who opposed ObamaCare and had a desire to both repeal and replace, culminating in the election of President Trump.

Now, I and SUSAN COLLINS, as well as others, have introduced something called the Patient Freedom Act, which is our attempt to replace ObamaCare. But what I want to emphasize here is the bill's emphasis upon federalism. The key feature is that we take power from Washington, DC, and give it back to patients and back to State capitols.

We think that we find plenty of examples where Washington has done that, allowing States to be the laboratories of democracy. It has worked out well for all.

First, let's look at the parameters that President Trump has laid out. President Trump says he wants to repeal the Affordable Care Act but replace it with something which covers everyone, takes care of preexisting conditions, does not have mandates, and lowers cost. Those are the marching orders, as far as I am concerned. With the Patient Freedom Act, we attempt to achieve President Trump's goals.

Now, how do we do that? Under our bill, Congress would pass legislation this year which next year would give States one of three options.

The Patient Freedom Act has something we call the better choice. That would be one option that States could choose. But really, a State would have the choice to say nothing: We don't want anything from the Federal Government. Good-bye. Get out of here. That is one option the State has, and the last option the State has is to stay with the status quo—or the Affordable Care Act.

We have actually gotten a little bit of criticism for that from conservatives, and I am saying: Why? This is federalism.

We are going to repeal the ObamaCare taxes and penalties. We are repealing that. But if a State and a State capitol wants to reinstitute taxes and penalties upon the people in its State and upon the businesses in that State, God bless them. I think it is a mistake, but they should have that choice. In fact, they have that choice now. All we are saying is that you can exercise the right that you currently possess.

The States would choose in 2018. They would implement their choice in 2019. By 2020, ObamaCare would be repealed and replaced. That is our goal: to repeal and replace while achieving President Trump's goals of insuring all, taking care of those with preexisting conditions, without mandates and at a lower cost.

Now, by the way, let's talk a little bit about federalism. Conservatives have always thought the 10th Amendment, which grants the States every responsibility not delegated to the Federal Government, is an important consideration. That is what we are embracing here—to allow the State to choose.

There are some States in which the Affordable Care Act, I am told, is working well. The folks in California and New York swear by it. It is not working in Louisiana.

A friend of mine got his quote for the renewal of his and his wife's policy. They are 60 and 61, or thereabouts. It was $39,000 a year—$39,000 a year for the renewal of a policy.

Yes, Mr. President, it is $39,000 a year for the renewal of a policy. No one believes me. I put it on my Facebook page, holding up the quote sheet with their names darkened out, but you can see, it is $39,000 a year. That is the ''un-Affordable Care Act.''

As you look around the country, you can see, for example, in Arizona, there was one county that for a while had no insurance company there, and when one came in, it raised the rates 116 percent in one year—more than doubled in one year, on top of the increases in all the previous years.

If California and New York say that the Affordable Care Act is working for them, keep it. It is not working for Arizona. It is not working for Louisiana. It is not working for other States in the Union. Why not take power from our Nation's capital and give it to the State capital, and allow the State capital to come up with a solution that works for that State?

I read an editorial today, and it was out of Rome, GA. It pointed to the Welfare Reform Act, in which a Republican Congress and President Clinton devolved to the States many of the reforms necessary for welfare. It has been considered a tremendous legislative success. They used that example as an endorsement of the approach to federalism we are taking now.

It isn't just that we give power back to the States; we also give power back to the patients. We let them choose the benefits they wish to have. We put in measures such as price transparency so that someone knows how much something costs before she has the tests performed, as opposed to being surprised by a huge bill 6 months later. With that and other means, we give power to patients.

We hope all those who wish to see President Trump's mandates fulfilled to cover everyone, take care of those with preexisting conditions, lower costs without mandates, in the process of repealing and replacing ObamaCare, will endorse the federalism of the Patient Freedom Act as well as those other provisions.

Mr. President, I yield back.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

PRIORITIES OF THE REPUBLICAN-LED CONGRESS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, every year around this time, House and Senate Republicans get together for a joint conference to share ideas and develop our action plan for the year. Last week, we gathered in Philadelphia for this year's conference, and we had a very productive session. All of us came back energized and ready to achieve big things for the American people.

In November, the American people elected Republican majorities in the House and Senate and a Republican President. That was a tremendous show of trust, and Republicans know it. We are committed to living up to that trust by delivering on the promises we have made.

The last few years have been tough for American workers. Job creation has been sluggish. Wages have been stagnant. Economic growth has lagged far behind the pace of other recoveries, and opportunities for workers have been few and far between. It is no surprise that so many hard-working Americans feel as if they have been left behind. For millions of American workers discouraged over the past 8 years, I want to say this: We hear you. Republicans hear you, and we are going to act.

Republicans have outlined an agenda focused on growing our economy, creating jobs, increasing wages, and lifting the burdens that the Obama administration has placed on the American people.

One big issue that we will tackle this year is repealing and replacing ObamaCare. Seven years ago, ObamaCare was sold to the American people with a lot of promises. The law was going to reduce premiums for families. It was going to fix problems with our health care system without hurting anyone who was happy with their health coverage. If you like your health plan, you will be able to keep it, people were told. If you like your doctor, you will be able to keep your doctor, people were told. Well, as everyone knows, every one of these promises was broken.

Premiums for families continue to rise. Millions of Americans lost the coverage that they liked. Americans regularly discovered they couldn't keep their doctors, and their choice of replacement was often limited. These broken promises were just the tip of the iceberg. The law hasn't just failed to live up to its promises; it is actively collapsing, and the status quo is unsustainable. Premiums on the exchanges are soaring. Deductibles regularly run into the thousands of dollars. In fact, for 2017, the average deductible for a bronze level ObamaCare plan is rising from $5,731 to $6,092. With deductibles like that, it is no wonder that some Americans can't actually afford to use their ObamaCare insurance.

The problems on the exchanges are not limited to soaring costs. Insurers are pulling out of the exchanges right and left, and health care choices are rapidly dwindling. Narrow provider networks are the order of the day. One-third of American counties have just one choice of health insurer on the exchange. One-third of American counties have one option—one option. Tell me that is not a monopoly. This is not the health care reform that the American people were looking for.

Republicans are committed to replacing ObamaCare with real health care reform that focuses on personalized patient-centered health care. One massive problem with ObamaCare is that it puts Washington in charge of health care decisions that should be made at a much lower level. Any ObamaCare reform that Republicans pass will focus on fixing this. We are going to move control from Washington and give it back to States and individuals. Health care issues don't have one-size-fits-all solutions. It is time to stop acting as if they do. States should have power to innovate and embrace health care solutions that work for the individual employers in their State, and individuals should be able to make health care decisions in consultation with their doctors, not Washington, DC.

Another thing we are going to focus on is breaking down the ObamaCare barriers that have artificially restricted choice. As I said earlier, ObamaCare has defaulted to a one-size-fits-all solution when it comes to health care. That means many Americans have found themselves paying for health care that they don't need and don't want. We need much more flexibility in insurance plans. A thriving health care system would offer a wide variety of choices that would allow Americans to pick a plan that is tailored to their specific needs. We also need to give Americans tools to better manage their health care and to control costs. Of course, any reform plan

has to make sure that employers have the tools they need to provide employees with affordable health care coverage.

Mr. President, another priority of the Republican-led Congress will be regulatory reform. While some government regulations are necessary, every administration has to remember that regulations have consequences. The more resources individuals and businesses spend complying with regulations, the less they have available to focus on the growth and innovation that drive our economy and create new opportunities for American workers.

Unfortunately, the Obama administration chose to spend the last 8 years loading employers with burdensome regulations. According to the American Action Forum, the Obama administration was responsible for implementing more than 675 major regulations that cost the American economy more than $800 billion. Given those numbers, it is no surprise that the Obama economy left businesses with fewer resources to dedicate to growing and creating jobs. Repealing burdensome regulations is one of the most important things we can do to get our economy healthy again. That is going to be a Republican priority.

Mr. President, another big thing we can do to make America competitive again is to reform our outdated Tax Code. That will also be a Republican priority this year.

Right now, the Congressional Budget Office is projecting that our economy will grow by an average of just 2 percent over the next 10 years. If we can increase that growth by just 1 percent, we would see average incomes rise by $4,200. Just get the growth rate from an average of 2 percent, which is what the CBO is projecting for the next 10 years, to 3 percent, and incomes go up by $4,200. We would see an additional 1.2 million jobs created in our economy, and we would see much faster increases in the standard of living.

So many younger Americans today are finding that they are not able to enjoy the same standard of living that was enjoyed by their parents because of a sluggish economy that is growing in that 1-percent to 2-percent range. One of the ways to achieve that kind of growth, to get back to a 3- to 4-percent growth in our economy, is to reform our broken Tax Code.

The current Tax Code is costly, complex, and frequently unfair. Some corporations benefit from special rules, deductions, and credits, while others are forced to pay the highest corporate tax rates in the developed world. More and more American companies are focusing their business operations overseas because the tax situation is so much better abroad. That means American jobs are going overseas with them. Instead of pushing employees out of the country, we should bring our Nation's tax rates in line with those of other countries to keep more jobs here in the United States.

We should make our whole Tax Code flatter, fairer, and less complex. Our Tax Code should work for all taxpayers, not just a privileged few. A simpler, flatter, and fairer Tax Code will make U.S. businesses more competitive in the global economy, and it will help businesses create new good-paying jobs for American workers. It will jump-start our economy and ensure long-term economic growth.

Finally, Mr. President, Republicans in the Senate have another important trust to uphold this year, and that is confirming a new Supreme Court Justice. We are committed to confirming a well-qualified nominee with the right temperament to sit on the Court and have the proper understanding of the role of the Court in our country. Supreme Court Justices are umpires. They call balls and strikes; they don't write the rules of the game. The job of a Supreme Court Justice is to interpret the law and the Constitution, not rewrite the law based on his or her personal opinions.

Democrats have spent a lot of time talking about the need for nine Justices on the Supreme Court. Republicans trust that they will follow through on their statements by working with us to confirm the President's nominee.

To every American who voted for change in November, to every American frustrated with the sluggish economy and a lack of opportunity, I want to say again that we hear you. The Republicans hear you. We are not going to let you down. We will spend the 115th Congress fighting for your priorities, and we will not rest until every American has access to a future of security, hope, and opportunity.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HOEVEN). The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, what is the issue before the Senate?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Tillerson nomination.

Mr. DURBIN. Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. President, Rex Tillerson of ExxonMobil has been nominated to be our Secretary of State. We are going through a procedural 30 hours of debate, moving to that issue. As we can tell, many speeches are being given on the floor on a lot of different topics, but the underlying order of business is the next Secretary of State of the United States of America. His nomination comes to us at a particularly challenging time. We live in a dangerous world. We know that. We learned it on 9/11, and we learn it every day when men and women in uniform are risking and sometimes sacrificing their lives for this great Nation.

We also live in a complicated moment in time with the changeover in Presidents and clearly a changeover in foreign policy. We note that in the first 12 days—the first 12 days of the Trump Presidency—how many serious foreign policy issues have arisen, some the creation of the new President of the United States.

It is customary, it is traditional, for the President of the United States to make one of his first major visits to Mexico, or Mexico to the United States. The reason, of course, is they are our third largest trading partner, and in so many different areas, we work together closely with Mexico. We certainly work together with them on issues of security, issues of terrorism and narcotics and trade issues that go on, on a daily basis. Unfortunately, this new President Trump is off to a rocky start with the President of Mexico, to the point where the President of Mexico canceled his visit to the United States.

Strong statements were made during the campaign by President Trump about building a wall and the Mexicans will pay for it. How many times did we hear that? Over and over again, the Mexican Government has said: We will never pay for it. So that standoff over a campaign threat or promise is at this moment inhibiting a relationship which traditionally has been strong for generations.

Secondly, since being elected President of the United States, President Trump has said that NATO is obsolete. NATO is the alliance created after World War II to protect Europe against aggression from outside, particularly from the Soviet Union. Since the fall of the Soviet Union, NATO has expanded to include many other countries—the Baltics, for example, and Poland. As a result, these countries have become dependent on NATO for their security.

The theory behind NATO is very basic. If one of our NATO allies is attacked, we will all defend. So we can understand why a small country like Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, even Poland, realizing that they are vulnerable to Russian attack, count on NATO. When the President of the United States says that NATO is obsolete, people living in those countries wonder: What about tomorrow? What happens tomorrow if Vladimir Putin, who has been guilty of aggression in Georgia, as well as Ukraine, decides to pick a Baltic country next?

So the uncertainty created by President Trump's statement on NATO is one that haunts us to this moment.

But the one that is really overwhelming over the last few days is President Trump's Executive order when it came to refugees and immigration. The story of refugees in the United States does not have a good start. Going back to World War II, a man named Breckinridge Long was in charge of immigration into the United States during that war. He worked in the administration of Franklin Roosevelt. Sadly, his view on refugees was harsh, and as a result, the United States was caught up many times denying access to the safety of the United States to people who were vulnerable to persecution and genocide. The most noteworthy example was the

SS St. Louis in 1939, which brought 900 people from Nazi Germany to the United States to escape the Holocaust. They were turned away. They were forced back into Europe, and hundreds died as a result of it. That was the policy of the day.

When Robert Wagner, the Senator from New York, asked that we allow 10,000 German children to come into the United States to escape the Holocaust, that measure was defeated in committee in the U.S. Senate—children coming to the United States.

After World War II, when we saw 6 million Jews killed in the Holocaust and so many others whose lives were compromised and lost, we decided to change the U.S. approach when it came to refugees. Instead of pushing back against them, we began to embrace them. And do you know what has happened since? We developed a reputation around the world as the safe place to be, the country that cared. Ask over 600,000 Cubans who came to the U.S. shores to escape Castro's regime. Remember, at that time, Castro had allied with the Soviet Union, our mortal enemy of the Cold War. Yet, without vetting—without extreme vetting—we said to these Cubans: You are welcome to be safe in the United States, and they came in the thousands. Are they an important part of America? You bet they are, and there are three Cuban-American U.S. Senators to prove it.

Today, a question has been raised by the Trump regime as to what our view is going to be toward refugees in the future. Thank goodness we didn't raise it with Cuba, nor did we raise it when Jews in the Soviet Union were facing persecution. They asked for a chance to come to the United States. Synagogues and communities across the United States opened their arms and gave them a chance, and over 100,000 came to our shores. We are better for it. We really have demonstrated that our ideals and values as a nation apply to those who came to our shores.

The list goes on and on, from Yugoslavia to Viet Nam, to Somalia, and many other places where the United States has shown that we are a caring nation. Now comes this new President who says: It is America first; we are going to redefine this refugee policy.

Well, this redefinition of America around the world is something that many of us believe is just plain wrong. These Executive orders were issued by President Trump without consultation with even his own Cabinet members who have been appointed. Those in the area of national security, for example, weren't consulted before these Executive orders went into effect. When I talked to the Department of Homeland Security and Customs and Border Protection, it turns out they were given instructions at the last minute as to how to treat passengers coming into international terminals over the weekend.

I know what happened at O'Hare. Over 130 people were stopped and detained and questioned, and some were never allowed to board planes in other countries, and some were returned to those countries. It was chaotic. It didn't show basic competency in running a government, and it was fundamentally unfair.

Let me say it wasn't just a matter of an uncomfortable situation. It wasn't just a situation of people being inconvenienced. One of our priorities when it comes to refugees, even from those seven countries that President Trump noted, were those who were in desperate medical conditions. So when the President said: I just wanted a pause—a pause for these seven countries—let me ask what we think that pause means to that 9-year-old Somali child in an Ethiopian refugee camp with a congenital heart disease that can't be treated anymore in that camp and who was finally going to get to come for medical care in the United States. That pause by President Trump could be deadly. A 1-year-old Sudanese boy with cancer. A Somali boy with a severe intestinal disorder living in a camp that doesn't even have medical facilities. A pause. We will get it together. We will get back to you later. That is the kind of human condition that is being affected by these orders issued by our new President. Is it any wonder that so many people around the world have reacted?

First, they should react when it comes to our security. Do we know how many terrorist refugees have come from these seven countries on the list? None. Not one. Not one Syrian refugee has engaged in terrorist activities in the United States. If you watched ''60 Minutes'' over the weekend, you will understand why.

This is not an easy ask. You don't just hold up your hand and say: I am ready to go to the United States. You first submit your name to the U.N. Commission on Refugees. Then we cull the list to find the ones we might consider in the United States, and that is about 1 percent. Then we put them through a vetting process that can go on for 2 years—2 years of being interrogated, investigated, examined, watched, and challenged. Then, finally, after those years, they may have a chance to come to the United States.

So now we are going to move to extreme vetting? What is that going to be—trial by fire? What is left? We are doing the very best. The fact that there has not been one refugee from any of these countries engaged in terrorism is an indication that we have a good process that is stronger than any nation on Earth. Yet the President has said we are going to stop these refugees from coming indefinitely from Syria and for months from these other six countries.

Then he made a statement on a Christian broadcasting show that he was on that really went far over the line. During the course of the campaign, he said repeatedly: This will be a Muslim ban. Then he said: They told me to stop saying ''Muslim ban,'' so he stopped for a while.

It turns out that Rudy Giuliani, the former mayor of New York, said: Well, he called me in and said, How do I put together something legal that is a Muslim ban? I think Mayor Giuliani may have been speaking out of school, but it is an indication of what was really going on in the Trump campaign and this administration.

On this Christian broadcasting show, the President was explicit that he would give priority to Christians because he believes they would be persecuted in those countries. That flies in the face of some fundamentals in this country—the fundamentals of our Constitution—because we have said that when it comes to religion, this government shall not favor any religion. Here we have the President of the United States on a television show saying the opposite.

It is being challenged in court, at least to some extent. It has been slowed down by retraining orders issued by Federal courts and judges around this country.

Last night, the Acting Attorney General, Sally Yates, said that in good conscience, she could not defend President Trump's decisions in these Executive orders. For that act of courage, she was fired. I am sure she expected it. But I want to say that for a woman who has given her life—20 years of it, at least—as a prosecutor and who had an exemplary career at the Department of Justice, my hat goes off to her. I think she did what she thought was right and faced the consequences. History will prove her right and this decision by the administration wrong.

So now we have Rex Tillerson, who wants to be Secretary of State of the United States of America. How would you like to take over that job tomorrow in light of what I have just mentioned—the Executive orders issued by the President without consultation with the Department of State; judging NATO to be obsolete in his Twitter; and then having a relationship with Mexico where the President is cancelling trips to the United States, not to mention other things said about China and other countries. It is an awesome challenge. It is a challenge that we have to ask whether Mr. Tillerson is prepared for. He has had 40 years of success with ExxonMobil, starting as a production engineer and going to the top of the company. Now the question is, Is he ready to give up his loyalty to a company and to have a loyalty to a country even if the decisions he has to make as Secretary of State may be inconsistent with the best business policy for that company?

I am going to yield the floor. I see my colleague from the State of Wyoming is here. I believe this will be ongoing, so I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

NOMINATIONS OF JEFF SESSIONS AND TOM PRICE

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I wish to congratulate the current Presiding Officer for his ascension to the

chair of the Indian Affairs Committee in the U.S. Senate. It is a committee with a great history of bipartisan efforts working together. It is a committee on which I was privileged to serve and still serve and of which I have been the chairman in the past. I am looking forward to the distinguished Senator from North Dakota taking over the mantle of responsibility, and I know he will continue to work hard, as he has since joining the Senate, in the efforts on behalf of so many Americans.

I also come to the floor about what is going on in the Senate with regard to confirming nominations in a Cabinet that I believe is truly an all-star Cabinet—truly an all-star Cabinet. I think it gets better as we keep confirming one nominee after another. Last week I spoke on the floor about what a great job I believe Scott Pruitt is going to do as head of the Environmental Protection Agency. Today I wish to talk about two more examples.

First, there is the nomination of our friend and colleague, Senator JEFF SESSIONS from Alabama, to be Attorney General. Those of us who have served with Senator SESSIONS over the years know he is a man of uncommon decency, of fairness, and of integrity. We know his dedication to the law is absolute.

In 1999, Senator SESSIONS came to the floor to speak in support of awarding the Congressional Gold Medal to Rosa Parks. In that speech, he said: ''Equal treatment under the law is a fundamental pillar upon which our republic rests.'' We saw Senator SESSIONS' devotion to this idea again and again and again. He introduced legislation to reduce the differences in the kinds of sentences that could be handed out to people convicted of similar drug crimes. He teamed up with Senator Ted Kennedy to pass legislation protecting prisoners from sexual assault behind bars.

The job of Attorney General is to be America's top law enforcement officer and attorney. JEFF SESSIONS has shown himself to be an outstanding attorney. He worked as a frontline prosecutor. He spent 12 years as the U.S. attorney for the Southern District of Alabama. He was attorney general of the State of Alabama, and he has spent 20 years here as a U.S. Senator.

If confirmed as Attorney General, he will be one of the most qualified people ever to hold this job. These qualifications include an exceptional knowledge of how the Justice Department works and the priorities of the people who work there.

The Attorney General oversees the work of more than 100,000 people. Most of them are law enforcement, working for agencies like the FBI and the Drug Enforcement Administration. I think these men and women are going to find that JEFF SESSIONS is their greatest champion, and I think they are going to greet his arrival at the Justice Department with a wonderful ovation. National law enforcement groups have already endorsed his nomination, and so have groups representing Federal and local prosecutors. He is going to enforce the laws passed by Congress in a fair and impartial manner. That is exactly what America needs in its Attorney General.

The second person I want to talk about is Congressman TOM PRICE. TOM has been nominated to be the Secretary of Health and Human Services. Just as JEFF SESSIONS has devoted his life to the law, TOM PRICE has devoted his life to caring for the health of patients and the American people.

Dr. PRICE practiced medicine for 20 years. He was medical director of the orthopedic clinic at Grady Memorial Hospital in Atlanta. Grady Memorial Hospital is a public safety-net hospital in Atlanta, and many, many of its patients are low income. Dr. PRICE saw each and every day the challenges that people faced in America's broken health care system, both the patients and the people who are trying to provide the care. That is why he has taken health care reform so seriously as a Member of Congress. He did as well when he was in the Georgia State legislature. He understands and he understood immediately why so many parts of ObamaCare simply would not work when they were passed and signed into law some 6 years ago. Like a lot of us, he warned the health care law would actually make things worse for millions of Americans—and TOM PRICE has proven right.

It is time for the Department of Health and Human Services to have leadership that understands that patients should not become a political tool. Congressman PRICE is actually the first medical doctor to be nominated to head the Department of Health and Human Services since 1989. That kind of knowledge and the background he has is essential for dealing with the challenges the Department faces today.

The wheels are falling off of America's health care system. We need leaders—leaders who are more than just professional bureaucrats, which is what we have had. We need someone who understands health care deeply, and who cares about putting patients first, not politics.

TOM PRICE has shown he can reach across the aisle to get things done. It is what he did in the State legislature in Georgia, and it is what he has done in the House of Representatives here in Washington. TOM worked with Democrats to make sure that Medicare patients could continue to get access to medical equipment like blood sugar monitors and oxygen tanks. He did the same thing when he introduced a bipartisan measure to stop burdensome new regulations affecting patients who need a new hip or a new knee joint. As Secretary of Health and Human Services, he is going to listen—listen to the best arguments of both sides, and then he is going to do what is right for the health of the American people.

ObamaCare has to go. It has failed miserably. We all know that. Even Democrats in Congress who wrote the law realize how flawed it really is. It is time for us now to focus on what can be done to replace ObamaCare and make American health care work once again.

I have seen media reports that Democrats want to obstruct the nomination of TOM PRICE as well as that of JEFF SESSIONS. I expect Democrats will plan to grandstand for political purposes because they have no real objections to either person's qualifications or credentials.

Democrats' complaint is that they lost the Presidential election. Well, the President deserves to have his Cabinet in place. That is why Republicans didn't object to President Obama getting seven of his Cabinet members on his very first day in office in 2009. By this point in time, President Obama had a significant number of his Cabinet—over 20 members—confirmed in 2009, and we look at where we are today, with President Trump's Cabinet and the obstruction of the Democrats. It is unfortunate that Democrats have decided not to follow the example of Republicans when Barack Obama came to the White House.

Political spite isn't a good enough reason for delay. Democrats need to get over it and get on with it. Attorney General of the United States and Secretary of Health and Human Services are big jobs. They are important jobs, and they are necessary jobs. It is time for the Senate to move as soon as possible to confirm both JEFF SESSIONS and TOM PRICE to the Cabinet.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The assistant minority leader.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, the Senator from Wyoming from the other side of the aisle is my friend. We spend time in the gym together; I go there regularly—for no apparent reason. But we are friends, and we disagree on some political issues. I just wish to clarify one or two things.

When it comes to Congressman PRICE, I don't know him personally. He has been chosen by President Trump to head up the Department of Health and Human Services, one of the biggest and most important. He has stated, as a Member of Congress from Georgia, that he believes we should change the Social Security system as well as the Medicare system and privatize Medicare. That is a worrisome suggestion for 50 million or more Americans who count on Medicare and do not exactly look forward to being placed in the loving arms of an insurance company at some point late in their lives. So there are questions there.

But the question at hand was brought to the attention of the American public today, not in some liberal newspaper, but in the Wall Street Journal. It turns out that Congressman PRICE has been engaged in the purchase of stock that

has a direct impact on the medical profession. Whether he properly filed disclosures in buying that stock or whether he did something improper is still to be resolved.

Part of the reason the nominees for President Trump are taking longer than others is that many, like Congressman PRICE, have extensive financial holdings. We found that when a billionaire from Chicago—Penny Pritzker—was nominated for Secretary of Commerce under President Obama, it took literally 6 months for us to gather all the financial information about her and to divest her of any potential conflicts of interest. It turns out that many of these nominees did not have their ethics filings on file in time to be considered in a timely fashion, and, in some cases, information about them was found to be in conflict with reality, and now there is a further investigation necessary. It isn't just a matter of spite; it is a matter of doing our due diligence, as required by the Constitution and required in the U.S. Senate.

AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

A word about ObamaCare: My friend from Wyoming, a medical doctor himself, has felt strongly against the Affordable Care Act since its passage. I view it a lot differently.

There are currently 1.2 million Illinoisans—1 out of 10 in our State—who have health insurance because of the Affordable Care Act. Over half of them are now brought into the Medicaid system, the others are on insurance exchanges, and many of them have their premiums subsidized by our Federal Government.

In addition, every person in America who has a health insurance plan has benefited by the Affordable Care Act. Why? Because we took some of the worst abuses in health insurance and said: You can no longer do that and sell health insurance in this country. One example is lifetime caps—caps on the amount of money that a policy will play. Now, $100,000 in coverage may sound like a lot, until you are diagnosed with cancer—and then it disappears in a matter of days and weeks. So we eliminated lifetime caps on coverage.

The second most important thing we did was to say: You can't discriminate against someone because they have a preexisting condition. Is there anyone alive that doesn't have some preexisting condition? If it was bad enough in the bad old days before the Affordable Care Act, that was enough to either disqualify them from health insurance or to run the premiums up to the high heavens. Now you can no longer be discriminated against because your husband has diabetes, your wife survived breast cancer, or your child has survived a cancer scare themselves. We have eliminated that in all health insurance policies.

The third thing we did was to say that every health insurance policy sold in the United States has to cover mental illness and substance abuse treatment. The people who pushed for that—Democratic Senator Paul Wellstone of Minnesota and Republican Pete Domenici of New Mexico—both had family histories of mental illness, and they said health insurance ought to cover mental illness. They finally prevailed. It was included in the Affordable Care Act, so it means that, across the board, all of us who buy health insurance are buying care for mental illness.

Is substance abuse treatment important? Think about the opioid and heroin epidemic across the United States—across my State of Illinois. Where would these families be, with a person in the family suffering from addiction, if the health insurance plan didn't provide some coverage? The Affordable Care Act requires that.

When the Republicans say that they want to repeal it, the obvious question is: And then what? What happens next, when the insurance companies can stop covering these critical areas?

There is another thing. My wife and I have raised some kids who have gone through college, and when they finished college they didn't quite go into their long, permanent career. They had a bunch of jobs, looking for the right place.

I can recall calling my daughter, fresh out of the University of Wisconsin, and saying: Jen, do you have health insurance? I know you did as a student.

She said: Dad, I'm fine. I'm strong and healthy. I don't need it.

That is the last thing a father wants to hear.

Do you know what the Affordable Care Act says? My daughter—anyone's daughter—up to the age of 26 can stay on my family plan. How about that for common sense? There are 90,000 young people in Illinois protected by the family plans because of that provision. Now we hear from the Senator from Wyoming that this is a big failure and we have to repeal it.

The last thing we did is important to every senior citizen on Medicare across the United States. There used to be something called the doughnut hole. It is even hard to describe, but it related to paying seniors for their prescription drugs. Here is what it said; try to follow this: We will cover you for the first few months of the year, with Medicare paying the prescription drug cost. Then you are on your own for 3 or 4 months. Once you have delved into your own personal savings up to a certain amount, we will come back and cover you again.

Go figure. It would take a Congressman or a Senator to dream up something like that, and seniors across the country felt completely vulnerable. When they went into that period of no coverage, many of them stopped taking their drugs. That is not a good thing. So we closed that gap. We closed that doughnut hole.

What does it mean to seniors in Illinois? On average, they save $1,000 a year because the Affordable Care Act brought this reform to Medicare. Now the Republicans say: Let's repeal that. Do they want to explain to the seniors in my State that they now have to turn for their savings for that gap period again? We don't want to see that happen.

For 6 years, Republicans have said repeatedly that they want to repeal ObamaCare. Repeal ObamaCare. They say it in their sleep. They have vote after vote—I think 60 different votes in the House—to repeal it, knowing it would never happen with President Obama in the White House. Now, the dog done caught the bus. Here they are, in the majority in the House and the Senate with a Republican President, and their first order of business: Repeal ObamaCare.

Do you know what they are learning? All across the United States, medical health care providers—hospitals, doctors, clinics, and others—are telling them that will be a disaster. If you eliminate the Affordable Care Act without a replacement as good or better, you are going to leave chaos in the system and a lot of people without the protection of health insurance.

So after 6 years, you would think the Republicans would have a replacement plan. Right? A substitute. They have had all this time to think about it. No, not yet; they are still thinking about it, but they are determined to repeal.

I met with hospital administrators around my State last weekend and will continue to in the future. They are worried. We estimate Illinois hospitals will lose over 90,000 jobs with the repeal of the Affordable Care Act. We know that downstate hospitals and hospitals in rural areas—in many States represented here—are going to be forced to close. What happens when you close that smalltown hospital in downstate Illinois? What used to be a 20-minute ride to the hospital becomes a 1-hour drive. How important is that? Well, when you are in labor, it is important or if you just had a farm accident or you are responding to something that happened on the highway, it is critical, life-or-death important. So you would think Republicans would have a plan to keep these hospitals open. They don't. We haven't seen a substitute.

They rail against ObamaCare; they rail against the Affordable Care Act. They don't criticize the individual components I have described because they are wildly popular with the American people.

The irony of this is that we have spent 6 years trying to convince people that the Affordable Care Act, even with its flaws and faults—and it has them, but even with that, it is good for America. We got nowhere. We were beating our heads against the wall.

Then, when the Republicans took over and started talking about repeal, people were stepping back and saying: What am I going to lose if they repeal it? The approval rating for the Affordable Care Act since Donald Trump was

elected is going up, as people come now to finally understand the value of it for their families and their businesses.

So I say to my friends on the Republican side, as I have said over and over again: The Affordable Care Act is not a perfect law. The only perfect law was carried down the side of a mountain by Senator Moses on clay tablets. Everything else can be improved, and I am ready to sign up for that improvement. First, jettison this whole talk of repeal. It is totally irresponsible. If we want to have a constructive conversation about how to make the Affordable Care Act more affordable, covering more people, finally doing something about prescription drug costs, let's sit down and do it together on a bipartisan basis. Starting with repeal is a nonstarter.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I want to express my support for Rex Tillerson to be our next Secretary of State. Mr. Tillerson is one of the most distinguished businessmen in the world. His reputation precedes him. I don't have to recount for all of you his remarkable career—rising from an entry-level production engineer to CEO of ExxonMobil, the largest oil company in the world. Mr. Tillerson's story should be an inspiration to kids across this country: Through hard work, discipline, and striving, you can achieve your dreams, even if you weren't born into wealth, power, or privilege. Like the Boy Scouts he has mentored, like the Eagle Scout he was, Mr. Tillerson inspires by his example.

No one can doubt Mr. Tillerson has acquired a wide range of skills throughout his notable life, as well as a gold-plated reputation. I think it goes without saying that a man of such varied experiences will bring a well-informed and shrewd perspective to the post. In fact, I would suggest that it is the very perspective which recommends him most for the job.

I met with him in December, and we had a wide-ranging conversation about Russia, the Middle East, human rights, and the many other geopolitical challenges and opportunities facing our country. I was impressed by the breadth of his knowledge, his familiarity with so many world leaders, and his understanding of their peoples. The one thing that really stood out to me was his clear-eyed, hard-nosed prudence. It is little wonder that Mr. Tillerson comes highly recommended by Dick Cheney and Bob Gates, seasoned statesmen with no illusions about the world and no doubts about America's role in it. I am confident that as Secretary of State, he will protect the interests of the American people just as he protected the interests of ExxonMobil's shareholders as their CEO.

I have heard some Senators wonder whether a businessman can really walk away from a company and its financial interests—as if it were the money that made the man, instead of the man who made the money. Their concern reminds me of similar questions raised about one of the best Secretaries of State in the modern era, George Shultz. When President Reagan nominated him, Secretary Shultz was president and director of the Bechtel Group, a large construction concern with business across the Arab world. People asked whether Secretary Shultz would therefore tilt U.S. policy toward those countries. I think anyone looking back today on his record would marvel at those fears.

In 2015, the World Jewish Congress awarded Secretary Shultz its prestigious Theodor Herzl Award on behalf of his work with America's good friend Israel. Yes, Secretary Shultz went on to lead a very successful tenure, working with different countries all over the world and always putting America's interests front and center.

If anything, Rex Tillerson's business experience will only enhance his ability to provide the President his sound, unbiased judgment. If you need any more evidence, just look at the way Mr. Tillerson has conducted himself throughout the confirmation process. He has answered every question and addressed every concern. He has been calm and steady under pressure. These are precisely the qualities we need in our next Secretary of State.

Today, I offer my strong support for an outstanding businessman and an American patriot, our next Secretary of State, Rex Tillerson. I encourage all of my colleagues to vote for the nomination.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. DURBIN. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, as I indicated earlier, this afternoon I had an opportunity to meet with King Abdallah of Jordan. During that conversation with Members of the Senate, there was a good deal of discussion about foreign policy challenges that are very much a part of this debate on Mr. Tillerson.

It was interesting to listen to King Abdallah of Jordan talk about his country's commitment to refugees. They have taken in refugees from many parts of that region—from Iraq, Yemen, and other countries. They have taken in over 600,000 refugees from Syria. I think King Abdallah used a number. If you wanted to use a comparable number of refugees coming into America, it would be equivalent to about 60 million refugees coming into our country. Let me remind you that in Syria, President Obama committed to 10,000. It is literally a drop in the bucket compared to what Jordan has done in accepting refugees. It just underscores even more how wrong President Trump's Executive order over the weekend was, which put a hold on our refugee program and restricted travel to the United States.

The vetting that goes forward in Jordan in regard to refugees is under the auspices of the United Nations, and of those who are seeking refugee status, a very small percentage—I understand it is less than one percent—will actually ever get a chance to be considered for refugee status here in the United States. Let me remind you that we are talking about, generally, women and children who are fleeing persecution, who have established themselves as refugees. They go through several screening procedures. Their background is thoroughly checked. They check all of the different indices as far as different agencies are concerned to make sure that they have no concern. Then a small percentage of that number actually ever gets to the United States. It takes 18 to 24 months. To date, there hasn't been a single episode of terrorism from a Syrian refugee. We have a pretty strong vetting process—the strongest in the world—that very much puts American security first.

It was disheartening for me to listen to King Abdallah talk about the sacrifices his country has made. Of the 650,000 refugees that Jordan has taken in from Syria, the King indicated that about 90 percent are integrated into the Jordanian society. They are not in camps. They are in their schools, in their communities. They have been able to make sure that the refugees are well cared for. It is a huge part of the budget. I think the King indicated that maybe 20 percent of the Jordanian budget deals with refugees. That is a country that understands their regional responsibilities and international responsibilities.

The United States has been the leader in the global community, recognizing that the flight of people—the refugees—represents not only a humanitarian requirement for the global community but also security issues. We have to have an orderly process for those who are fleeing persecution, and the United States has always been in the leadership. We have been in the leadership in opening our borders. We are proud of the refugees that came to this country after World War II, from Cambodia, Vietnam, and Cuba. There is a long list of those who have escaped persecution coming here to the United States and helping to build this great country. We recognize that diversity is our strength. This made us the great Nation that we are.

For all those reasons, it was very disheartening to hear President Trump's Executive order, where he really questions whether America is committed to its traditional values, whether we are going to maintain our international leadership, whether we are going to be

credible when we deal with other countries around the world to take on the responsibilities of dealing with the flight of people who are escaping persecution.

I mentioned all this because the Secretary of State is the key diplomat that we have for America and to use America's power of persuasion, of using diplomacy, of using the tools at our disposal under the Department of State, including development assistance for how we can, in fact, promote those values. We need someone who is going to be able to speak out about these policies that were announced over the weekend because they weaken America. They make us less safe. I brought this out: In reality what you are talking about is how do you engage other countries around the world to help us in our war against terror when we tell them that Muslims aren't really welcome here in America and it is a majority-Muslim country? How does that work? How do we protect Americans who are traveling abroad who may be subjected to physical danger because of the statements that have been made by our President? How do you protect this country from the concerns about homegrown terrorism, which might, in fact, be encouraged by the recruitment of terrorists as a result of what the President has done in his Executive order?

For all those reasons, it is even more important for us to have as the next Secretary of State a person who is committed to the core values of this country—that it is part of their gut, and that they will be a strong advocate for those issues. I have already indicated during the questioning in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that we did not see that moral clarity in regard to Mr. Tillerson and in regard to those values.

The second issue that came up in King Abdallah's meeting was very interesting. We had a long discussion about Russia and about Russia's influence. We know about Russia's influence in Ukraine. We had a little discussion about Russia's desires in regard to the Baltics and whether the Baltics could be the next Ukraine, as far as Russia's aggression. We know that Russia is already in Georgia. Russia is already in Moldova. Russia is in Ukraine. Do they have their sights now set for Lithuania or Latvia or Estonia or Poland, where there is a large Russian-speaking population?

Interesting observations were made that if Russia sees that we don't have resolve, they will use that opportunity to expand their influence. We saw that in the Middle East. We saw how in the Middle East Russia, which a few years ago had very little influence in the Middle East, now has a growing influence in the Middle East—not only in Syria but in other countries in that region where you see Russia's active engagement. So this is not theoretical.

Russia's interests are different than our interests. Make no mistake about that. They don't share our values. They are not our friends. They are trying to compromise our democratic institutions. We have seen that over and over—not only the attack on our election system here in the United States, not only the attack on the system in Montenegro in parliamentary elections, but the concern now in Western Europe, as they are entering into the election season. We see over and over what Russia has done in denying space for civil society, in compromising dissent in their own country, in the way that corruption has been established as part of government. All of that is just against the principles that we believe in, that we believe the global community has accepted, and that leads to the stability in nations and advances America's national security interests.

I must tell you that there are Democrats and Republicans all talking about the fact that we have to stand up to Russia. We have to be stronger on Russia. Yes, we have been able—thanks to the leadership of the Obama Administration—to take the sanctions that were passed by Congress. We passed the sanctions. The leadership and Members of the Senate and the House have brought about the stronger sanctions regime here in the United States. I congratulate my colleague, Senator MENENDEZ, who was one of the principal leaders to get stronger sanctions here in regard to Russia, and other members of our committee who worked on that. We were able to get stronger sanctions. At the same time, we were able to get Europe to join us in these sanctions, and that helped us. But now there is a concern as to whether these sanctions will remain.

President Trump at least has raised that question as to the continuation of sanctions. The question becomes this: Should we be maintaining those sanctions until Russia complies with the Minsk agreement that are relevant to its invasion into Ukraine? But we should also be strengthening those sanctions because of Russia's illegal activities in attacking our country and in what they are doing in Syria in perpetrating war crimes. We should be looking at stronger sanctions against Russia.

I mention all of that because the person who can lead us in that effort is our next Secretary of State. We look at Mr. Tillerson and his record as the CEO of ExxonMobil, their relationships in Russia, and his answers to questions as to whether we should consider additional sanctions. Over and over he says: Well, there are multiple considerations. To me, that was a red flag that indicated that maybe there is some business interest here. Maybe, if there is a business interest, we shouldn't let that be more important than the human rights advancements and the other areas that we are concerned about.

In reality, we saw that in the way ExxonMobil lobbied against the original sanctions that were imposed against Russia. They lobbied against it because they said it didn't create a level playing field for U.S. companies. The reason it didn't create a level playing field is that the United States is always the leader on sanctions. We always set the international bar as to what we need to do, and then the rest of the world follows us. But if we take the lowest bar, we will never have a tough enough stance against Russia.

We need, as the next Secretary of State, a person who is going to be a leader in saying: We are going to use every one of our diplomatic tools to isolate Russia if they continue this activity of interfering with our elections, threatening to interfere with European elections, interfering with humanitarian assistance in Syria, or if they continue their illegal occupation of Crimea. We need that type of leadership. That is one of the reasons we have been so much engaged in this debate.

There are many other issues about which we talked with King Abdallah that dealt with foreign policy challenges, including moving forward with broader coalitions against ISIS in the region. All of that requires the use of all the power we have. We know that our military is very strong. We are very proud of our Department of Defense and very proud of the men and women who serve in the military. They are the guardians of our freedom. We thank them every day for the sacrifices they make on behalf of our Nation. We owe it to them to make sure our military is only used as a matter of last resort, that we use all of our diplomatic skills in order to prevent the unnecessary use of our military, that we only use the military when it is absolutely essential and it is a matter of last resort.

We must have as our chief diplomat a person who will carry out that strong commitment to our diplomatic skills and agenda in order to make sure that we only use the military when necessary.

We have heard this before. But it was General Mattis who said: If you don't fund the Department of State, if you don't give them the resources they need for development assistance, you are going to have to give me a lot more soldiers.

Our diplomats can very much keep us safe, and they can do it with less risk to our men and women who serve in the military and at less cost.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. ERNST). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. KAINE. Madam President, I rise to speak concerning the nomination by President Trump of Rex Tillerson to be Secretary of State. I believe I am going

to be speaking a little bit this afternoon and possibly later. This will just be part of my remarks this afternoon.

First, I am going to say some positive things about Mr. Tillerson's career and the importance of the position, but then I want to talk about the reason for my opposition, which has to do largely with my concern about whether he is capable of exercising truly independent judgment on behalf of the United States, particularly given his 41-year career with ExxonMobil.

To begin, Mr. Tillerson has an exemplary record with ExxonMobil. I was impressed by it. I have been impressed by his business acumen. I think this one would, frankly, be relatively straightforward if he had been nominated for Secretary of Commerce. I think it would be relatively straightforward had he been nominated for Secretary of Energy.

That is an interesting aspect of some of these nominations. I think there are some people who are up who—if they were in other positions, they might be easier, but because of the ones they have been nominated for, it has made it a little more difficult. I put Mr. Tillerson in that category.

Secretary of State is an enormously important position. We all know that it is important, but we, even for the public, separate the Secretary of State position from others.

There are four Cabinet Secretaries who by law are not allowed to be involved in political campaigns. They can't go out on the campaign trail during election season. They are designated as ''special,'' and I think they are special for a reason—Secretary of Defense, Secretary of State, Secretary of Treasury, and the Attorney General. The reason these four positions are made separate, in my view, is they are positions that are supposed to have a special gravity, positions that are supposed to be above politics. They are also positions that are supposed to have a degree of independence.

An Attorney General needs to have a degree of independence from a President because that individual must weigh in on the legality of actions even of the administration in making decisions. I think the Secretary of State needs some independence and gravitas as well. That is why the Secretary of State position is such a special one.

I want to focus on this area of independence and the independence I wanted to see in a Secretary of State Tillerson and that I did not feel comfortable enough after the research I have done and after the hearing itself. It fits into three basic categories—issues with respect to climate, issues with respect to Russia, and issues with respect to the development policy that the United States uses in nations around the world, including very poor nations that are resource rich but often find that their oil reserves or other natural resources put them into kind of a resource-cursed position where, resources notwithstanding, they actually trend toward authoritarianism and keeping their citizens in poverty.

Let me start with climate. Climate is an enormously important issue in Virginia, as it is to all States, but to give you kind of the Virginia focus on climate issues, Virginia voters overwhelmingly believe that humans are affecting climate and that something should be done about it. We have 134 counties. The eastern part of Virginia—Hamilton Roads, near the Atlantic—is the second most threatened area in the United States to sea level rise. So if you go to Hampton Roads, VA—1.6 million people, the center of naval power in the United States and the world—what you find is sea level rise accelerating to the extent that neighborhoods where you could once sell a house, you can't sell it anymore. Flooding that was once every few years is now regular.

Even our Nation's military operations in Hampton Roads are jeopardized. There is a main road leading into the Norfolk Naval Base, which is the largest naval base in the United States—the largest naval base in the world. That road is increasingly flooded just during normal tidal conditions. We are not talking about storms; we are talking about normal tidal conditions. The inability to get road access into America's center of naval power is highly challenging, highly problematic. In the future, it is going to be very expensive for us.

So the climate change issues in Hampton Roads—whether it is affecting your ability to sell a house, the ability to conduct naval operations—and in many other areas is of deep concern to my State.

There are climate issues in other parts of my State, from weather patterns to warming temperatures wiping out species in the Shenandoah National Park because as the temperature warms, the species need to move higher and higher, and at some point they can't move any higher. So there are endangered species in the Shenandoah National Park because of climate issues.

The issue is not only important to my State, it is a critically important part of the job. The Secretary of State in the previous administration was involved in crafting the Paris climate accord. Nearly 200 nations agreed that climate change is a huge problem and that we have to do something about it, and each nation came forward voluntarily to craft its own plan so that the world could deal with this problem.

The U.S. played a critical role—Secretary Kerry and others—in forging this global coalition around the overwhelming scientific consensus. The Secretary of State in this administration, along with others—the EPA Administrator—will play a key role in determining whether we continue to take seriously climate, whether we continue to take seriously the promises we made under the climate accord, or whether we go backward. I don't want to go backward because it would hurt my State and hurt our country and hurt the world.

During my examination of Mr. Tillerson during his confirmation hearing before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, I was not happy with the answers with respect to climate issues. The overwhelming majority of scientists say that climate change is real and that it is caused significantly by the burning of fossil fuels and the release of CO_2. This is not a controversial conclusion; it should not be partisan, either.

The first climate bill that was introduced in this body was introduced by Senator MCCAIN in 2004. Then, in 2007, a predecessor of mine, Senator Warner of Virginia, a Republican, and Senator Lieberman of Connecticut, a Democrat, introduced a bipartisan bill. Senator Warner, now retired—John Warner—still speaks regularly on the national security implications of climate change.

During the hearing before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, I examined Rex Tillerson about the role of ExxonMobil in climate research. ExxonMobil is a company that is chock-full of engineers and scientists. It is one of the most accomplished companies in the world if you just measure it by the extent of engineering and science talent that it has.

There has been a series of investigative articles in the last few years in the Los Angeles Times, the New York Review of Books, and Inside Climate News that get into the question of what ExxonMobil knew about climate science and what they told the public. I wanted to ask Mr. Tillerson about this. Some of the information that I put on the table during that examination: There was an internal letter in September of 1982 from Exxon's Theoretical and Mathematical Science Laboratory. This was during the time Mr. Tillerson was working for the company.

I want to read a quote from this letter which I put into the RECORD as I was examining Mr. Tillerson:

> However, over the past several years a clear scientific consensus has emerged regarding the expected climate effects of increased atmospheric CO_2. . . . There is unanimous agreement in the scientific community that a temperature increase of this magnitude would bring about significant changes in the earth's climate. The time required for doubling of atmospheric CO_2—
>
> Doubling of atmospheric CO_2—
>
> depends upon the future world consumption of fossil fuels. There is potential for our research to attract the attention of the popular news media because of the connection between Exxon's major business and the role of fossil fuel combustion in contributing to the increase of atmospheric CO_2. . . . [O]ur ethical responsibility is to permit the publication of our research in the scientific literature; indeed, to do otherwise would be a breach of Exxon's public position and ethical credo on honesty and integrity.

In other words, by 1982 the key scientific research organizations within

ExxonMobil, which has a sterling cadre of scientists and researchers, said: Here is our view of the scientific research—and not just other scientific research, they did their own studies to replicate it. They concluded that the burning of fossil fuels was going to lead potentially to a significant increase in global temperature, with catastrophic climate effects.

There is other information as well that ExxonMobil had within it during Mr. Tillerson's tenure with the company. But by 2000, ExxonMobil in its face to the public was saying something very different. Despite the internal recognition of climate science and the potential effects on the economy and on our atmosphere and despite scientists with ExxonMobil saying we have an ethical duty to share these facts with the scientific community, by 2000, ExxonMobil was publishing, in major publications in this country, op-eds—full-page op-eds in newspapers and magazines. I am going to read a quote from one, an ExxonMobil published op-ed in 2001:

> Knowing that weather forecasts are reliable for a few days at best, we should recognize the enormous challenge facing scientists seeking to predict climate change and its impact over the next century.
>
> Geological evidence indicates climate greenhouse gas levels experience significant natural variability for reasons having nothing to do with human activity. . . . Against this backdrop of large, poorly understood natural invariability, it is impossible for scientists to attribute the recent small surface temperature increase to human causes.

So, from 1982, there were scientists at ExxonMobil who were aware of it and were saying we have a duty to share this with the public and with our fellow scientists, but by 2000, in statements to the American public—all during Rex Tillerson's tenure at ExxonMobil—the company was taking a very different position.

I summarized this material during my examination of Mr. Tillerson before the Foreign Relations Committee, and I asked him: What do you have to say about this evidence and about the numerous public reports that ExxonMobil knew about climate science but made a decision to tell the American public something different? A pretty straightforward question from a Senator whose State is experiencing climate change, a pretty important question for a nominee who will be in charge of, as Secretary of State, carrying out our obligations under agreements, such as the Paris climate agreement.

Mr. Tillerson's answer to me was a little surprising. He said: Oh, I can't answer this. You are going to have to ask somebody at ExxonMobil.

He had stepped away from ExxonMobil a few days before the hearing. I was puzzled by it. So I went back to him and I said: Well, wait a minute. I want to make sure I got this right. You were at ExxonMobil for 41 years.

That is right.

You were an executive at ExxonMobil for more than half of your tenure there; isn't that right?

That is right.

You were the CEO of ExxonMobil beginning, I believe, in 2006; am I right about that?

You are right about that.

I am not asking the company's position. You now are no longer at ExxonMobil. I am asking you, as somebody who is going to be in charge of carrying forward America's obligations under the Paris climate accord, whether the allegation that ExxonMobil knew about climate science but chose to say something different to the American public—I am going to ask you if you can answer that question.

And he came back again and said: You are going to have to ask somebody at ExxonMobil.

I then asked Mr. Tillerson a really important question. I said this: Do you lack the knowledge to answer my questions or are you refusing to answer my questions?

And he said: A little bit of both. A little bit of both.

And I said to him: You have been there 41 years. I have a hard time believing you don't know the answer to this question. I think you are refusing to answer my question, and he didn't comment on that.

I then followed up with one more question to Mr. Tillerson that I also think was important because I am a lawyer, and I just wanted to make sure I understood this. I asked him: Are you sitting here today subject to any kind of a confidentiality agreement that would prohibit you from answering the question I just posed to you? And he said no, that he was not.

I asked Mr. Tillerson these questions because I am deeply interested in climate change. It affects my State in a significant way, and it is directly relevant to his job, but I asked him for another reason as well. I am just going to talk for a minute about the reason, and I am going to yield to my colleague from Oregon and return later this evening on the other points.

The reason I was asking Mr. Tillerson about this was not just his awareness of science, I was asking him to see whether at this point, as a nominee for Secretary of State of the United States, he could set aside a 41-year loyalty to his previous employer, ExxonMobil, and instead focus solely on his obligations to this country if he were to be confirmed as Secretary of State.

I believe he knew the answer to the question I asked him, and he told me he was not under any legal agreement that would bar him from answering my question, but he, nevertheless, refused to answer my question. When I challenged him on it and said: You are refusing to answer my question, he basically agreed that was the case.

I think we are entitled to a Secretary of State who can set aside any other loyalty, including an understandable loyalty to an employer of 41 years, and exercise complete and independent judgment on behalf of the interests of this country. The refusal of Mr. Tillerson to answer my questions about a matter clearly within his knowledge, clearly within the job description of Secretary of State and deeply important to my Commonwealth, led me to have significant doubts about whether he could separate his previous employment from his independent obligation to this job, should he be confirmed.

I am going to have more to say on a couple of other issues related to this independence point when I return later this evening.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KENNEDY). The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I appreciate my colleague's contributions and his insights, representing Virginia and representing the United States.

I must say that all of us were quite frustrated by the hearing we held with Rex Tillerson. We know that America needs a strong and capable Secretary of State. We have many great power issues to wrestle with—certainly with Russia, certainly with China. We know we have many emerging powers around the globe that will raise issues relevant to the security of the United States and the economy of the United States. We know the Secretary of State plays a key role in shaping our policy toward impoverished nations and how we might facilitate their growth and enhance our Nation's relationship with them. Nuclear strategy is always an extremely important role.

This position is perhaps the most important position in the administration, second to the Presidency, and it is for that reason that we are weighing with such intense attention.

Already we have challenges that have been raised by the conduct of our President over the last 12 days. We have, in 12 days, seen actions by President Trump that have diminished our Nation's standing in the world, that have offended many of our international neighbors and allies, that have weakened the security of our country. So we need a capable Secretary of State. We need that person soon.

Certainly one piece of the pattern we have seen is a new low in the relationship with the leadership of Mexico on our southern border, but we also have seen actions that have offended over a billion people in the world through the Friday night Executive order banning immigration from seven Muslim-majority nations along with an order affecting refugees fleeing the ravages and devastation of war in many places, but Syria is specifically singled out for a longer period of time.

The President said, well, this is not, in fact, a Muslim ban and that it is about the security of the United States of America, but he is certainly wrong on both counts. All the nations singled out are Muslim-majority countries. Not a single immigrant from any of those countries has killed an American in a terrorist attack, and the President

made a very specific point, saying there would be exceptions for Christians, meaning there would not be exceptions for Muslims.

One of his advisers, Rudy Giuliani, even said explicitly that the President had wanted to do a Muslim ban and asked him how to do it legally. So the intent is crystal clear that this is a ban founded in religious discrimination, and a policy based on religious discrimination has no place in our Nation. It is completely incompatible with our traditions and our principles of religious liberty.

We are a nation built by immigrants, founded by men and women seeking safety from religious persecution, adding to the sense that this position is wrong and abhorrent. It goes against the fundamental building blocks of our Nation and everything we stand for.

If our history and our fundamental values aren't enough, then we need to consider the danger this ban represents for our national security. Much of our efforts in the Middle East involve close partnership, close teamwork with the leaders of Muslim nations.

Taking on ISIS involves close coordination and close teamwork with the leadership of Muslim nations. In fact, we should be very aware that ISIS uses as its recruiting tool that the United States is conducting a war on Islam, and the President's actions feed directly in and serve the ISIS recruiting strategy.

The world has reacted with furor. Over the weekend, more than 4,000 Oregonians attended a pair of my townhall meetings. The first meeting was in a room about this size, and I was astounded to see 600 people just jammed in, just crowding it. It was the largest townhall I had ever had. I do 36 townhalls a year, open forum. People can come and ask anything they want.

Then I went to my second townhall, and it wasn't 600 folks. It was 3,700 people who turned out just because they heard that a Senator was holding a townhall, and they wanted to make their voices heard about how wrong they thought it was, the direction that President Trump is headed. A key piece of that was certainly his ban on Muslims entering our Nation.

Protests erupted at airports all across our country. I went out on Sunday to the Portland Airport. It had been informally organized, the protest at 2 o'clock, and I got out there about 2:15. People were pouring in. There may have been somewhere around 1,000 people by the time I could get out onto the upper level deck of the two levels of the airport—the level at which people are arriving for their flights—to be able to speak to people.

The condemnation and opposition didn't just come from the grassroots across America. It didn't just come from the spontaneous voices of American citizens who value religious liberty, value our traditions, value their understanding of our Constitution and wanting to send a message to President Trump that he was violating each and every one of those things, that opposition came loud and clear from international leaders as well.

Our Canadian neighbors made sure the world knew they welcomed the immigrants and refugees that America had slammed the door on.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel called the President to remind him of our Nation's responsibilities, as signatories to the Geneva Convention, to take in refugees. It is quite embarrassing that a European leader has to call an American President to educate him about the Geneva Convention.

France's President Francois Hollande has called for a firm European response to this ban; the United Kingdom, whose Prime Minister Theresa May just met with President Trump last week, came out against the order; and more than a million Britons signed a petition to have the British Government rescind its invitation to President Trump to travel to London for a state visit.

Iraq, Iran, Brussels, Scotland, Norway, nation after nation have come out to protest this terrible, dangerous policy.

It is going to be up to our next Secretary of State to repair and rebuild these relationships and the reputation of the United States of America. So much damage has been done in just 12 days.

My colleagues Senator MCCAIN and Senator GRAHAM said in a statement this weekend: ''This Executive order sends a signal, intended or not, that America does not want Muslims coming into our country,'' and indeed it does.

So is Rex Tillerson the right individual to set our Nation back on a firm and steady course? Is he the right person to guide us through this volatile international landscape, where we need to rebuild alliances and restore leadership?

In short, the answer is that Rex Tillerson is not the right man to do it.

Forty years in the oil and gas market, 40 years in an oil company are good preparations for leading an oil company but not good preparation for leading the United States of America in international relations, not good preparation for serving as our top diplomat, putting out fires, calming fears, communicating our policies to the world in this volatile moment in history.

During the hearing, there were a series of questions really related to one's moral compass in leading the foreign policy of the United States of America. One of the questions I asked about was Exxon's effort to set up a subsidiary to evade American sanctions on Iran and what did he feel about that as a leader of Exxon. He responded by saying: I don't have any memory of this. Really? The top management of Exxon decides to set up a subsidiary to circumvent American sanctions on Iran with a great deal of national security at stake, and he has no memory? Well, that was certainly a disappointing comment and an unbelievable statement.

How about when we asked him about Exxon lobbying against U.S. sanctions on Russia because of its annexation of Crimea and the holding of territory in the eastern part of Ukraine? He said: Oh, Exxon didn't lobby on this. Yet the lobbying reports were right there. We have transparency on this. Millions of dollars were spent lobbying on this issue, and they certainly weren't lobbying for U.S. sanctions. This was a second extraordinary statement by the nominee.

I then asked the nominee about Exxon's pattern of working with dictators to take the royalties for oil and funnel them to the dictator's family rather than to the treasury. This is particularly true in Equatorial Guinea where President Obiang has declared himself President for life. His response was simply: But Senator, we weren't successfully prosecuted for violating the law. That is not a statement related to moral compass and understanding. Certainly, when a company takes a nation's treasure and diverts it into the pockets of a dictator, you are affecting the lives of hundreds of thousands of people. Certainly, the people of Equatorial Guinea are a poor people who could use those resources for health care, for transportation systems. The President of Equatorial Guinea is famous for filling a plane with fancy sports cars from Europe and flying them to Equatorial Guinea. And how does he do that? Because Exxon steered the royalties for that nation's oil into the pockets of the dictator, but we didn't get any sense that there was any concern about the impact that it had on the people of that nation.

Members of the committee asked him about the extrajudicial killings by police officers in the Philippines—the extrajudicial killings ordered by President Duterte. Young men were shot down in the street. I think at last count an estimated 4,000 to 6,000 young men were assassinated in the street, and he simply said: I need to get more information. This is not something that has been hidden on the back pages of the newspaper; this is something fundamentally contrary to the principles of due process and justice that our Nation stands for. Couldn't the nominee have expressed that this is completely in violation of our core principles? But he had no ability to do so.

We come then to global warming, an impact that is occurring right now on the ground in my State. The burning of coal, oil, and natural gas, causing an accumulation of carbon dioxide and an accumulation of methane, is resulting in the acidification of the ocean. That is causing oysters to have difficulty reproducing because it affects the formation of their shells at the beginning of their life. The higher acidity makes it harder to form shells.

We see global warming in Oregon in terms of a longer fire season with more

intense fires. It is burning more forest there than ever before. We see it in terms of a lower average snowpack on the Cascades that is causing significant drought and smaller and warmer trout streams. This isn't some strange phenomenon that we imagine might happen in the future; it is happening at this moment. We have high tides that are now covering the sidewalks of cities on sunny days. We have moose dying of ticks because it is not cold enough to kill the ticks in the winter. We have lobsters off Maine traveling further into Canada while they start to get fish from the Carolinas. It is everywhere we look. It impacts the economy of our country, particularly our rural economy of fishing, forestry, and farming. His response was simply: We need to keep talking to people about it. He says it is an issue, not particularly urgent, not necessitating American leadership, but just something we should be at the table for—not at the table to urge others, just be at the table. That certainly misses the size of this challenge to our planet.

Here we are, 12 days into the Presidency with major international problems occurring, and we have a nominee who, on issue after issue after issue, lacked a moral compass or insight about the complexity of issues, about the principles of our Nation. So for these reasons, I am voting against the nominee.

I may well be back to extend my remarks at another moment, but I am delighted to yield to my colleague from New Mexico who is standing by to make his remarks.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. UDALL. Mr. President, thank you for the recognition, and I thank Senator MERKLEY very much for yielding.

I have been here on the floor, listening to Senators KAINE and MERKLEY, and I saw Senator CARDIN speaking earlier from my office. We can see that for many of us who sat through these hearings and heard the answers, it didn't give us a lot of confidence that Rex Tillerson was going to be able to step in and be the top diplomat for the United States of America. So I join in all the comments that have been made earlier.

I want to talk about one of the issues that has developed over the last couple of days and that really has bearing on this. For the last century, the United States has led the world stage. We are the inspiration for countless nations as they nurture hopeful democracies—democracies that respect human rights and individual liberties. We are a nation of freedom, where men and women can work hard, build a happy, healthy life, and live the American dream. That is what makes President Trump's anti-Muslim, anti-immigrant actions last week so repugnant.

I believe his actions violate the Constitution. They also violate everything we stand for as a country. Turning our backs on refugees and those seeking a better life doesn't project strength. It shows weakness. It fuels anti-American rage around the world. Our Nation doesn't punish innocent people because of what they believe and who they pray to. We don't slam the door in the faces of those who need help the most.

I call on all of us, especially my colleagues across the aisle, to denounce this action and the people behind it. I am relieved that Federal judges around the nation are blocking the President's unconstitutional order, and I am also very proud of our strong constitutional system of checks and balances.

I can't express adequately how proud I am of Sally Yates, the Acting Attorney General who was fired by President Trump. Now you have to know something about her. This is a very courageous person who stood up and did the right thing. Sally Yates is a career prosecutor. She has served as a U.S. attorney in the U.S. attorney's office under Democrats and Republicans—a career prosecutor. When she was put up for a vote in the Senate, she got 84 votes when she was approved for Deputy Attorney General of the United States. This is someone who understands what is going on, understands the Constitution, and understands her legal obligations. She stood up and said that she wasn't going to represent in court the President on this Muslim ban, and he fired her. He fired her.

These kinds of actions are disturbing. They are un-American acts, and they are the most urgent reason I rise today to state that I cannot support confirming Rex Tillerson as Secretary of State.

There is no doubt that Mr. Tillerson was qualified to run ExxonMobil. Exxon was his first job out of college, and the only company he worked for during his 40-year career in the oil and gas industry. There is no doubt that Mr. Tillerson, as CEO and chairman of ExxonMobil, was 100 percent committed to making sure the best interests of the company's shareholders were served. But with no diplomatic experience or history of public service, I am not confident that Mr. Tillerson is qualified to serve as the United States' chief diplomat.

After studying his work and studying the history and his responses at the confirmation hearing and looking at his answers in writing, I do not believe that Mr. Tillerson is able to commit 100 percent to serving the best interests of the American people. Negotiating the complexities of oil and gas deals is not the same as negotiating the complexities of treaties and agreements with foreign governments.

ExxonMobil's top priority is profit. That is its reason for existence. Leaders negotiate business deals over money and access to resources. The United States and the American people have different priorities—sometimes conflicting priorities.

Our Nation is economically successful, for sure, and we value business and we value making money, but our core values go way beyond economics. We value representative government, we value human rights, and we value freedom of speech. We value the four freedoms that President Roosevelt talked about when we entered into international agreements to spread the four freedoms around the world.

An incoming Secretary of State should not be learning on the job. He or she should already have substantial relevant experience. He or she should already have proven experience fighting for our Nation's core values, for human rights. Mr. Tillerson made it clear during his hearing before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that he lacks substantive foreign policy experience and knowledge. He told the committee many times that he was not familiar with the issues at hand or needed briefing. He must have said that a number of times. As just one example, Mr. Tillerson was unfamiliar with Russia's role in the indiscriminate slaughter of civilians in Syria. He had no opinion of the legality of the slaughter under international law. These are some of the most important, most urgent foreign policy matters we face, but he was unprepared to answer them.

Like Senators on both sides of the aisle, I am concerned about Mr. Tillerson's close personal business ties to the Russian Government. I am concerned about those. They may color his view of Russia. He has been long friends with Vladimir Putin. He has a highly profitable relationship with Igor Sechin, the head of the state-owned oil company Rosneft. I worry that these ties make it difficult or maybe even impossible for him to objectively evaluate Russia's actions and to act in America's best interests.

Are his close ties to Russia why he does not condemn Russia's actions in Syria? We cannot be sure. Mr. Tillerson also will not confirm whether he will advocate maintaining sanctions against Russia for invading Crimea. We know that the sanctions also continue to cost ExxonMobil because it is not able to drill for oil in Russia's Arctic.

Will Mr. Tillerson not commit to maintaining sanctions because of his ties to Russia? We cannot be sure.

In a third example, Mr. Tillerson would not commit to sanctions against Russia for its interference in our Presidential election. He said he didn't have enough information. Well, every U.S. security agency—all 17 of them—has concluded that the Russian Government hacked the Democratic National Committee, disclosed email from the hack from getting in there, and tried to influence our election. They agreed that these actions were authorized at the highest levels of the Russian Government, with fingers pointing right at Vladimir Putin. The intelligence community's public reports stated it this way:

We assess Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered an influence campaign in 2016

aimed at the U.S. presidential election. Russia's goals were to undermine public faith in the U.S. democratic process, denigrate Secretary Clinton, and harm her electability and potential presidency. We further assess Putin and the Russian Government developed a clear preference for President-elect Trump—

Now President Trump—

We have high confidence in these judgments.

So 17 of our intelligence agencies pooled together all of their information, and they had high confidence in what they concluded there.

Mr. Tillerson had adequate information to make a strong statement against this attack, against this hacking, and in favor of American democracy. He did not make such a statement.

We must have a Secretary of State whose allegiance is 100 percent committed to U.S. interests. Mr. Tillerson's equivocating testimony on Russia did not convince me that he can be counted on to serve America's interests and America's interests only. Mr. Tillerson's equivocations mirror the Republicans' record on Russian interference in our democracy.

While the President has plans to dismantle the post-World War II international order, Republicans have done nothing to address Russia's attempt to dismantle our democracy.

I was also unsatisfied by Mr. Tillerson's answers on climate change. While he acknowledges the existence of climate change, he testified that ''our ability to predict that effect is very limited'' and that what action to take ''seems to be the largest area of debate existing in the public discourse.'' That is not what the overwhelming majority of scientists tell us. Our ability to predict what is happening to the planet's climate is not ''very limited,'' and there is international consensus written into the Paris Agreement as to what actions nations agree they must take. Scientists from all over the world have joined together through the United Nations and said that climate change is real and we have to take specific actions.

I appreciated that Rex Tillerson at least said that he believes the United States should remain at the table, but he questioned a key part of the Paris Agreement: the nationally determined contribution, or what is called the NDC. Without the NDC from the United States, the agreement is likely to fall apart, and his claimed support for the Paris Agreement becomes meaningless.

I cannot be clearer: Ignoring the threat of climate change is a direct threat to the United States. We have heard other Senators talk about the threat to their States, and it is a direct threat to my home State of New Mexico.

While President Trump may be trying to quiet our climate scientists, the science is clear. Climate change is real. We just finished the hottest year in recorded history. We know we must act, and we know there will be devastating impacts if the United States does not lead on this issue.

No matter what one believes about science or foreign policy, we should all be alarmed at the lack of transparency in the new administration, especially the unwillingness of our President and key Cabinet members to be open and honest with taxpayers about their finances and potential conflicts.

While Mr. Tillerson has divested from ExxonMobil, we still don't have copies of his tax returns. Mr. Tillerson's ties to ExxonMobil are decades old. Yet he has said he will recuse himself from matters related to ExxonMobil for only 1 year. For only 1 year will he recuse himself. He has worked for this company his entire life. He should refrain from taking calls from his old company for as long as he serves as Secretary of State. He is serving the country. He is serving in a taxpayer-funded job. I don't understand why he cannot agree to this simple standard to avoid the appearance of any conflict. If he deals favorably with ExxonMobil, how can the American people know he is working for us or for his former employer, which made him an extremely wealthy man?

But most concerning to me is whether Mr. Tillerson will be able to speak truth to power. We have just seen this weekend how vital that will be in this administration, where it appears that there is no unifying vision, and different factions of President Trump's Cabinet are competing for his attention. We need a leader with a clear vision for America's role in the world, someone who will put American values ahead of everything else.

Too many times, when pressed during his confirmation hearing about U.S. interests and values, Mr. Tillerson did not give straight answers. On questions such as human rights violations in the Philippines and Syria, he did not call out these offenses for what they were. On questions about whether we should maintain sanctions against Russia for illegally invading Crimea or for interfering with our electoral process, he deferred; he wavered; he said he would decide at a later date when he can be briefed or meet with the President. If Mr. Tillerson can't give straight answers, from the heart, about the most pressing human rights issues, on violations of international law, on a foreign power's interference with our Presidential election, how can we expect him to speak up and temper the worst angels in the Trump administration?

If Mr. Tillerson were the nominee for a more conventional Republican President, these concerns would not be as serious. But I think every Senator can agree that Donald Trump is not a conventional President. He is offending allies and upending alliances on a nearly daily basis. He has made negative statements about the German Chancellor's domestic policies. He is threatening to extort the Mexican Government to pay for an offensive and ineffective wall on America's southern border. He has repeatedly questioned NATO, the fundamental alliance that has secured peace between major powers since World War II. He is threatening to slash funding for the United Nations, including the World Health Organization, which fights global pandemics.

While addressing employees of the Central Intelligence Agency, standing in front of a wall honoring professionals who have made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedoms, President Trump threatened to take Iraq's oil—that he wanted to take another look at taking Iraq's oil—and he said: ''To the victor go the spoils.'' This is a line attributed to Julius Caesar, who decreed himself Emperor. He began rattling the saber with China before he was sworn in.

The President has done all of this while repeatedly praising Vladimir Putin as a strong leader and proposing to improve relations there, while making them worse nearly everywhere else.

This weekend, he closed America's doors to Muslim refugees trying to escape the very evil our government is fighting against. He not only closed the doors to people who believe in our democratic institutions and the freedoms we enjoy, he closed the doors to people who have risked their lives in service of our ideals.

These are not normal changes in foreign policy between administrations. I would change many aspects of U.S. foreign policy if I could. But President Trump's approach to foreign policy so far is one of reckless change that is frankly scaring the American public and our allies around the world. In such a foreign policy environment, we need experienced, skilled hands, people who understand these allies and who understand our longstanding alliances and why we have them. But the President has fired all U.S. Ambassadors, and most high-level State Department employees have resigned or been forced out.

Mr. Tillerson, there is no doubt, is a talented businessman. He loves his country. He has devoted himself to other worthy causes, like the Boy Scouts. It is no exaggeration to say that the post-World War II international order is under attack by the President, endangering U.S. leadership in the world. As a result, our national security and place in the world are threatened like never before. During such tenuous times, we need a leader as our chief diplomat who is prepared to take the reins and calm the waters. But I do not have confidence that Mr. Tillerson has the experience, knowledge, values, or temperament to stand up to the President, to be a voice of reason, or to moderate the President's extreme views and actions. For these reasons, I oppose Mr. Tillerson's confirmation as Secretary of State, and I urge my fellow Members, including those who claimed the mantle of President Reagan, to do the same.

I know my good friend Senator MARKEY, a member of the Foreign Relations Committee, is here on the floor, as well as Senator COONS, another member of the committee, and I think both of them will speak on the Tillerson nomination.

I yield to the Senator from Delaware, Mr. COONS.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The distinguished Senator from Delaware.

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, after two long one-on-one meetings with Mr. Rex Tillerson, after a thorough confirmation hearing in the Foreign Relations Committee that stretched over some 9 hours, and after extensive additional research and reading and digging into his record, his public statements, and his views, I announced last week that I would oppose the nomination of Rex Tillerson to be Secretary of State of the United States.

I will say that over our meetings, our conversations, and my review of his record, I have come to respect Mr. Tillerson as a thoughtful and seasoned and capable professional in his line of work, with impressive international business experience. And I will say that his quick action to sever financial ties with ExxonMobil is a strong example that I wish President Trump had followed with regard to his own private business interests.

I found encouraging some of Mr. Tillerson's statements in the confirmation hearing and his public stances, including his commitment to NATO, his respect for U.S. leadership in multilateral initiatives, from the Paris climate change agreement to the Iran deal, and his support for development programs throughout the world but especially in Africa, a continent where I have been engaged in my 6 years on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

His nomination has the support of highly respected former officials, from Brent Scowcroft and Bob Gates to James Baker and Condoleezza Rice, former Secretaries and National Security Advisors.

But Mr. Tillerson and I disagree strongly on key issues. I believe, for example, that climate change is a pressing national security threat that must be addressed. Mr. Tillerson saw it somewhat differently. I believe in advocating for human rights, for a free press, and for democracy around the world because these principles advance our security and our economic interests here at home. I don't believe that human rights, press freedom, and democracy are add-ons, are things that we can address and deal with after national security is addressed. These are core to who we are as a nation and to the advocacy and engagement that I hope for and expect from our State Department and our next Secretary of State.

These are just a few of the reasons why I ultimately decided to oppose Mr. Tillerson's confirmation, but that is not why I have come to the floor today. I am here today principally because the challenge we face is not whether a single nominee is the perfect person for this particular role; the challenge we and the American people now face is to determine the future we seek for our country and the world stage and whether we will choose to continue to lead the free world.

Do we envision the United States leading by example through actions that show we will stand by our values, especially when it is challenging or difficult? Do we envision the United States leading a coalition of democratic allies and Muslim partners around the world in the global fight on terrorism, defending each other and promoting values of human rights, the rule of law, and democracy? Or do we accept a dark and dystopian vision that sees the world in strict zero-sum terms whereby any win for our allies or partners is automatically a loss for America; a vision in which we could abandon our values for political gain; a vision that distances us from the world both by a literal wall and a growing gulf in priorities?

For decades, Republicans and Democrats have agreed on foundational principles of U.S. leadership in the world. We engage with the world. We consistently and reliably support our allies. We lead by example, especially on our core values. We fight for the rule of law, for human rights, and for democratic institutions because doing so makes us safer and more secure.

Consider our alliances. The Heritage Foundation accurately pointed out that supporting our allies overseas and in particular our treasured and enduring alliance with our NATO partners in Western Europe isn't charity but, rather, a proven method for keeping the United States safe and secure. As Heritage puts it, alliances prevent wars by driving up the cost of aggression. Alliances deter our rivals and adversaries. Alliances promote stability, help us project power, and enhance our legitimacy.

Why does this matter? Why is this a current matter of debate? Why is this a pressing concern in the context of this nomination and in the work of this body? Take, for example, Russia under Vladimir Putin. It is the unanimous view of all 17 U.S. intelligence agencies that Russia conducted and organized an intentional campaign of interfering in our 2016 Presidential election and that Russia conducted a cyber attack, authorized at the highest level, with the intention to influence the outcome of our election.

I cannot imagine a more direct frontal assault on who we are as a nation than to seek to influence our democratic election. But on top of that unprecedented attack on who we are as a nation, Vladimir Putin's Russia illegally annexed the Crimean Peninsula and continues to support the murderous Assad regime in Syria. Today, Russia is preparing—even threatening—to intervene in upcoming elections across Central and Western Europe, including elections in our longtime close allies, France and Germany. It has been amassing troops on the borders of our NATO partners, such as Estonia and the other Baltic States, and conducting snap exercises up and down the border with NATO. It is precisely because of these acts of aggression that the NATO alliance is more relevant and more important than ever.

These aren't groundbreaking or controversial conclusions that I am reaching today. Yet President Trump's rhetoric as a candidate, his early actions as President, his compliments to Vladimir Putin, his claims that NATO is obsolete, and his intimation that he may not honor our article 5 mutual defense commitment to our NATO allies all call into question the President's understanding of the role that our alliances play. It also calls into question whether his administration understands the consequences of weakening or abandoning these alliance.

More than perhaps any nation on Earth, the United States has deeply benefited from the stable world order that we helped shape following the Second World War. After Americans went throughout the world to fight the forces of fascism and imperialism in the Pacific and the European theater in the Second World War, we sat astride the world as the most powerful country on Earth, with weapons possessed by no other, with the greatest manufacturing and military might on the planet, and we set about establishing an inclusive, rules-based, democratically oriented world order, from which we have benefited more than any other nation. NATO has become a key part of the alliances that we have relied on for that peace and stability in the seven decades since.

Let's not forget that the only time NATO invoked its mutual defense provision article 5 clause was when our allies came to our defense after 9/11. So to suggest that NATO is obsolete or outdated because it wasn't developed in a time where terrorism was a central threat gives a lie to the reality that our NATO allies have stood shoulder to shoulder with us and have fought alongside American service men and women in Iraq and Afghanistan. Nearly 1,000 have given their lives, and our NATO allies have poured their blood and treasure into our defense and into our joint conduct against our enemies in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Interpreters from Iraq and Afghanistan have kept our troops safe, and yet today those espousing ''America First'' would break our promises to these vital partners. I have to ask: To what end? When we turn our backs on our allies and friends, there are consequences. They may be prompted to seek to help themselves in new or unexpected or dangerous ways, such as developing their own nuclear capability or seeking armaments from Russia rather than working in partnership with us for their own security. They may seek to find new allies who do not,

in fact, share our values. In all these cases, ''America First'' may gradually, tragically, become instead ''America Alone.'' That leaves us less safe and closes off economic opportunities around the world. So in seeking out a strategy that is purported to make us safer and stronger, President Trump may, in fact, accomplish neither.

A policy of ''America First'' doesn't just mean turning our backs on our allies and partners. It may also mean turning our backs on some of the world's most vulnerable people, with real consequences here at home. The Executive order signed by President Trump just on Friday, banning all refugees from the United States for 120 days, banning refugees for 90 days from seven countries and indefinitely from Syria, caused chaos and confusion at our airports and instilled concern—even fear—in American families across our country.

I have a key question today, introduced earlier by Senator CARDIN, the ranking Democrat on the Foreign Relations Committee, but not yet answered: Where does Rex Tillerson stand on this Executive order? How does he see it in our place in the world? How does he understand the centrality of the example that we show to the world in how we embrace human rights?

Sadly, I think this Executive order has validated the claims of jihadist groups like ISIS that recruit young men on the false claim that the West is at war with Islam, which is why these very terrorist groups are today cheering this Executive order. I think it has made us less safe by alienating Muslims in the United States and around the world. Why would we want to alienate the very Iraqis with whom we are training, serving, and fighting in the war against ISIS when they are a critical part of the ground forces that we are counting on to liberate Mosul from the tyranny of ISIS?

Most significantly, this Executive order may violate our Constitution and values by banning people based not on security concerns but on the basis of their religion, and by turning our backs on a decades-long commitment to welcome those fleeing credible fears of persecution, fleeing violence and chaos in their home countries. These may be the consequences of ''America First.''

It is well known but bears repeating that in 1939, a ship called the St. Louis approached American shores bearing nearly 1,000 mostly Jewish refugees fleeing the horrors of the Nazi regime and the impending Holocaust. In one of our Nation's most shameful chapters, the United States turned away these refugees seeking our shores. One passenger on board the St. Louis received a telegram from the U.S. Government instructing him that passengers must ''await their turns on the waiting list and qualify for and obtain immigration visas before they may be admissible.'' Most of these refugees were forced to return to Europe, where they were murdered by the Nazis.

This tragic episode from 1939, born of isolationism and, tragically, anti-Semitism and a mistaken sense that we could isolate ourselves from the challenges and the violence of the world was also part of a period when a group whose name was the America First Committee mobilized to try to prevent our entry into the Second World War.

I will say that these are the consequences of ''America First.'' The United States ultimately is less safe. Our allies may be made to feel uncertain or even betrayed. Americans will find themselves more fearful, and, our values, with which we have sought to lead the world, are cast aside.

That is why I believe this debate today is about far more than a single nominee for an important post in our State Department. American leadership on the world stage is not as simple as ''America First,'' and the consequences of truly embracing the dystopian vision of ''America First,'' I think, will be tragic.

If Mr. Tillerson is confirmed, it is my sincere and earnest hope that he will challenge President Trump to rethink the dark and dystopian view of the world that he laid out in his inaugural address, and that he will instead bend his skills, character, and qualities to the hard work of realigning our role in the world to the course that Republicans and Democrats together have steered from this floor and from this body for seven decades.

As the world saw last weekend, the new Trump administration desperately needs someone in the room to speak truth to power and to temper its worst impulses.

I yield the floor.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, will the Senator from Delaware yield?

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The distinguished Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, the Senate's advise and consent role is one of our most important duties as Senators, and the Secretary of State is one of the most important nominations we will consider. The Secretary of State is America's chief diplomat, and he should project America's values to the world.

Yesterday, I joined Senator SCHUMER in calling for a delay on Mr. Tillerson's vote on the Senate floor until we hear from him about President Trump's Muslim ban.

Turning away refugees based on their nationality and religion is un-American, it is illegal, and it is immoral. This Muslim ban is propaganda for ISIS. It is a recruiting gift to terrorist groups around the world and in our own country. It will increase the risk of harm to Americans everywhere, including here at home. Donald Trump is sending a message to Muslims around the world that they are all suspects. This has profound implications for our ability to work with governments in the Middle East in the fight against terrorism. One of the countries named in this Executive order is Iraq, our closest ally in the fight against ISIS. Conflict and war is forcing millions around the world from their homeland. Donald Trump's Muslim ban directly undermines our historic commitment to international cooperation and international refugee aid. That is why world leaders have joined the chorus of millions of Americans who do not support the Muslim ban.

America has always been a beacon to those fleeing persecution and violence. We are a refuge for those seeking a better life. The poetic inscription at the base of the Statue of Liberty does not say: Send back ''your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free.'' As our top diplomat, Mr. Tillerson will be in a position to work directly with the nations named in this Executive order, and we need to hear how he believes it will impact our standing around the world.

With respect to Mr. Tillerson's nomination, I have very serious concerns. Rex Tillerson could have enjoyed his retirement after spending more than 40 years at ExxonMobil. Instead, he answered the call to enter public service, and I commend him for that. His record at ExxonMobil is one that clearly has received accolades. He did a good job for ExxonMobil. He is highly respected in the oil industry. But public service requires the public's trust, and Mr. Tillerson will not have that trust unless he agrees to recuse himself from participating in decisions that would affect ExxonMobil for the entirety of his term. So far, he has refused to do so.

Our laws require Federal officials to recuse themselves when a reasonable person could question their impartiality. Before President Trump nominated him to be Secretary of State, Mr. Tillerson worked for one company—ExxonMobil—for virtually his entire adult life. As he rose to become a senior manager and then CEO, Mr. Tillerson was personally involved in getting lucrative oil deals in a number of countries, including Russia. In fact, during Mr. Tillerson's time as CEO of ExxonMobil, the company expanded its drilling rights in Russia to 63 million acres. That is an area the size of Wyoming and nearly five times the size of Exxon's holdings in the United States.

But Mr. Tillerson didn't just deepen the relationship between his company and Russia. He also tried to protect that relationship by speaking out against sanctions on Russia. As a reward for personally cementing Exxon's relationship with Russia, President Vladimir Putin awarded Mr. Tillerson the Russian Order of Friendship.

The stakes with U.S.-Russia relations could not be higher. Russia has invaded the Ukraine, annexed Crimea, bombed innocent civilians in Aleppo, and attacked our elections with cyber weapons. Our next Secretary of State will be negotiating with Russia on

some of the most critical foreign policy issues facing the world.

Mr. Tillerson's decades-long history at ExxonMobil and Exxon's vast holdings in Russia clearly create a conflict of interest. How can the American people be sure Mr. Tillerson will be objective when he participates in matters relating to sanctions on Russia or in any matters that could affect Exxon in the dozens of other countries in the world where Exxon operates?

As the top ethics lawyers for Presidents Bush and Obama have said, these conflicts could require Mr. Tillerson to recuse himself from any matters affecting ExxonMobil, irrespective of his financial divestitures. When I asked Mr. Tillerson during his confirmation hearing whether he would commit to recuse himself without waiver or exception from matters affecting Exxon for the duration of his tenure as Secretary of State, he refused. That is unacceptable. The American people and the national security of the United States demand a Secretary of State whose impartiality is unambiguous.

Make no mistake, the stockholders of ExxonMobil would have serious questions about hiring the leader of the Sierra Club to be the new CEO of Exxon. We, too, should have questions about hiring ExxonMobil's former CEO to be America's chief diplomat.

If he agreed to recuse himself, Mr. Tillerson would be following a tradition that is longstanding and bipartisan. Secretary of State James Baker recused himself from participating in any matter that could affect the price of oil and gas. Treasury Secretary Hank Paulson promised not to participate in any matter where Goldman Sachs was a party. And all of President Obama's appointees recused themselves from any matters related to their former employers or clients. Mr. Tillerson's refusal to follow their example will call into question his impartiality, and it could undermine his effectiveness as Secretary.

During his confirmation hearing, Mr. Tillerson displayed an alarming lack of understanding of oil's role in geopolitics—clearly a consequence of having worked solely at Exxon—that disqualifies him from being Secretary of State.

When I questioned him, Mr. Tillerson told me that he never had supported U.S. energy independence. He told me that he didn't agree that reducing America's demand for oil and our reliance on foreign oil imported from the Middle East would strengthen our negotiating position with oil-producing nations.

We as a nation still import 5 million barrels of oil every single day into the United States. Three million of those barrels a day come from OPEC members, such as Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Nigeria. ExxonMobil has energy interests in each one of those countries. And we are still exporting our own young men and women in uniform overseas to defend those energy interests every single day.

Mr. Tillerson is looking at the world through oil-coated glasses. He may have gotten rid of Exxon's stock, but he hasn't gotten rid of Exxon's mindset.

Mr. Tillerson's answers to questions about climate change—the global generational challenge of our time—are a cause for extreme concern. Although he recognized that climate change is real and human activities influenced it, he would not commit to continuing action on it as a foreign policy priority. Throughout his hearing, Mr. Tillerson would only say that he wanted to keep a seat at the table of climate negotiations. The United States needs to have more than a seat at the table; we need to be at the head of the table.

In December 2015, 150 heads of state gathered in support of finalizing the Paris climate accord. It represents a global solution to the problem of global warming in which all countries commit to doing their fair share. Instead of strengthening this historic accord, Mr. Tillerson indicated that all treaties and agreements to which the United States is a party would be up for review by President Trump.

America needs a Secretary of State who will lead the world to fully realize the clean energy revolution that will help us avoid the catastrophic impacts of climate change while creating millions of jobs. To abandon the Paris climate accord would be to abandon our clean energy future. We cannot roll back years of progress cutting dangerous carbon emissions or deploying clean energy solutions.

For 41 years, Rex Tillerson's world view has been to advance the interests of one place and one place only—ExxonMobil. Confirming Mr. Tillerson as Secretary of State would be turning over the keys of U.S. foreign policy to Big Oil. Big Oil's interests are not America's interest. If Mr. Tillerson were to negotiate with Russia and President Putin, whose interests will he represent—those of Big Oil or those of the American people? I still do not have satisfactory answers to that critical question. For those reasons, I cannot vote for his confirmation.

I thank you for allowing me to speak at this time on the Senate floor.

I yield to the Senator from Connecticut, Mr. MURPHY.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. RUBIO). The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, since assuming office on January 20, which is just 11 days ago—I don't know, it kind of feels to me like it was 11 months ago; this is going on in a horrible, nightmarish slow motion—the Trump administration has assumed responsibility for our Nation's national security. There are a lot of jobs the President has, this new administration has, but that is at the top of the list—guaranteeing this country's security and, frankly, being the guarantor of global security.

Leaving aside some of the broader systemic challenges that we face in the world, let's just look at what has happened since the inauguration.

Yesterday, Iran reportedly conducted another ballistic missile test. President Trump criticized President Obama on Iran for being too soft. Now it is his turn to get China and Russia to agree to a Security Council resolution condemning this test and taking punitive action.

On Sunday, extremist groups all around the world celebrated the Trump administration's ban on travel from seven Muslim-majority countries. Comments that were posted to pro-Islamic State's social media accounts predicted that the Executive order would serve as a recruiting tool for ISIS. One posting said that Trump's actions ''clearly revealed the truth and harsh reality behind the American government's hatred towards Muslims.'' Another posting hailed Trump as ''the best caller to Islam.'' Another one talked about the ban being a blessed ban, which is a reference to what militant leaders called the invasion of Iraq, which was hailed then as the blessed invasion, becoming the cause celebre, as the intelligence community called it, for the global jihadist movement.

Immediately following the first phone conversation between Trump and Putin, the conflict in Ukraine flared up. Likely not coincidentally, 8 Ukrainian soldiers were killed and 26 were wounded just since Saturday.

In the Balkans, where Russia has been just recently again steadily increasing in influence, as Europe is pulling up the doors on its new perspective members, Serbia sent a train emblazoned with the motto ''Kosovo is Serbia'' up to the border of Kosovo. It turned around, but as a result, troops and security forces reportedly scrambled to the border from both sides.

I am not suggesting that all of these bad things happened because Donald Trump was inaugurated. I listened to my colleagues explain all of the world's troubles for 8 years through the lens of responsibility to the Obama administration. But this is all an advertisement for a very simple idea—that this is probably the absolute worst time to have the first American President with no government experience and no diplomatic experience pick the first Secretary of State with no government experience and no diplomatic experience. This is not the moment for on-the-job learning. Yet that is what we have so far.

Granted Mr. Tillerson is not in place, but President Trump's foreign policy up to this point has been tragically amateurish. Witness the invitation for the Mexican leader to come to the White House, worked out in painstaking detail, an opportunity to show, despite the furor and rhetoric of the campaign, solidarity between the American and Mexican people, and then Donald Trump sends out a tweet daring the Mexican leader to cancel the meeting, which he promptly does, erupting threats of a trade war.

Witness Friday's Muslim ban, which now has Muslim nations all around the world rethinking their relationship with the United States, sending this dangerous message to people all around the world that you have no home in the United States if you practice one particular faith.

It begs the question as to whether Mr. Tillerson is going to be able to right this ship, having no experience working on almost every single one of these issues that confront us around the world. It is not the same thing to run a global business and run the State Department.

Frankly, I would argue that Mr. Tillerson's experience—even if you believe he did a good job for Exxon, it doesn't advertise him as a good candidate for Secretary of State. In fact, we have reason to fear that Mr. Tillerson would run the State Department like he ran Exxon, where he repeatedly worked against U.S. national interests.

Mr. Tillerson opposed sanctions levied against Russia in the wake of their invasion of Ukraine. He tried to pull one over on the committee, telling the committee this ridiculous story of first not lobbying Congress on sanctions, then not knowing if Exxon was lobbying for or against sanctions. That just doesn't pass the smell test. He called the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee to express his misgivings about sanctions. He personally lobbied Congress against the sanctions. His company spent millions of dollars lobbying against the sanctions.

When asked by President Obama and his administration to refrain from attending a major economic development conference hosted by Vladimir Putin in the middle of the Ukraine crisis, Tillerson thumbed his nose at America. He intentionally embarrassed his own country and our allies by sending his top deputy to that conference—and it gets worse—and standing next to Russian officials to announce major new contracts with Russia. Think about that. We begged Exxon to stay away from that conference. Not only did they go, but Tillerson had his No. 2 guy announce new contracts in the middle of the sanctions, in the middle of the worst of the crisis with Ukraine. It is not surprising that he was awarded the Order of Friendship by Vladimir Putin 3 years ago.

Just an aside, I have listened to my colleagues castigate President Obama for being weak on Russia for years. Frankly, the only thing that has been consistent about Candidate Trump and President Trump's foreign policy has been a marshmallow-like softness on Russia. At every turn, Trump has previewed for you that he is going to be easy on Vladimir Putin. Tillerson's testimony cemented that. He was asked over and over whether he would commit to holding the line on existing sanctions, whether he would commit to imposing new sanctions based on Russian interference in the U.S. elections. He was asked by the Presiding Officer if he would, at the very least, commit to holding in place the sanctions on the individuals who were named as those interfering with the U.S. election. He wouldn't commit to any of it, and so it is hard for me to understand how all of the Republicans who have been eviscerating President Obama for 8 years for being soft on Russia are now supporting the nomination of Rex Tillerson, who has basically advertised that they are going to withdraw the line the Obama administration had taken and enter into a new relationship with Russia, in which they likely get everything they want. I hope that is not true, but we have asked over and over again for this nominee to give us some signal that they are going to at least maintain the policies we have today, and we have gotten no satisfactory answer.

Lastly, maybe most concerning about this nominee, is the potential for him to carry with him from Exxon a total lack of concern for ethics. I understand business ethics. That sounds really harsh, right? I understand there is a difference between business ethics and government ethics, and human rights is not something you are going to care about in a business to the extent that we care about it as those who run and advocate for American foreign policy. But I asked Mr. Tillerson if there was any country in the world he wasn't willing to do business with as the leader of Exxon. He danced around the answer a little bit, but the simple response was no, and that is plain as day. We can look at the countries they did business with, including Syria through subsidiaries, including Iran. There was no human rights record that was bad enough for Exxon to say: Hey, no. This isn't something we want to touch.

We have been told by those who are supporting his nomination that we really shouldn't pay attention to everything he did at Exxon because he is going to be a new man when he comes to State. I guess you can understand that. Plenty of people take on new priorities when they come into new jobs. Plenty of people argue for something they argued against once they have a new boss, but he had a chance before the Foreign Relations Committee to tell us how serious he was about human rights. He got asked over and over again what he thought about human rights violations by some of the worst offenders around the world. His answers to those questions were, boy, they were disturbing and troubling. He wouldn't name Saudi Arabia as a human rights violator. Saudi Arabia is locking up political dissidents left and right. They don't allow women to drive. I understand they are an ally, but they are also a human rights violator. Everybody knows that. He wouldn't commit that President Duterte in the Philippines, who has been openly bragging about murdering thousands of civilians with no due process—wouldn't name him as a human rights violator, wouldn't say that what Russia has done in Aleppo is a war crime. I understand that maybe you don't know all the facts when you are just coming through the process, but you just have to pick up a newspaper to figure out what is going on in Manila or what is happening in Aleppo. It doesn't take a lot of research to know that Saudi Arabia is violating people's human rights. He knows that country very well.

It suggests that this lack of concern for ethics and human rights is going to carry over to the State Department, and of course he is working for a President who is never going to tell him to care about human rights. The President has openly talked about his affection for torture; how he thinks that strong leaders are the ones who kill journalists who oppose them.

So it looks as if we are seeing a preview of an abdication of America's historic role in promoting and pushing human rights around the world. We have a President who has openly mocked human rights, who has supported vicious dictators, and a Secretary of State who has made a career of doing business with some of the worst human rights violators in the world and who couldn't name human rights violators when he appeared before the committee.

Senator MARKEY is right. Mr. Tillerson is an accomplished businessman. He is smart. He is savvy. I don't say any of this to impugn his character. He had a job to do at Exxon, and he did it well on behalf of those shareholders. Frankly, he didn't have to take this job. He didn't have to subject himself to this spotlight, to the constant second-guessing that awaits him as the next American Secretary of State. So I give him credit for making this decision to step up to the plate and do this job. I think his motives are pure. I guess I can't assume anything else. I know there are people who question those motives, but I am going to assume that he is doing this because he wants to help his country, and I look forward to working with him.

He needs to be an advocate for the State Department. He needs to be an advocate for the nonmilitary tools that have not historically been available to the President. We have had a ''military first'' mentality as a country. We think every problem in the world can be solved through military intervention. Even under President Obama, there was a bent toward military solutions. A Secretary of State can be the chief spokesman here for the ways in which you solve problems that don't involve attacking and invading, but I don't think somebody who has done one thing with one set of priorities and values for 40 years just suddenly does an about-face, and adopts a totally different set of priorities and values for his career's capstone job. If that were the case, he could have previewed that for us in the committee hearing. Yet

over and over again, when we asked for evidence that his priorities and his values were changed, his answers didn't measure up.

As I said, in addition to those concerns, this is just not the time for a Secretary of State with no diplomatic experience whatsoever. It is not a time for our new Secretary of State to learn on the job.

I will oppose his nomination and I hope others will join me.

I yield the floor.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I yield 15 minutes under my control to the Senator from Massachusetts, Ms. WARREN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has that right.

The Senator from Wisconsin.

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, I rise to speak about the nomination of Rex Tillerson to serve as Secretary of State. Shortly after President Trump's election, I wrote to him about what I thought was a mutual interest, taking on a rigged system in Washington where powerful interests call the shots. For too long, I have heard from Wisconsinites who feel that Washington's economic and political system is broken. People are angry because they feel that our government institutions seem to work for Big Banks or Big Oil but not for them.

President Trump clearly tapped into this widely held dissatisfaction when he announced his plan to reduce the influence of special interests in government by draining the swamp. Yet with appointment after appointment, it has been made clear that President Trump is not interested in ridding the government of powerful interests. In fact, he continues to appoint and nominate foxes to guard the henhouse.

We don't need to look back very far to know what can happen when we let industry insiders run our government. The 2008 financial crisis was a result of years of deregulation pushed by Wall Street from both inside and outside the government. Last Congress, I introduced legislation to slow the revolving door and ensure that our public servants are working for the public interest, not their former—or future, for that matter—employers. I was inspired to introduce this legislation when I saw several Obama administration appointees receive multimillion-dollar bonuses for leaving their private sector jobs to join the government. These government service golden parachutes, as they are known, demonstrate how valuable some companies believe it is to have friends in high places.

Rex Tillerson, the President's nominee to serve as Secretary of State, received a $180 million payout from ExxonMobil that he would have to forfeit had he taken a job elsewhere. What is more, reports indicate that the deal he struck allows him to defer paying 71 million in taxes. It is hard to imagine that our Nation's top diplomat will forget such an incredible favor, but Rex Tillerson isn't the only Trump appointee who will be rewarded with a golden parachute as he enters government. Gary Cohn, the President's pick to run the National Economic Council, will receive over 100 million from his former employer, Goldman Sachs, before he starts to coordinate an administration-wide economic policy.

I remain as opposed to this practice under the Trump administration as I was during the Obama administration. Wisconsin families cannot afford to have corporate insiders running our government to rig the rules on behalf of their former corporations. That is why I am reintroducing the Financial Services Conflict of Interest Act, to ensure that our government is truly of the people, by the people, and for the people of the United States, to ensure that President Trump's Cabinet officials are working in the national interests instead of their own interests, to ensure that they are working for their current employers, the American people, instead of their former bosses.

In the case of Mr. Tillerson, whose nomination the Senate is voting on this week, these questions of influence, of favoritism and priorities are particularly troubling, troubling because during his tenure leading Exxon, Mr. Tillerson showed a disregard, if not outright contempt at times, for putting U.S. policy first. Whether in the Middle East, Africa or Russia, Exxon's bottom line was his overriding priority. Now, with 180 million of Exxon's money in his pocket—and after 40 years with the company—should we take it on faith that his priorities will suddenly change? Should we blindly accept that the 180 million will not ever influence his decisionmaking or should we continue to ask questions, questions that Rex Tillerson has yet to answer?

For example, how will Exxon and Big Business influence U.S. policy in strategically important but democratically fragile oil-producing African states? How about U.S. international commitments to combatting climate change, one of our greatest national security challenges but also a challenge that Big Oil has dismissed as a hoax. Perhaps most concerning, what influence will Exxon have in matters relating to Russia, where its long record of doing business at the expense of U.S. national security interests seems to be right at home in the Trump administration?

We also need to hear what Rex Tillerson thinks about President Trump's actions this weekend. On Friday, President Trump issued anti-refugee and anti-immigrant Executive orders. I am outraged by the way these orders were hastily thrown together late Friday. The President's sloppy actions created chaos, disorder, and confusion at our airports, and it left families, including permanent legal residents, wondering what it meant for them. There have been media reports that relevant agencies, including the State Department, were not consulted before this order was signed by President Trump. President Trump says we need extreme vetting of refugees fleeing war-torn nations. The refugees—the vast majority of whom are women and children—already go through an extremely strict screening process before they are allowed to enter the country.

What we really need extreme vetting of is President Trump's Executive orders before he signs them. With the stroke of a pen, President Trump's orders will make ISIS stronger, weaken America's counterterrorism efforts, and likely cost lives. It is wrong to turn our back on our American values and the rest of the world. We are better than this.

President Trump and Republicans in Congress should reverse these shameful actions immediately. I am proud to be cosponsoring legislation that would do just that. We need to know where Rex Tillerson stands on those very same issues. Does he oppose welcoming refugees into the country, which strengthens America's connection with freedom, the foundation of who we are as a people? Was Mr. Tillerson consulted by the President before these orders were issued? Mr. Tillerson owes it to the American people to answer those questions before the Senate votes on his confirmation.

What happened the day after President Trump issued these Executive orders? On Saturday, President Trump called Vladimir Putin to discuss a more cozy relationship with Russia. What does Mr. Tillerson think about this call? According to reports, it was a warm conversation and resulted in preparations for a meeting between President Trump and Vladimir Putin, the same Vladimir Putin who illegally invaded Ukraine and actively seeks to divide and destroy NATO, our most important security alliance; the same Vladimir Putin who is responsible for directing cyber attacks meant to influence and undermine our elections and our Democratic process; the same Vladimir Putin who fights alongside the murderous Syrian dictator, Bashar al-Assad, and is responsible for war crimes, indiscriminately bombing innocent civilians in Aleppo; the same Vladimir Putin who gave Rex Tillerson the Order of Friendship following his business dealings in Russia.

We need a Secretary of State who understands the threats posed by nations like Russia, not someone who is cozy with Vladimir Putin. We need a nominee with experience in foreign affairs and foreign policy, not a billionaire oil tycoon who has spent his career fighting to ensure that government policies help the oil industry. Rex Tillerson is not this nominee.

For all these reasons, I oppose the nomination of Rex Tillerson to serve as U.S. Secretary of State. I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to do the same.

I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

TRAVEL BAN

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I would like to address some of the very serious concerns posed by the nomination of Rex Tillerson for Secretary of State, along with several of President Trump's Cabinet nominees. But first I do want to briefly address what unfolded this weekend at airports across the country following President Trump's appalling and un-American ban on Muslims and refugees from entering the country.

With the stroke of a pen, the Trump administration caused chaos and heartbreak for hundreds of families, many of whom are our friends, our neighbors, and our coworkers. On Saturday night, Members of this Congress, including myself, were denied answers to even the most basic questions from border enforcement officers, questions that affect the people whom we represent.

While I am glad that a Federal judge quickly issued a stay and that the Department of Homeland Security has since provided further guidance on the Executive orders, many questions remain and too many lives hang in the balance.

I am going to keep fighting as hard as I can, and I encourage everyone who is listening and watching right now to continue making their voices heard because President Trump is already governing the way he campaigned, by dividing our country and pushing extreme policies that hurt families across the country. Again, we saw this so clearly in the Executive orders he signed this past week.

But it is also something we have seen in the Cabinet nominees he has put forward since his election. As we all remember, President Trump said that he was going to drain the swamp, but he seems to think the way to do that is by filling it with even bigger swamp creatures. He said he was going to stand with the working class and fight Wall Street and Big Business. But he nominated a Cabinet full of Wall Street bankers and billionaires and millionaires and friends and insiders and campaign contributors.

As many of my colleagues have discussed today, one clear example of President Trump's broken promise to drain the swamp is the nomination of Rex Tillerson, CEO of ExxonMobil for Secretary of State. This is a nominee who is not only a known friend and business partner to Russia, but someone who publicly spoke against sanctions on Russia after the invasion of Ukraine and Crimea.

People in my home State of Washington have significant concerns about who he plans to work for, and so do I—concerns that Mr. Tillerson failed to adequately address in his hearing. I have said before that reports of Russia meddling in our election should disturb and outrage every American, Democrat, Republican, or Independent who believes that the integrity of our elections is fundamental to the strength of this democracy. That is why it is so critical we have a Secretary of State who will stand up to protect those values.

NOMINATIONS OF BETSY DEVOS, TOM PRICE, AND ANDREW PUZDER

Mr. President, along with Rex Tillerson, I have serious concerns with the nominees that are going through our Senate HELP Committee, as well as the vetting process that has taken place.

My Republican colleagues rushed us into a hearing on President Trump's nominee for Secretary of Education, Betsy DeVos, for example. When we started the hearing, the Republican Chairman, the senior Senator from Tennessee, preemptively declared he would be limiting questions to just 5 minutes per Member, a shocking and disappointing breach of committee tradition, clearly intended to limit public scrutiny.

When the questions began, it quickly became clear why Republicans felt the need to protect her. Ms. DeVos refused to rule out slashing investments in or privatizing public schools. She was confused about the need for Federal protections for students with disabilities. She argued that guns needed to be allowed in schools across the country to ''protect from grizzlies.''

Even though she was willing to say that President Trump's behavior toward women should be considered sexual assault, she would not commit to actually enforcing Federal law, protecting women and girls in our schools.

I would say I was shocked at this candidate's lack of qualifications to serve, but at this point, you know what, nothing surprises me when it comes to President Trump's new administration.

As was the case with Ms. DeVos, Democrats were also unable to thoroughly question President Trump's nominee for Health and Human Services, Congressman TOM PRICE. I can understand why Republicans would not want Congressman TOM PRICE to defend his policies, which would take health care coverage away from families, voucherize Medicare, and undermine women's access to reproductive health services, despite President Trump's comments to make health care better for patients and even provide insurance for everybody. These are issues that families and communities do deserve to hear about, and they also deserve a thorough investigation into serious questions about whether Congressman PRICE had access to nonpublic information when he made certain medical stock trades while he was in the House.

Lastly, I have to say, I have grown increasingly concerned that President Trump's nominee for Secretary of Labor, Andrew Puzder, represents yet another broken promise of his to put workers first. On issue after issue, Andrew Puzder has made clear that he will do what is best for big businesses, like his own, at the expense of workers and families.

He has spoken out against a strong increase in the minimum wage. He has been one of the most vocal opponents of our efforts to update the rules so that millions more workers can earn their overtime pay.

Puzder has even talked about replacing workers with robots because ''they never take a vacation, they never show up late, there's never a slip-and-fall, or an age, sex, or race discrimination case.'' That is a quote from Puzder.

He has aggressively defended his company's offensive ads, leaving women across the country wondering whether he can be trusted in a role that is so critical to women's rights and safety in the workplace.

All of that makes a lot of sense coming from a millionaire CEO who profits off of squeezing his own workers. But it is very concerning coming from a potential Secretary of Labor, someone who should be standing up for our workers and making sure they get treated fairly, rather than mistreated.

So, now more than ever, people across the country want to know how the Trump administration will continue to impact their lives. We Democrats consider it our job to stand up when President Trump tries to hurt the families whom we represent. We are ready to stand with families we represent, to hold him and his administration accountable, and we refuse to back down and are prepared to fight back.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, I rise today to express my strong opposition to President Trump's nomination of Rex Tillerson to be the next Secretary of State. There are many, many reasons to oppose this nomination, and my colleague from Washington has just listed several of them. But the main reason for me is as simple as it is disturbing: Tillerson's extensive and longstanding ties with Russia mean that the United States of America simply cannot trust him to be a strong advocate for the interests of our country.

Here is what has been publicly reported. Our intelligence agencies have concluded that the Russian Government conducted a successful series of cyber attacks on the United States designed to help Donald Trump get elected President. Intelligence chiefs have briefed the President on a dossier alleging that the Russian Government has collected compromising information on him. And in response, the President has attacked the intelligence community.

This week, he installed his political crony, Steve Bannon, a man with ties to White nationalists, on the National Security Council while marginalizing the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Director of National Intelligence.

Now, there is significant reason to believe that the President has extensive financial relationships with Russia, but nobody actually knows any of

the details because he has refused to release his tax returns. And, apparently, the President's own national security adviser is currently under FBI investigation for his own interactions with the Russian Government.

This is only the 12th day of the Trump Presidency, and this is what is going on right now—12 days. I wish this weren't happening. I wish things were normal, but this is not normal. We cannot simply ignore all of this as we evaluate the President's nominees to critical foreign policy and national security jobs.

I have heard some people say that Rex Tillerson doesn't know anything about diplomacy or have any experience with foreign policy. I actually think that is wrong.

For the last decade, Tillerson has served as the CEO of ExxonMobil, a massive company that would have roughly the 42nd largest economy in the entire world if it were its own country. As the leader of that giant oil company, Tillerson was an expert at diplomacy; specifically, how to advance the interests of his own fabulously wealthy oil company and himself, no matter the consequences for American foreign policy toward Russia.

Russia has vast oil resources, and Exxon is one of the world's largest oil companies. Getting at that oil is a critical priority for Exxon—such a high priority, in fact, that when it came time to pick a new CEO, Exxon chose Tillerson, who had spent years managing the company's Russia efforts. This isn't just a passing coincidence. Tillerson has worked closely with Putin's senior lieutenants, and, in 2013, Tillerson received the highest honor that the Kremlin gives to foreigners.

Tillerson's Russia projects ran into trouble the following year, however, because after Russia invaded Ukraine and started illegally annexing territory, Europe and the United States slapped sanctions on Russia. Those sanctions made life more difficult for Exxon, so Tillerson ignored them. He forged ahead despite the sanctions, signing more agreements with Russia, and then he used his army of well-funded lobbyists to undermine our sanctions with Russia.

When confronted with the facts about this in his confirmation hearing, Tillerson first pretended that he didn't know if the company had lobbied at all. And then later, he said: Well, the company simply participated in discussions with lawmakers without actually taking a position.

He is saying that they paid their lobbyists to show up and just talk generally, not to advance what the company wanted. You know, when you hear something that lame, you wonder just how dumb he thinks we are.

Mr. Tillerson has argued that in his job at Exxon he was advocating for the interests of his giant oil company. And he understands that being Secretary of State is a different job.

Really? At his hearing, Tillerson lamented that when sanctions are imposed, ''by their design, [they] are going to harm American businesses''—as though the principal question the Secretary of State should be asking when deciding whether to hold Russia accountable for hacking our elections or for annexing Crimea is whether it might dent the bottom line of a powerful oil company.

And has Tillerson really separated himself from Exxon? Tillerson is receiving a massive $180 million golden parachute for becoming Secretary of State—$180 million. It is a special payout that he wouldn't get if he were taking some other job. He is getting it only because he is coming to work for the government.

I have opposed these parachutes for many years now, and many of us have worked on legislation to make them criminally illegal—many of us. I have opposed nominees in my own party over them because if your employer offered you $180 million to go to work for the government, that looks an awful lot like a bribe for future services. This kind of payment raises questions about whether you work for the government, for a multinational oil company, or for both at the same time. America deserves a Secretary of State who works for the American people, period.

Will Tillerson help Exxon while he is in office? Well, the law requires him to recuse himself from any matters involving this company for how long? For just 1 year.

Common sense requires Tillerson, who, again, is receiving a $180 million special payment from the company where he has worked his entire adult life—common sense requires him to recuse himself from all matters involving Exxon for the entirety of his time in government. But when pressed by my Massachusetts colleague, Senator MARKEY, Tillerson flatly refused to do it.

Mr. Tillerson's views, experiences, relationships, and compromising arrangements with Russia aren't my only problem with this nomination, not by a long shot.

Mr. Tillerson's company has spent years lying about climate change. In Massachusetts, we have laws about consumer fraud: telling people lies about your product, lies that could make a difference about whether or not customers want to buy it. The Massachusetts attorney general, Maura Healy, has been investigating whether Exxon deliberately misled people about the impact of climate change on our economy, on our environment, on our health, and on our future.

Exxon didn't want to answer, so they bullied and stonewalled all the way. But it hadn't worked. In fact, our attorney general won a court ruling earlier this month, and Exxon is being forced to hand over 40 years' worth of internal documents that will show what the company knew about climate change, when they knew it, and whether they lied to their customers, their investors, and the American public.

Tillerson bobbed and weaved on climate change at his confirmation hearing. I wonder if he is just trying to avoid accidentally saying anything that might help Massachusetts finally find out and hold his company accountable for massive fraud. Look, that may be OK for a CEO, but that is not good enough for someone who wants to be our Nation's Secretary of State.

Climate change is a defining issue of our time, and the last thing we should do is hand our foreign policy over to someone who cares more about lining his own pockets than the survival of our planet.

I could go on at length about the glaring problems with Mr. Tillerson's nomination. It is amazing how far we have fallen, to go from John Kerry, an accomplished statesman, combat veteran, Presidential candidate, long-time public servant, and son of Massachusetts, to a billionaire with a golden parachute and no record of public service or putting American foreign policy interests ahead of his own corporate interests.

When we vote, Senators should understand this: Handing American foreign policy over to the leader of a giant oil company is not something we do in the United States; it is something Vladimir Putin would do in Russia.

Donald Trump is building his Presidency in the image of Vladimir Putin, and that is good for Russia, but it is a real problem for America.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I rise to speak in opposition to the confirmation of Rex Tillerson, the President's nominee to be Secretary of State, and I will tell you why in two words: Vladimir Putin.

Rex Tillerson's ties to Russia have been widely reported. The Senator from Massachusetts has outlined a number of them, specifically his ties to President Putin, who awarded him the Order of Friendship after signing deals with the state-owned oil company, Rosneft.

Now isn't the time to cozy up to Russia. Now is the time to stand up to Russian aggression in Crimea, in eastern Ukraine, and Syria.

Just yesterday, we heard reports of another outbreak of fighting between Ukrainian forces and Russian-backed separatists in war-torn eastern Ukraine. And all you have to do is speak to a Ukrainian and let them tell you—as I met with the former Prime Minister yesterday, and I will be meeting with a former Member of their Parliament, let them tell you what it is like to have the Russian Army march on your country and take part of it away, as they did with Crimea, and then come in under the disguise of little green men, as if they did not have ties to the Russian Army. That is going on in eastern Ukraine right now.

Our own intelligence community has told us that the Russian President personally ordered a campaign to influence the 2016 Presidential election

right here in the United States. That campaign—a mix of covert Russian operations, cyber attacks, cyber operations, and propaganda—was only the latest in a series of efforts to undermine American leadership and democracies around the world and what is coming next for the elections in Europe in the next few months.

Russia is testing us, and I am concerned that Mr. Tillerson cannot stand up to the Russian President who, I am afraid, thinks of himself as the next Russian czar.

In Mr. Tillerson's past, as Exxon's CEO, he lobbied against sanctions on Russia for invading and seizing Crimea—the very sanctions that we and our allies have put on Russia for taking over sovereign territory of another independent country. And now it is not clear, as our Nation's top diplomat, that Mr. Tillerson would fight to keep the sanctions in place, even as President Trump is now considering lifting them, despite the clear evidence of Russia's continued aggression.

During his confirmation hearing, Mr. Tillerson refused to condemn the Russian and Syrian bombings in Aleppo as war crimes, a question that was proffered to him by the Senator, my colleague from Florida, who happens to sit in the Chair right now.

I also have serious concerns that Mr. Tillerson doesn't understand the urgent need to combat climate change. You don't have to remind us about climate change in Florida. South Florida is ground zero for climate change. Miami Beach is awash at the seasonal high tides as the water flows over the curbs and over the streets, causing Miami Beach to spend hundreds of millions in taxpayer dollars to install pump stations, raise the roads, and address all kinds of flooding and saltwater intrusion. Other South Florida communities have had to move their water well locations farther west because of the intrusion of South Florida into the freshwater aquifer.

Climate change is not a problem that we are going to face some day in the future; it is a daily struggle for communities along our coasts all over America. The U.S. State Department is responsible for engaging with other countries to confront both the cause of climate change and the devastating impact of drought, sea level rise, and severe weather.

By the way, speaking of sea level rise, this Senator convened a meeting of the Senate Commerce Committee in Miami Beach a couple of years ago. We had testimony from a NASA scientist that measurements—not forecasts, not projections, but measurements—in the last 40 years of sea level rise in South Florida were 5 to 8 inches higher. That is sea level rise. That is why even the Department of Defense is concerned. Climate change has the potential to destabilize nations. How about Bangladesh? It has the potential to drastically reduce potable water supplies and result in crop loss and food shortage and to create climate refugees.

We simply cannot play fast and loose with the science that will help save our planet. The top diplomat of our country has to confront the reality of climate change today and to work on it immediately. Mr. Tillerson has not adequately laid out a plan to address that global climate crisis.

For all the reasons I have outlined, including many more, I will vote no.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROUNDS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, as the Presiding Officer well knows, the Secretary of State is one of the most important positions in the President's Cabinet. He is the Nation's chief diplomat, and he champions American values. He is the symbol in a sense, the chief voice and advocate around the world of America. The Secretary of State is in a sense our representative to the world, embodying and promoting, hopefully, the best in America to billions of people around the globe, proving to the world yet again that America is exceptional, that we are the greatest country in the history of the world, and that we have a respect for the rule of law, for human dignity and rights for all, including the right to live in a safe and free environment.

Past Secretaries of State have changed history, averted and navigated war, brokered peace, championed human rights, and fought to make the world a better place. In this time of immense uncertainty, we must demand nothing less of our next Secretary of State than that he be a great reflection and representative of the United States to the world.

The likes of Hillary Clinton, Colin Powell, Madeleine Albright, George Marshall, and Charles Evan Hughes have all held this position. To join these titans or even to aspire to their position is no small challenge. We need a candidate who will continue to embody what is right even in the face of resistance from adversaries and foes who do not admire and, in fact, seek to do harm to our way of life.

As ExxonMobil's CEO, the President's nominee, Rex Tillerson, has worked hard and successfully for his corporation. In fact, he has put that corporation's interests ahead of America's interests. That may have been his job, and I understand that was his job description, but doing that job well does not qualify him to be our Nation's chief diplomat and to assume the mantle of defending our national interests.

Having worked for four decades for this oil giant, without any government experience, I am unconvinced that Mr. Tillerson has shown he is able to reverse this oil interest mindset and put America's needs before his former employer. I do not have faith that he can rise to the paramount challenge of representing us on the world stage.

I share my colleagues' concerns. We have heard numerous of our colleagues express the same view—that his oil interests will harm the progress we have made to protect the environment and slow the impact of climate change. I say that reluctantly because I hope I am wrong. He is likely to be confirmed, but I hope my colleagues think hard and long and join me in opposing Rex Tillerson.

I am also hopeful that a number of his other stances, such as enforcing sanctions that hold our adversaries accountable—notably, Russia and Iran—will change as well. These stances have been troubling. I have little confidence that Mr. Tillerson will vigorously enforce these sanctions and even less confidence that he will guide President Trump to provide the crucial advice our demonstrably rash and ill-advised President needs.

I want to point particularly to some of the tactics ExxonMobil used in its litigation against legal challenges that were brought based on climate change information that allegedly was concealed by ExxonMobil. These tactics are deeply troubling, and I hope that maybe the toughness of ExxonMobil in those tactics will be replicated in the toughness that is brought to bear in enforcing the sanctions against Iran and Russia because he has shown a troublesome trend of opposing sanctions that have held Iran accountable—sanctions that pushed Iran to the table in negotiating the Iran nuclear agreement, which has made our world a safer place.

Across decades and administrations, the Senate reached an overwhelmingly bipartisan consensus that the Iran regime should be aggressively sanctioned for its global missile program, state sponsorship of terrorism, and gross human rights violations. ExxonMobil directly and together with other global oil companies and through the financing of third-party advocacy organizations has persistently tried to stop Congress from passing sanctions legislation.

ExxonMobil has been a board member of USA Engage since its founding in 1997 and from 2003 to 2007 held the chairmanship of that organization. For two decades it has actively lobbied Congress to oppose Iran-related sanctions bills, including last year for at least four such pieces of legislation.

ExxonMobil has worked to prevent the authorization and extension of the Iran sanctions act, which I am proud to say was renewed for another 10 years by Congress, becoming law just a few weeks ago, and I was proud to support it. Yet, during Mr. Tillerson's hearing, he denied that ExxonMobil ever lobbied against Iran's sanctions, in the face of facts to the contrary. As Ronald Reagan said, ''Facts are stubborn things.''

Foreign policy experts and military leadership have explicitly identified Russia as a growing threat and a violator of international law. Many of us in this body—in fact, I would say the majority—have recognized that fact. Yet Mr. Tillerson does not seem to treat Russia with the same gravity.

We need a Secretary of State who is going to work with our NATO allies and stand up for us and not give Putin a pass. We are all aware of Mr. Tillerson's inappropriate stance toward relations with a country responsible for assaults on world order through cyber attacks, illegal land grabs, and war crimes. We are the victims of a cyber attack by Russia, an act of cyber war. The Secretary of State must be somebody who regards that kind of attack as intolerable and unacceptable.

Mr. Tillerson's affinity for Russia is alarming because he adds to the growing list of Putin admirers in this administration, and that list unfortunately includes the President himself and National Security Advisor Michael Flynn.

Mr. Tillerson's opposition to sanctions imposed on Russia for its illegal annexation of Crimea in 2014 was not the result of national security concerns but, rather, because ExxonMobil stood to make millions, even billions of dollars from the business deal that corporation had recently made with Russia to develop its oil and gas interests. What is good for ExxonMobil is not necessarily good for the United States of America. These sanctions were put in place because Russia's invasion of Ukraine was unacceptable and now has led to at least 10,000 deaths, 20,000 wounded, and 2 million people displaced.

These are hard numbers and hard facts—the result of Russian aggression that must be countered.

As a member of the Armed Services Committee, I have fought to include and pass the NDAA's robust funding for Ukrainian assistance. I am proud to say that this initiative was successful. I also successfully urged a provision that terminated U.S. contracts with the Russian arms export agency.

Mr. Tillerson made it clear during his nomination hearing that his stance was unchanged. He could not admit that Vladimir Putin is a war criminal, despite these deaths and the torture involved in this aggression and other similar acts, or to say that the sanctions against Putin's Russia are necessary and appropriate. His views are inconsistent with the interests of the United States of America.

Given his troubling trend of dodging questions during his testimony, I cannot confidently say that he will follow the clear direction of Congress concerning sanctions policy. I will say bluntly and frankly to my colleagues that my particular concern is that sanctions laws contain waivers. Those waivers are provided to the President for the rare requirement that such sanctions may be waived when it is in the national interest or for national security. This exception must be used exceedingly sparingly and judiciously. Sanctions without enforcement are worse than no sanctions at all. They are meaningless, and they raise false expectations. My fear is that under Mr. Tillerson, if he is advising President Trump, those exemptions and exceptions will swallow the rule.

Talking about rules, if confirmed, Mr. Tillerson will be responsible for executing President Trump's extremely misguided policy expanding the global gag rule, which prevents foreign aid from being provided to global health programs that discuss or provide abortion services. The result will be to obstruct programs that cover everything from HIV prevention to maternal and child care and epidemic disease responses, putting lives at risk. This is just the opposite of what we ought to be doing. It makes the world less safe, as does this weekend's Executive order that bans refugees and Muslims. We need someone willing and able to voice resistance and opposition to policies that flagrantly fly in the face of everything we value—our American values. We need a Secretary of State ready to stand up for the most vulnerable people and speak truth to power, even when that power is the President of the United States. The fact is, sadly, that Mr. Tillerson has never taken strong stances on these issues, leaving us guessing as to what he will do when and if he is in office.

I cannot support anyone to be Secretary of State who fails to condemn the suspension of our Refugee Resettlement Program directly under his purview. When we target refugees, we target people who are victims of the same oppressors and tyrants and murderers that we call enemies. Refugees are not our enemies. Many are fleeing the murderous Syrian regime and ISIL, which are our enemies. We are at war with ISIL, and we must win that war. We are disadvantaged by a policy that excludes refugees on the basis of religion, because we alienate our allies with the sources of intelligence and troops on the ground, and we lead to the misimpression—and it is a misimpression—that we are at war against Islam or our Muslim neighbors when, in fact, our enemy is violent extremists.

These refugees and immigrants see America as a beacon of hope, but they are now receiving the message that, whoever they are and however strong their claim to come here is, their religion will bar them, their religion denies them the right to come to this country, their religion will ban them.

Mr. Tillerson has never denounced this strategy when it does so much to damage our international credibility, our values at home, and our Constitution. Four judges have stayed the President's Executive orders. My respectful opinion is that the President's orders are, in fact, illegal.

The question is this: Will he defend career diplomats who have spoken out against these policies? Will he take a stand himself against them? Will he stand up for American values?

One story in particular struck me because it involves my own State of Connecticut. Last Saturday, a Syrian refugee who settled in Milford, CT, 2 years ago, Fadi Kassar, anxiously awaited the arrival of his wife and two daughters, ages 5 and 8. He has not seen them since resettling in this country. His family was turned away before they could board a flight to the United States. They were told they were not going to be allowed to enter this country following the President's refugee ban. Despite having been granted refugee status—asylum—three days before the refugee ban, they would no longer be united with Mr. Kassar in the United States.

I am working—and I hope the Secretary of Homeland Security may be listening, if not at this moment then at some point in the future, to my entreaty that he do the right thing, that he make their entry possible. They have gone through all of the necessary screenings, submitted all of the necessary forms. Yet, under the President's Executive action, they are denied refuge in the United States based only on their nationality and their religion.

Mr. Kassar's family is now back in Jordan without luggage, without clothes, and without the new home they were so close to having. My office has offered assistance to Mr. Kassar's lawyers, and we are working to help in any way we can.

The United States—Connecticut in particular—has a proud moral tradition and heritage of aiding refugees who need our help when their own homelands are in turmoil. President Trump's egregious acts contravene our values, contradict our Constitution, and should be rescinded immediately.

Mr. Tillerson, join me in urging President Trump to rip up this order. It is the only solution.

I am not confident, until I hear him say so, that he is ready to be the leader we need in the Department of State to ensure that America's values of acceptance and assistance hold strong in an administration that directly challenges these most cherished traditions and values.

Our Secretary of State must be clear-eyed about threats facing our Nation, both from adversaries abroad and others who would do us harm inside our borders. I regretfully conclude that Mr. Tillerson has failed to demonstrate that ability to do so, and I urge my colleagues to join me in opposing his nomination.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, American history has been shaped by U.S. Secretaries of State. Secretary Dean Acheson guided the United States through the Cold War. Secretary Madeleine Albright proved that diplomacy does not depend on gender and that protecting refugees and human rights are core American principles. Secretary Henry Kissinger laid the groundwork for peace between Egypt and Israel. And forgive me for using such a recent example, but Secretary John Kerry helped to bring the international community together to tackle climate change.

As our Nation's top diplomat, the Secretary of State is the highest ranking cabinet member and the President's top adviser on U.S. foreign policy.

The Secretary balances relationships with some 180 countries and is responsible for tens of thousands of Americans working at more than 250 posts around the world.

In other words, it takes a remarkable knowledge base and skill set to be Secretary of State, particularly as the United States takes on a complex and complicated set of issues. At the top of the list is climate change. The global changes we have seen in the climate are affecting almost every part of the world, from droughts in Sub-Saharan Africa to rising sea levels in parts of Asia.

We have also not seen this level of refugees and migrants since after World War II. The Rohingya, Syrians, Afghans, Guatemalans, and many others are fleeing war, violence, persecution, and instability. Globalization and technology have disrupted economies, leaving governments, companies, and workers trying to figure out how to keep up with the times without being left behind. Terrorism and violent extremism haunt parts of the globe, from the Middle East to Europe, and to our own borders.

The Secretary of State has to take on all of these challenges and do it in a way that advances U.S. interests and values. After reviewing his record and his testimony before the Senate, I am not satisfied that Rex Tillerson is the right person to lead the State Department. On each of these criteria—views, knowledge base, and skills—I have concerns about his nomination at this point in the process.

First, I am not satisfied with Mr. Tillerson's views. There has been a clear consensus among both parties on the foundation of U.S. foreign policy. Throughout the confirmation process, however, Mr. Tillerson indicated that his views did not necessarily align with that consensus. During discussions on international human rights, the hearing record shows that Mr. Tillerson was vague about oppressive governments, extrajudicial killings, and the bombing of hospitals. He demurred when given the opportunity to rule out a Muslim registry, a concept that is anathema to American values, and yet this administration is dangerously close to implementing one.

Perhaps most concerning were Mr. Tillerson's views on Russia. I don't need to be the umpteenth person to list the many, many concerns we have about a country that is not America's ally. For decades, there has been bipartisan consensus about U.S. relations with Russia, and I am uncomfortable with confirming a Secretary of State who does not share that bipartisan view.

Secondly, I am not satisfied that Mr. Tillerson has the knowledge base to lead U.S. diplomacy. His vision for the State Department seemed to confuse the roles of the Department of State and the Department of Defense. During his confirmation hearing, Mr. Tillerson responded to a question on the South China Sea, but his answer focused on military solutions instead of the long list of diplomatic options which we should first explore.

That is not to say a Secretary of State can't recommend military solutions. There is certainly a long history of the State Department doing just that, but it should always be as a last resort. It always comes after a long pursuit of peace through diplomacy.

Finally, I am not satisfied that Mr. Tillerson will be able to translate the considerable skills he has from ExxonMobil to the State Department. His long career at Exxon is certainly impressive, but it is the only international job on his resume, and let's be clear, the company's record does not at all align with U.S. foreign policy, from accusations related to human rights abuses to Exxon's business operations in countries that are not friendly to the United States. I am not arguing that this makes Mr. Tillerson a bad person. As the CEO of a big company, he had his own imperatives and his own obligations, and I understand and respect that. But it is not enough to say that I used to care only about ExxonMobil's interests, but now I only care about the U.S. interests.

The next leader of the State Department will have to argue for our values and our priorities with friends and adversaries alike. He or she will need to balance business interests with national security and with American values. I approach this nomination process with an open mind, but Mr. Tillerson's confirmation hearing left me with too many doubts about his views, his knowledge set, and his abilities. I will be voting no on his nomination.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, I rise to express my opposition to the nomination of Rex Tillerson as Secretary of State. The position of Secretary of State was one of the original four Cabinet positions created by President George Washington.

Even after we declared, fought for, and won our independence as a new country, our Founders knew that this world is interconnected. They understood that what we needed was to engage with other countries and to manage our affairs all across the world.

Our first Secretary of State, Thomas Jefferson, had previously been our Minister to France, our closest ally at the time of our Nation's founding.

Today, the role of Secretary of State is as important as ever. We need a Secretary who will reassure our allies, project strength and competence around the world, and push back against the President's worst impulses.

Having reviewed his qualifications and testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, I am unfortunately convinced that Mr. Tillerson is not the right person to lead the State Department and to represent the United States abroad.

Mr. Tillerson has spent decades at ExxonMobil, where he rose through the ranks from an engineer to chairman and CEO. We should value hard work and success in the private sector, but we should also ask what the President's nominees were working toward. Mr. Tillerson's success at Exxon in large part can be attributed to deals he struck and connections he made with Russian plutocrats and government officials, including Vladimir Putin.

Over the years, Mr. Tillerson's views toward Vladimir Putin have been, in a word, flexible. Mr. Tillerson has always put Exxon first, cozying up to Putin's authoritarian regime when it suited his own business interests.

In 2008, he spoke out against the Russian Government's disrespect for the rule of law and its judicial system, but in 2011, after reaching a $500 billion deal with the Russian state-owned oil company, he changed his views.

Under Vladimir Putin, the Russian Government silences dissent. They murder political rivals and journalists. Many of Putin's political opponents have been poisoned or shot. Since 2000, at least 34 journalists have been murdered in Russia, many by government or military officials.

Mr. Tillerson was awarded Russia's Order of Friendship by Putin in 2012—one of the highest honors Russia conveys to foreigners.

When Congress was working in a bipartisan manner to enact sanctions on Russia for its illegal annexation of Crimea in 2014, ExxonMobil was lobbying against the bill under the leadership of Mr. Tillerson.

During his confirmation hearing, his answers demonstrated either a lack of understanding or a willful ignorance of the destabilizing role Russia plays around the world.

Last year I traveled to Ukraine and Estonia, countries that are on the frontline of Russian aggression. They are genuinely concerned about President Trump's desire to embrace Russia. I heard firsthand how important the support and presence of the United States is to our allies in the Baltics.

In recent years, Russia's belligerence has only grown. Russia has conducted a cyber attack against Estonia, seized territory in Georgia, kidnapped an Estonian border guard, and illegally annexed Crimea. Russian military patrols have approached NATO member territory and have come recklessly close to U.S. military vessels. These irresponsible actions can have severe, dangerous consequences.

What should be most disturbing to any American is that last year Russia interfered with our election to undermine public faith in our democratic process. The intelligence community reported that Vladimir Putin himself ordered the interference—a significant escalation of Russian attempts to sow chaos in the West.

I recognize the President's right to choose his appointments to the Cabinet, but, as the Senate provides its advice and consent, there are still too many unanswered questions for me to support this nomination. We still have not seen President Trump's tax returns, breaking a 40-year tradition adhered to by nominees of both parties. This lack of transparency means that we don't know about the Trump family's possible past and current business ties to Russia. What message do we send to our allies if the Secretary of State and potentially even the President have a history of significant business dealings with a corrupt regime? How will this impact our moral authority as a country to take action against corruption worldwide?

The Secretary of State is the U.S. Ambassador to the world. It is essential that the Secretary is someone who can provide unquestioned leadership and represent American values. There must be no question that the Secretary of State is acting in the best interest of the United States and is willing to take strong action to advance our interests. He must put the American people first and not his former shareholders and friends in the Exxon boardroom.

I am concerned that Mr. Tillerson will prematurely lift the sanctions that have been put in place against Russia. Sanctions are not meant to be permanent, but they should never be removed until they have achieved their purpose.

When our Secretary of State looks at a map of the Baltic region, we need a statesman who sees allies that contribute to NATO, not a new opportunity for offshore drilling.

The Senate must ensure that we are a moderating voice and are approving moderating voices in the Trump administration.

I supported the nominations of Secretary Mattis to lead the Department of Defense, Secretary Kelly to lead the Department of Homeland Security, and Ambassador Haley to serve as U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, and I supported these individuals because I believe they will serve as a positive influence against the worst instincts and erratic tendencies of President Trump and his political advisers.

America must stand by its allies and serve as a shining example of democracy. I cannot support a Secretary of State nominee if there is any doubt as to whether they will be a strong, independent voice within the Trump administration. The events of the past week have made the need for such leadership abundantly clear. That is why I will vote against the nomination of Rex Tillerson for Secretary of State, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I rise today to talk about the Secretary of State nominee, as well as President Trump's recent Executive order on refugees. I believe we need a Secretary of State who will clearly stand up to Russian aggression. I am concerned about the nominee's past statements and his relationship with Russia, and I am not going to be voting for him. If he is confirmed, I hope we can work with him. Some of his newer statements have been positive on taking that on, as well as some of the many issues confronting our world.

The reason I am so focused on Russia is, first of all, we have a significant Ukrainian population in Minnesota. We are very proud of them. I was recently in Ukraine, Georgia, as well as Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia with Senators MCCAIN and GRAHAM. I saw firsthand the meaning of Russian aggression on a daily basis. In these countries, the cyber attack is not a new movie. They have seen it many times before. It is a rerun. In Estonia, in 2007, they had the audacity to move a bronze statue of a Russian fighter from a town square where there had been protests to a cemetery. What did they get for that? They got their Internet service shut down. That is what they do. In Lithuania, they decided something you could imagine happening in our own country. On the 25th anniversary of the celebration of the independence of their country, they invited, as an act of solidarity, the members of the Ukrainian Parliament—who are in exile in Kiev from Crimea, which has been illegally annexed by Russia. They invited them to meet with them and celebrate in Lithuania. What happened to them; again, cyber attacks on members of the Parliament.

This is not just about one political candidate. We saw in the last election in the United States—where now 17 intelligence agencies have collectively said there was an infringement—that there was an attempt to influence our elections in America. It is not just about one candidate. It is not just about one political party, as Senator RUBIO so eloquently noted. It is not even just about one country. It is an assault on democracies across the world.

I think we need to take this very seriously, not just from an intelligence standpoint but also from a foreign relations standpoint. That is why I introduced the bill, with Senators FEINSTEIN, CARDIN, LEAHY, and CARPER, to create an independent and nonpartisan commission to uncover all the facts. It is also why we have an expanded sanctions bill that is bipartisan, led by Senators MCCAIN and CARDIN.

What we do matters. I think you see that, not only with regard to our relations with those countries in the Baltics but also with what we have seen in just the past few days because of this Executive order. I hope that having a Secretary of State in place would help, as well as more involvement from other agencies so something like this will never happen again.

TRAVEL BAN

As a former prosecutor, I have long advocated for thorough vetting. I have supported strong national security measures. I believe the No. 1 purpose of government is to keep people safe, but I don't believe that is what this Executive order did. In fact, it created chaos. I am on the bill to reverse and rescind this order. I know they have taken some steps to respond to all of the problems we have seen in every State in this Nation, but what really happened was—with the stroke of a pen—the administration excluded entire populations from seeking refuge.

I do think it is a bit forgotten that it is not just the seven or so countries that were identified by the administration. The refugee program has been stopped all over the world, and on Sunday I met with, along with Senator FRANKEN, a number of our refugee populations. To give you some background, we have the biggest population of Somalis in the Nation in Minnesota. We are proud of our Somali population. We have the second biggest Hmong population. We have the biggest Liberian population. We have the biggest Oromo population. We have a number of people from Burma. These are all legal workers. They come over as refugees. They are legal when they come over. Many of them get green cards. Many of them go on to become citizens. We have people who are on work visas, people who are on student visas.

The faces I saw and the people I met, these were their stories: an engineer from 3M who doesn't think he can go back to visit his father; a former marine from one of the affected countries who doesn't believe his brother can

now come and visit him; two little girls in bright pink jackets who stood with us because they had waited for years for the arrival of their sister; the mother, a Somali woman within a refugee camp in Uganda was pregnant. She finally had gotten her papers to be able to come to America, get out of the refugee camp with her two children, but because she was pregnant when the papers came through, she wasn't able to apply for what would be her third child. The baby was born and she had a ''Sophie's Choice.'' Was she going to stay in the refugee camp with the two older girls or was she going to bring them to safety in America, in Minnesota, with so many friends and relatives whom she knew, and then have to leave the baby behind?

She decided to leave the baby with friends at that refugee camp, and for 4 years she worked to get that baby to Minnesota. She got it done, and that baby was supposed to get on a plane and come to Minnesota this week, courtesy of Lutheran Social Services in Minnesota that had worked with the family. Right now, the latest news our office has had, that is not happening. Why? This 4-year-old is not a green card holder. This 4-year-old is a refugee, a refugee who is coming to finally be with her mom and her sisters. To explain to what looked like about an 8-year-old and a 10-year-old why this is happening is really—there are no words to explain why it is happening.

I truly appreciate it that some of our Republican colleagues joined the chorus to say the vetting rule had not been vetted. Many of them pointed to the implementation problems with this rule, and others, such as Senator MCCAIN and Senator GRAHAM, also talked about the fact that this was simply a self-inflicted wound in our fight against terrorism. We heard much of that.

I know, from my colleagues, what this means to moderates whom we are attempting to work with in these Muslim nations as well as our allies all across the world.

I leave you with this. This is about our economy. I remind our friends, and I know—I see Senator RUBIO here who understands the economic value of immigration—that over 70 of the Fortune 500 companies in America are led by immigrants, including in my State, 3M, Best Buy, Mosaic; that 25 percent of our U.S. Nobel laureates were born in other countries; that at one point I had the figure that 200 of our Fortune 500 companies were started by immigrants or kids of immigrants. That is our economy.

There is the moral argument, best reflected in the story I just told of those two little girls in their bright pink jackets in the middle of a Minnesota winter, but then there is also the security argument. So we plead with the administration to reverse this rule, to rescind it.

Certainly, we can work on more vetting measures. As we know, the refugee vetting already takes 18 months, 2 years, 3 years, more work with biometrics, but there is no reason to do this on the backs of people who have followed the rules, who have followed the regulations and have done what is right and simply want to be part of our country or, in most cases, are already part of our country.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, we are here in the Senate debating what I believe is the most important Cabinet position that the President has to nominate, the Secretary of State. It comes at an important point in American foreign policy history. There is so much uncertainty and debate about our role in the world these days. A lot of our allies have questions. Our adversaries are obviously watching very closely.

I hope that all of us—and I mean the Executive Branch to the Congress—recognize that as people around the world are watching what is happening on television, they see an America that is deeply divided and fractured right now. I think this needs to be a moment of restraint, both in action and in words. As we work through our differences, these vibrant debates are important to our system of government.

It is one of the reasons that led me to ultimately support the nomination of Mr. Tillerson. I believe that despite some of the concerns that I had and have about his answers to some of my questions, it is vitally important for this country to have a Secretary of State in place at this moment.

I have never had any doubts about Mr. Tillerson's qualifications, his intellect, his background. I have had some concerns about his answers to some very important questions, at least important questions to me, and what I hope will be important questions for a lot of Americans. That is what I wanted to come to the floor and speak about in conjunction with this nomination, and that is the issue of human rights.

To me, human rights is critical both to our national identity, but it is also important to our national Security. In America today, we have, as we have done now for the past few centuries, contentious debates all the time about policies and about what kind of country we want to be. If you have watched the proceedings on the Senate floor or in committee over the last few days, you have seen a lot of that.

Even as we debate these things among ourselves, and even as the American political rhetoric has become so incredibly heated—and we will have more to say about that in the weeks to come—I don't know of any other time where we have gotten to the point that when we disagree with people, we don't just disagree with them, we question their motives and their character.

In fact, it is almost automatic today in American political discourse. You don't just disagree with someone; you immediately jump to why they are a bad person. In the months and weeks to come, I will have examples about why that is a bad idea. But as we are having those contentious debates, I hope that we never take for granted, sometimes as I think we do, that we live in a place where losing an election, losing a vote, losing on an issue, does not mean you end up in jail or disappear or are executed because that is the kind of stuff that happens in other places all over the world, even now, in the 17th year of the 21st century.

As we have seen in recent weeks, this political dissent is part of our way of life. It has come to define our country. We protect it in our Constitution. It has made us an example to the rest of the world. I was reminded of this just a couple of months ago, right here in Washington, DC. After our most recent election, I had to a chance to visit with my opponent, Congressman Patrick Murphy of Florida.

When I was finished with that meeting, I walked into another meeting. That other meeting was with a Cuban dissident. He is an opponent of the Castro regime, an individual who risks his life in the pursuit of freedom, an individual who does not just get bad blog posts or a bad article or a bad editorial or a nasty campaign ad run against him. No, this is an individual who routinely gets thrown into jail, and he has the scars to prove the beatings he has taken from the Cuban state police over the last few years.

I was a little bit late to this meeting. I apologized to him. I explained that I had just been in a meeting with my opposing candidate, the man I had just ran against in the election. I could see the look on his face. It kind of struck him. He immediately, I believe, appreciated what that represented. He said—and I am paraphrasing: That is what we want for our country too.

This is the essence of what has been America's example to the world, the essence of how our principles and our values have inspired others to seek their own God-given rights and how we have a moral duty to support—in our words, in our foreign policy, and in our actions—those aspirations of people all over the world.

In a way, dictators and tyrants have never had it worse than they do today because we live in this high-tech information age. We often get to see the images of repression within minutes of it happening, if not in real time. We can monitor it; we can catalog the status of human rights in every city, in every country, on every continent.

But as Americans, we are called to do much more than observe and record these atrocities for history. With this knowledge, it is our duty to act and to do what we can to support the people demanding their rights. We must hold those who are violating their rights accountable. I believe this is more important than ever because of the totalitarian resurgence underway in many parts of the world as democracy in every continent is under attack.

Even as I stand here now before you, there are political prisoners on this planet. They languish in Chinese prisons. Political dissidents and journalists are being silenced and targeted for murder in Russia. Those who seek democracy in Syria are being massacred. The United States has a unique responsibility to highlight, to expose, and to combat these grave human rights abuses around the world.

Historically, we have been a compassionate country that has welcomed people seeking refuge from repression and atrocities. That is why I understand. I understand the concerns about refugees from certain failed states or governments who sponsor terror, places where very often it is difficult if not impossible to verify the identities of people seeking to come to the United States.

I say this to people all the time. When you talk about changes in policies, there is a legitimate argument and a credible argument to be made that there are people we cannot allow into the United States, not because we don't have compassion for their plight but because we have no way of knowing who they are. You can't just call 1–800–Syria and get background information about the individuals who are trying to enter the United States. We know for a fact that there are terrorist groups around the world that have commandeered passport-making machinery and are producing passports that are real in every way, except for the identity of the person in the picture.

So I do believe that we need to have very careful and rigorous screening, more than ever before, of all people entering the United States but especially those who are coming from areas that we know do not have reliable background information available to us.

But at the same time, I cannot help, and I think we should not help, but to be worried about the impact of a 120-day moratorium on every single refugee from anywhere on the planet, refugees from places like the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ukraine, Colombia, El Salvador, Vietnam, Burma, and, of course, Cuba, just to name a few places. These are among the most vulnerable people on the planet, living often in the most difficult and dangerous circumstances imaginable.

I remind everyone: This is a moratorium; it is not a permanent policy. I understand that there are provisions available for waivers, and I find that to be promising.

But I also want to everyone to understand that 120 days, for someone who is trying to get out of a place where they might be killed, may be 1 day too many for some of them. I hope that that does not turn out to be the case. That is why I urge the administration, that is why I urge soon-to-be Secretary Tillerson, to exercise great caution in making sure that dissidents and others are not being turned away.

By the way, I am pleased to see that the administration is heeding some of these calls already, early this week. We must understand that when tyrants and dictators oppress their people, we are all paying a price. It is happening all over the world. Vladimir Putin continues to institute Draconian laws targeting the freedom of expression and assembly.

Earlier this year, my office and I highlighted the case of human rights activist Ildar Dadin, who was the first person imprisoned under Russia's new criminal provision that bars any form of public dissent.

In China, rights lawyers are tortured. Labor activists are arrested. Tibetan Buddhist nuns are expelled from their homes, and churches are being demolished. Just earlier today, I met the wives of two Chinese rights advocates, who both pleaded for the United States to champion their husbands' cases in the hope that they can see their husbands again.

In Iran, dissent, freedom of expression, and freedom of press is nonexistent, heavily restricted. Many continue to be jailed for simply exercising their fundamental human rights. The Government of Iran targets religious minorities, often jailing Christian pastors and those who gather to worship together in private homes. In Syria, one of the worst humanitarian catastrophes in modern history, the Assad regime, with the assistance of Vladimir Putin and the Iranian Government and military, is committing war crimes against innocent women, children, men, and civilians in Aleppo and beyond.

In Iraq, we have seen ancient Christian and Yezidi communities on the verge of extinction, all because of ISIS.

In Venezuela, the Maduro regime continues to imprison political opponents while the country descends further and further into economic chaos and has now become on the verge of a total humanitarian catastrophe in the Western Hemisphere. In one of the richest countries on the planet, we are at the point of people literally starving to death.

Saudi Arabia is an ally of the United States on many key geopolitical issues, and we will have to continue working with them on those shared causes. But they also remain one of the most censored countries in the world. The government has intensified its repression of activists and journalists. In Saudi Arabia, women remain under the male guardianship system. They are banned from even driving.

Globally, assaults against press freedom around the world are a major problem because, ultimately, the cause and champions of human rights need information to expose abuses and call for reforms. Without independent journalists, without information, tyrants and dictatorships can get away with so much more.

According to the Committee to Protect Journalists, in 2016, 48 journalists were killed and 259 journalists were jailed worldwide. In 2016, Turkey, a NATO member, again, an important geopolitical alliance of the United States, but, sadly, they became the leading jailer of journalists on the planet, following a widespread crackdown on the press.

The abuses and threats to human rights around the world are many. We could be here all night trying to break Senator Strom Thurmond's filibuster record, going country by country, case by case, and it still would not be enough time to do justice to all of the heroic figures around the world. But it is my hope that more of my colleagues will join me in doing so over time because it is important. Our voices here in the Senate give people all over the world confidence and motivation to stay the course.

As famed Soviet dissident Natan Sharansky has said of himself and fellow prisoners of conscience in the Soviet Union: ''We never could survive even one day in the Soviet Union if our struggle was not the struggle of the free world.''

In essence, what he is saying is that these tyrants and these dictators, when they jail these people, the first thing they tell them is that no one even remembers you anymore. No one talks about you anymore. You have been abandoned.

Today, I want to highlight one particular human rights case as part of the weekly social media campaign my office has been doing for the last couple of years called Expression NOT Oppression.

Here you see a picture of a gentleman named Dr. Eduardo Cardet of Cuba. He is a medical doctor and the national coordinator of the Christian Liberation Movement, a group which advocates for democracy and freedom.

Cardet assumed the role of national coordinator after the suspicious death of Castro critic Oswaldo Paya Sardinas. After allegedly stating in an interview that Fidel Castro was hated by the Cuban people—that is what he said—he was savagely beaten in front of his two young children and wife by Cuban state security on November 30 of last year. He has been in jail ever since.

He has been charged—get this. He has been charged with challenging authority. He faces a 3- to 5-year prison sentence. Let me repeat that. He is officially charged with challenging authority. That is a crime in Cuba. His father has written to Pope Francis begging for his intervention. By the way, this is a reminder that even though Fidel Castro is dead, his authoritarian system still lives on.

Dr. Cardet's persecution and the overall increase in repression in Cuba over the past 2 years is a reminder that the policy of rewarding the Castro regime, under the guise of engagement, with cash and concessions has not worked and must be strategically reversed here in the coming months.

So I come here today in the hope that our President and our State Department and especially Mr. Tillerson,

in whom I am entrusting my vote for confirmation, and all Members of Congress, for that matter, will add their voices in solidarity with Dr. Cardet, with all the Cuban people yearning to be free, and with those around the world who look to our Nation—to America—for leadership and often for nothing more than for us to lend our voice to their cause.

As we move forward here with our Nation's work, we must continue to highlight these cases and to raise awareness of them. We must never forget that there are people all over the world who are challenging authority because they want a better life for themselves and their families. They should be able to challenge authority peacefully and then go home to their families, not be thrown in jail, tortured, or killed.

Today I ask all to pray for those who are victims of their own government. I pray for the release of prisoners of conscience and their families, and I pray that our own country at this moment of extraordinary division on so many key issues can reaffirm its founding principles in calling for the sacred right of every man, woman, and child to be free.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, today the Senate is considering the nomination of Rex Tillerson to be Secretary of State. Mr. Tillerson is an intelligent, hard-working, and successful businessman. He is also, in my view, the wrong choice to be our Nation's top diplomat.

To effectively confront the many challenges our country faces in an increasingly globalized and volatile world, we need a Secretary of State who, with credibility and conviction, can clearly and effectively articulate our interests and values and who has experience advocating for them abroad.

We need someone who will work with the international community to combat climate change, bring to justice war criminals like Bashar al-Assad, and stand up to corrupt, abusive regimes that violate international humanitarian law and territorial integrity as Russia has done in Syria and Ukraine.

We need someone who will advocate for fundamental human rights and democratic values when they are threatened by friend or foe.

I am unconvinced that Mr. Tillerson is that person.

As an accomplished businessman, Mr. Tillerson's lone qualification for Secretary of State seems to be his success in tirelessly circumnavigating the globe to negotiate oil deals. There is no doubt he has helped ExxonMobil expand its business and made a lot of money doing so. But contrary to the view being promoted by the Trump administration, running a for-profit business is fundamentally different from running a large Federal agency.

As the CEO of ExxonMobil, Mr. Tillerson worked closely with corrupt autocrats like Vladimir Putin who were actively undermining U.S. interests and acting in ways that were counter to our values. In doing so, Mr. Tillerson served his shareholders, but he disregarded the national interests of the United States.

Unlike some in this body, I believe we should have relations with governments we disagree with. But I also believe that, in doing so, we must act in accordance with our principles and values. And I don't believe that being the CEO of one of this country's wealthiest companies entitles you to ignore those values for the sake of making money.

Mr. Tillerson's confirmation hearing provided him the opportunity to reconcile his track record of a lifetime in the oil business with the responsibilities he would have as Secretary of State.

In his testimony, he stated that ''American leadership requires moral clarity.'' I agree. But he was challenged by Senators RUBIO, MURPHY, and others who observed that despite this statement, Mr. Tillerson was unwilling to label the relentless bombardment and destruction of Aleppo by Russian forces as a war crime or the extrajudicial killings of thousands of civilians in the Philippines as a blatant violation of human rights, to cite only two examples of well-documented cases of atrocities he refused to recognize as such.

I worry that Mr. Tillerson will too often be inclined to subjugate fundamental human rights to what he perceives as overriding economic or security concerns. There is nothing in the record to suggest that he recognizes that the protection of human rights is itself a national security imperative or that he would differ from the President on these issues that have become even more important since January 20.

We also have no idea what Mr. Tillerson thinks about the President's misguided, discriminatory, and probably illegal decision to ban entry to the United States of all citizens of Syria and half a dozen other Muslim countries because he has been conspicuously silent, even though the State Department will have a key role in enforcing it. Our diplomats posted overseas will bear the brunt of the retaliatory actions by outraged governments in countries targeted by this arbitrary and self-defeating Executive order.

Nor do we know what he thinks of the President's draft Executive order that signals a drastic reduction in our support for and influence in the United Nations. Will the President consult with Mr. Tillerson before issuing that order? Does Mr. Tillerson think it is a smart way to protect our interests and reassure our allies? We don't know.

ExxonMobil, while Mr. Tillerson was CEO, lobbied to overturn section 1504 of the Dodd-Frank legislation which is designed to stop the illicit flow of revenues from oil and gas extraction to corrupt governments. Senator Lugar, who played a key role in that bipartisan legislation, said at the time that stopping such corruption is a national security and economic priority for the United States. Does Mr. Tillerson think that shrouding in secrecy corruption involving hundreds of billions of dollars by governments who steal from their own impoverished people is in our national interest? We don't know because he doesn't say.

My other abiding concern with this nominee is that we are being asked to confirm the head of the world's largest oil company to be the country's top diplomat, at a time when I believe the most challenging issue we and the world face is climate change resulting from the combustion of fossil fuels.

Uniting the world to combat climate change will not be possible without unprecedented U.S. leadership. Leadership requires credibility, and on this issue, Mr. Tillerson has next to none. He has devoted his professional career—and become a billionaire in the process—to extracting and selling as much oil as possible. If, at his confirmation hearing, Mr. Tillerson had said that he recognizes the causal connection between burning fossil fuels and climate change, that he understands the grave threat it poses, and that he is determined to use the position of Secretary of State to build on the record of the Obama administration to combat climate change, I might feel differently. But he said nothing remotely like that.

To the contrary, when asked at his confirmation hearing if ExxonMobil concealed what it knew about climate change while funding outside groups that raised doubts about the science, Mr. Tillerson said he was ''in no position to speak'' for the company, even though he had been the CEO until only a few days before. When asked whether he lacked the knowledge to answer or was refusing to do so, he replied ''A little of both.'' That should concern each of us.

Based on his professional record and his responses at the hearing, I do not believe Mr. Tillerson is the right person to be representing the United States in negotiations to reduce carbon emissions, one of the defining issues of our time.

I was also disappointed by Mr. Tillerson's responses to a number of other questions submitted for the record, including regarding U.S. policy toward Cuba and the right of Americans to travel there. By simply repeating the Republican talking points that he would act consistent with the Helms-Burton Act, he appeared to embrace a law that has failed to achieve any of its objectives and has prevented Americans from traveling freely to Cuba or U.S. companies from doing business there.

Does Mr. Tillerson believe that Cuba, an impoverished island of 11 million people who overwhelmingly have a positive opinion of the United States, should remain the country with the most U.S. sanctions of any in the world? He didn't say.

I hope that, if confirmed, Mr. Tillerson will evaluate our policy toward Cuba objectively and in a manner that favors diplomatic engagement—as the overwhelming majority of Cubans and Americans want—over isolation.

I understand that nominees are often unwilling to take hard positions or unable to discuss in detail at this early stage all of the issues they will be required to manage in their new job. But we should expect a nominee for Secretary of State to be willing and able to recognize and condemn horrific violations of human rights and to speak out against actions by foreign governments and our own that are obviously inconsistent with our interests and values.

President Obama did not achieve every foreign policy goal he set out to achieve, nor did I always agree with President Obama's or Secretary of State Kerry's priorities. But we worked together, and with our international partners, we made notable progress over the past 8 years on human rights, climate change, reducing poverty, and many other issues—progress we must continue to build on. With nationalism and isolationism on the rise and democracy and fundamental freedoms under threat, we need a Secretary of State who has demonstrated a track record and commitment to more than economic enrichment.

If Mr. Tillerson is confirmed, which I expect he will be, I will continue my longstanding support for the funding to enable the State Department to carry out its vital mission to protect and promote U.S. interests and values abroad. When he and I agree, I will support him. When we disagree, I will be vocal in my opposition as I was during the Obama administration.

I hope Mr. Tillerson will also be a strong advocate for the State Department's budget and personnel, including by protecting the integrity of the Dissent Channel to ensure that alternative views on important policy decisions can be expressed and considered without fear of retribution. Even the best policies in the world are worth little more than the paper they are printed on without the funds and the people to implement them.

We should always remember that the face of the United States is its people. Leadership is possible only through the hard work of the diplomats serving around the world to promote our values, defend our interests, and engage constructively with friends and adversaries. Their service, dedication, and expertise are the reason we are able to effectively confront an increasingly dangerous world. Our success at home is inextricably linked to their success abroad. That is why, just as we support the men and women of our military, so should we recognize and support the diplomats at the Department of State.

The State Department's indispensable role, made possible by its outstanding workforce, is recognized by the many widely respected senior U.S. Armed Forces officials, current and retired, who have repeatedly called for increased funding for diplomacy and development. They know better than anyone that preventing wars is far less costly than fighting them and that wars rarely if ever turn out the way one predicts, as the past 50 years painfully illustrate.

Regardless of whatever differences of opinion we may have, I hope Mr. Tillerson will consult regularly with Republicans and Democrats, as has been the custom with past successful Secretaries of State of both parties. I have been here a long time, and I would be the first to say that we have had outstanding top diplomats from both parties. I put James Baker in that category, and I sincerely hope that Mr. Tillerson proves me wrong and joins their ranks. We all want what is best for the American people and the Nation, and we are stronger when we work together and with other nations to find a common way forward.

HONORING OFFICER DAVID FAHEY

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, the city of Cleveland lost a committed public servant last week, Officer David Fahey. Officer Fahey dedicated his career to protecting our community and was tragically killed in the line of duty in a senseless hit-and-run.

A Navy veteran, Officer Fahey followed in the footsteps of his mother and his stepfather, both retired Cleveland police officers, and his brother Chris, an officer who joined the force in 2013.

At a memorial last week, his brother said that Officer Fahey ''loved this neighborhood; he loved working for this neighborhood and he loved this city, and he loved working for this city.''

And our city has given his family an outpouring of support.

A crowd of some 200 people gathered outside the First District police headquarters for a vigil.

Fellow officers from the Cleveland Police Academy's 133rd graduating class came out to honor their classmate's memory. They prayed together, calling him their brother, their friend, and their angel.

That spirit of community represents the best in our city that Officer Fahey loved and served.

Connie and I extend our deepest sympathies to Officer Fahey's family and fellow officers. We pray that this outpouring of support and comradery brings them comfort during this difficult time.

We join our fellow Clevelanders in thanking David Fahey for his service to our community.

TRIBUTE TO JAMES D. WISE

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, today I wish to honor a great man, a colleague, and my friend: Jamie Wise.

It was nearly 10 years ago that Jamie joined Team Montana. The passionate Representative ROSA DELAURO had toughened him up and groomed him for success in the world's most deliberative body. As a newly elected Senator ranked 100 in seniority, one of the first decisions I made was to hire Jamie.

Some may say it is tough to break into Team Montana. We are few but proud, an independent but tight-knit family, a little unpolished, but persistent and most often underestimated. Jamie fit right in.

With his sharp wit and dry sense of humor, he quickly became a Montanan. Hailing from his adoptive hometown of Great Falls, it was a natural fit for him to tackle my veterans, defense, and homeland security portfolios. And tackle it he did.

He wrote my first bill that was signed into law to more fairly reimburse veterans who are traveling to and from their doctors' appointments. It may seem like a simple thing, but it has been life changing for veterans all across this Nation who cannot afford a tank of gas but are facing debilitating medical conditions and need to see their doctor. This bill would set the stage for Jamie's long and incredible career in my office.

Jamie's dedication to Montana has taken him down into the silo of an intercontinental ballistic missile, from the embassy in Yemen, to the Port of Wild Horse on the border of Canada. Needless to say, his legislative chops are unmatched on the Hill. His ability to look 1 inch ahead while also calculating the roadblocks 100 miles away is a skill that can't be taught. It is instinctual.

Jamie worked hard, long hours and rose through the ranks from legislative assistant to legislative director and ultimately chief of staff. It was common to find Jamie sitting in his office into the wee hours of the night plowing through appropriations bills, making sure Montana got its fair shake. Those long hours produced real results for families and small businesses across the State. You can see Jamie's fingerprints on hundreds of letters, thousands of press releases, and the careers of dozens of young, aspiring staffers.

James D. Wise has left his mark on this world, and I can't wait to see what he takes on next.

So today, I wish to thank Jamie on behalf of this Nation, 1 million Montanans, and one grateful Senator.

STATE OF THE UNION ESSAY CONTEST FINALISTS

• Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I ask to have printed in the RECORD some of the finalist essays written by Vermont high school students as part of the seventh annual State of the Union essay contest conducted by my office.

The material follows:

ZOE HOULIHAN, NORTH COUNTRY UNION HIGH SCHOOL FRESHMAN (FINALIST)

When you think of America, do you think of McDonald's, big cities, high-tech phones and computers, or do you think about violence, fear, and hatred amongst people? Although America seems like a great place full of opportunities and freedom, it is quite the opposite if you are not a white, straight, cisgendered male. There are many problems in America that need to be fixed.

Racism has been ongoing for hundreds of years. Blacks, Hispanics and many other

non-white groups have faced discrimination and hatred because of the color of their skin. Blacks are thought as more violent and lazy than whites. African Americans now constitute 1 million of the 2.3 million imprisoned population. They are also incarcerated at six times the rate of whites. NAACP says that 5 times as many whites are using drugs as Blacks, but they are being sent to prison at 10 times the rate of whites. Moreover, Blacks are getting shot at higher rate than whites. Although more whites are getting shot, there are about 160 million more white people than there are black people. While Whites make up 49% of those fatally shot by police officers, Blacks make up 24%, despite only being 13% of the US population. More than 250 blacks were killed in 2016. Furthermore, 47% of hate crimes have to do with race. Racism is such a big problem in America it's hard to say what an effective solution would be. One solution to this could be to get media stars that are POC to talk about racism. This could cause their fan base (which can be quite large) to change their ideas about African Americans. Another solution is to educate people on racism. Teaching young children in school about how racism started could lessen the number of people in each generation that feel negatively about people of color. Lastly, the government should make the policies about racism in schools and workplaces stricter. Telling kids ''That is not appropriate'' when they make a racist comment isn't doing anything. People need to be punished for making these comments because if they aren't it makes it seem like it isn't a big deal.

Another problem in America is sexism and sexual assault. Sexism makes it harder for women to get jobs and be well-off in life. According to the Huffington Post, well-off white men are three times more likely than women to be offered a job interview. Moreover, women that work 41–44 hours per week earn 84.6% of what a man working that same time would earn. Women that work more than 60 hours a week earn only 78.3% of what a man would earn. Similarly, in the House of Representatives only 19.3% are women, and in the Senate only 20% are women. In addition, when a woman claims to have been sexually assaulted, men usually blame the women. They ask what they were wearing, how ''revealing'' it was, and if they were under the influence of drugs or alcohol. One in four women will be sexually assaulted in their lifetime. Also, 683,000 adult women are forcibly raped each year. This is equal to 56,916 per month, 1,871 per day and 78 per hour. One solution to women not getting payed as much as men could be to make a policy that both women and men are to be paid equally. Furthermore, a solution to sexual assault is to teach kids about consent and to give longer sentences to people that have committed sexual assault. Another solution to sexism is to have more women representation in media and politics. This could help eliminate the thought that women are only made to have children, clean and cook. It would also give young girls more role models to look up to.

Finally, the last issue that needs to be fixed is hate and discrimination against the LGBT+ community. According to an analysis of data collected by the FBI, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people are the most likely targets of hate crimes. An example of a hate crime against the LGBT+ community is the Orlando nightclub shooting. 49 were killed and at least 53 were injured. This shooting is considered the worst mass shooting in the United States and the nation's worst terrorist attack since 9/11. Additionally, LGBT+ people experience discrimination in the workforce. They actually have a higher unemployment rate than African Americans (15% versus 12%). People of color that are also apart of the LGBT+ community face the most discrimination. A solution to this problem could be to educate young children about the different sexualities and explain that it's okay to feel attracted to whomever. Another solution is to create policies that would help protect people in the LGBT+ community. Lastly, there should be stricter rules about when a teacher hears a homophobic comment. Many kids say ''That's so gay'' when something that they don't like happens and i could make other kids feel unsafe.

In conclusion, America has many issues with equal rights that need to be fixed. One of the main solutions to every problem is education. When people are educated, they can use their knowledge to base their opinions off instead of going with what the popular opinion is or what they are hearing around them.

GRAHAM JANSON, MONTPELIER HIGH SCHOOL JUNIOR (FINALIST)

Whenever you ask someone the question, ''What is the most pressing issue facing our nation today?'' you will most likely get a different answer every time. An environmentalist might say, ''Carbon emissions and global warming.'' A conservative activist might say, ''The increasing national debt.'' There are many answers to this question. But there is only one answer that addresses an issue that lies at the center of our nation's existence. That answer is that the fundamental democratic principles on which the United States is based are being eroded by voter suppression and gerrymandering.

Efforts to suppress voting rights for many people have been around since the Constitution was adopted as the supreme law of the land, when only property-owning white men could vote. We have come a long way since then, with African Americans, Native Americans, and American women gaining the right to vote, but we still have a long way to go. Similar to during Reconstruction, when literacy tests were used to deny African Americans the right to vote, a now-overturned North Carolina voter ID law was in effect that, according to the federal appeals court that dealt with the case, deliberately ''target[ed] African-Americans'' in an attempt to suppress their voter turnout. Other states, such as Ohio, Kansas, and North Carolina, have had voter ID laws that have been overturned after being ruled discriminatory by a federal appeals court. The overturning of these laws is already a step in the right direction. A way to address voter-suppression efforts is to require a federal court review for every voter ID law to make sure that there is no discrimination or infringement of American rights. Another way is to restore the provisions of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

Additionally, the repeal of some of the key aspects of the Voting Rights Act in 2013, which allowed nine states to alter their election laws without the approval of the federal government, demonstrates how gerrymandered elections can serve to undermine basic democratic principles. Gerrymandering involves altering the areas of electoral districts to favor one party or another, and both Democratic and Republican politicians have engaged in gerrymandering in the past. There have been many cases in which a political candidate has won an election because of gerrymandering. This clearly undermines our nation's democratic principles because now a candidate can carry the minority of an electorate and win an election, and it needs to change now. Furthermore, because these same elected officials appoint and confirm federal judges, voter suppression and gerrymandering can also undermine the judiciary's vital role in protecting democratic voting rights.

In conclusion, the restoration of equal voting rights and the elimination of gerrymandering would allow the United States to remain a true democracy. Indeed, the other pressing issues that face our nation today, such as global warming, economic development, immigration, healthcare, and gender equity, cannot be fairly addressed while our nation continues to utilize this flawed system that does not reflect democratic values.

IRA RICHARDSON, BELLOWS FALLS UNION HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR (FINALIST)

When George Washington delivered his farewell address, he stated that ''The alternate domination of one faction over another, sharpened by the spirit of revenge, natural to party dissension . . . is itself a frightful despotism.'' Our first and only president who was not a member of a political party attempted to warn us of the threats they can pose to democracy. Today, however, the Democratic and Republican parties have become so powerful that one can hardly imagine the American democratic system without them. In a sense, this is one of the sources of their overbearing power: many Americans see them as an intrinsic part of our democracy rather than two organizations that were created long after the union to organize like-minded voters. Political parties are not inherently bad, but a system which creates a forced dichotomy by only giving voters two realistic choices for any given position has unquestionable negative effects on our nation. Firstly, it forces citizens who care deeply about specific issues to routinely vote for candidates whom they may not agree with in any other capacity so as to not violate their personal moral code. This, in turn, allows parties to cynically align themselves with these single-issue voters to win their votes without truly sharing their values. Additionally, two diametrically opposed political parties give rise to an us-versus-them mentality among citizens, eroding the mutual trust that is intrinsic in the formation of a nation.

To reduce the near-hegemonic power that the parties currently hold, it is imperative to make it more clear to the American public that both parties are private organizations, operating within their own processes and promoting goals that are not necessarily those of their constituents. The intention is not to cause Americans to stop supporting the party they belong to, but rather not to follow any party blindly, and to understand their complex histories and role in American democracy. Another step towards a system in which people could more consistently vote for politicians they truly support would be the implementation of an instant run-off (aka alternate or ranked) voting system. In such a system, a voter does not select a single candidate to receive a position, but rather ranks the order in which they support each candidate. If no candidate has over fifty percent of the vote, the candidate with the least votes is eliminated and every citizen who selected them has their votes moved to their next choice, and the votes are tallied again. This process is repeated until a candidate has a majority. This alternative would allow people to vote their conscience without fear of handing the election to a candidate on the opposite side of the political spectrum. It would not destroy the existing political parties (which would be destabilizing) but rather allow third-party and independent candidates to speak for portions of the population who cannot identify with either existing party. By reducing the power of the two major parties, the environment necessary to address the many problems facing America could be created.

JULIA STERGAS, BELLOWS FREE ACADEMY FAIRFAX SENIOR (FINALIST)

Nearly 260 years ago our country endured a war over the rights of our states and the rights of its peoples. From this war came the first legislation to protect African Americans living in the United States. One-hundred years later, our country faced another revolution, resulting in new legislation that enhanced the ability for African Americans to participate in political and social life. Since then, many Americans have believed that racial equality has been achieved.

But here we are, fifty years later, struggling through yet another conflict over the divide between black and white. Tensions are high between African Americans and white authority figures in the United States. Distrust and anxiety separates black Americans from their government and onlooking citizens. In 2014, Michael Brown was shot and killed by a police officer in Ferguson, Missouri. That same year, a barrage of negative media emerged from an originally peaceful protest in Baltimore, Maryland, depicting unlawful rioters who looted and set fire to business, injuring six police officers. Now, we continue to watch video clips on nightly news highlighting the struggle between black and white. Through this our attention has been distracted from the true cause of continued racial conflict: the lack of recent successful intervention.

White authority figures are perpetually distrusted by the black community, and groups such as Black Lives Matter still believe inherent biases against African Americans are abundant in society. We must rebuild this connection. To achieve comprehensive change we must redirect our nation's path. The first step toward action is awareness. This issue must be introduced into schools, universities, and community centers. If we can enlighten young adults they will share their knowledge and work to obtain equality nationwide.

Educators would lead discussions on current and historic racial tensions in a nonpartisan, open environment. Focusing on historic and current events and their social and political ramifications, these open debates would promote civic engagement and thoughtful problem solving. Prompts regarding the government's involvement and the responsibilities it should assume, the action we as the nation's youth should assume, and opportunities to develop individual solutions would be considered during discussion. Our young population is critical to the future of our nation, so it is necessary that we provide them with opportunities to immerse themselves in their political and social world.

Today's generation and the ones to follow will be our leaders and our visionaries. Incorporating awareness into education programs would introduce these leaders to the nuances of the world they will come to inspire, and allow them to develop an understanding of their political efficacy. Raising consciousness of this racial strain would encourage young leaders to take charge of their futures, and ours, and incite change. It is critical to the well being of our nation that we cultivate a generation of educated young adults who possess the skills to maneuver themselves in their political and social world. Addressing our nation's imperfection and coaching our youth will only be the start to a nationwide revolution of change and acceptance.●

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 12:02 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 46. An act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study of Fort Ontario in the State of New York.

H.R. 339. An act to amend Public Law 94–241 with respect to the Northern Mariana Islands.

H.R. 374. An act to remove the sunset provision of section 203 of Public Law 105–384, and for other purposes.

H.R. 381. An act to designate a mountain in the John Muir Wilderness of the Sierra National Forest as ''Sky Point''.

H.R. 538. An act to redesignate Ocmulgee National Monument in the State of Georgia and revise its boundary, and for other purposes.

H.R. 558. An act to adjust the boundary of the Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park to include the Wallis House and Harriston Hill, and for other purposes.

H.R. 560. An act to amend the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area Improvement Act to provide access to certain vehicles serving residents of municipalities adjacent to the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, and for other purposes.

The message further announced that pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 1928a, and the order of the House of January 3, 2017, the Speaker appoints the following Members of the House of Representatives to the United States Group of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly: Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia and Ms. FRANKEL of Florida.

The message also announced that pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2903, and the order of the House of January 3, 2017, the Speaker appoints the following Member of the House of Representatives to the Japan-United States Friendship Commission: Mr. TAKANO of California.

The message further announced that pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2761, and the order of the House of January 3, 2017, the Speaker appoints the following Member of the House of Representatives to the British-American Interparliamentary Group: Mr. CICILLINE of Rhode Island.

The message also announced that pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 3003, and the order of the House of January 3, 2017, the Speaker appoints the following Members of the House of Representatives to the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe: Mr. HASTINGS of Florida and Mr. COHEN of Tennessee.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC–653. A communication from the Director, Office of Management and Budget, Executive Office of the President, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to spending limits; to the Committee on the Budget.

EC–654. A communication from the Federal Register Liaison Officer, Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Changes to Certain Alcohol-Related Regulations Governing Bond Requirements and Tax Return Filing Periods'' (RIN1513–AC30) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 18, 2017; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–655. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to construction of the Keystone XL Pipeline; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–656. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Parity Task Force, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 19, 2017; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–657. A communication from the General Counsel, United States Access Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Standards and Guidelines'' (RIN3014–AA37) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 17, 2017; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–658. A communication from the General Counsel, United States Access Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) Accessibility Guidelines for Transportation Vehicles'' (RIN3014–AA38) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 17, 2017; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–659. A communication from the General Counsel, United States Access Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Standards for Accessible Medical Diagnostic Equipment'' (RIN3014–AA40) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 17, 2017; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC–660. A communication from the Secretary of the Board of Governors, U.S. Postal Service, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act of 2006; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–661. A communication from the Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 (USERRA) Quarterly Report to Congress; First Quarter of Fiscal Year 2017''; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EC–662. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Exchange of Flatfish in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area'' (RIN0648–XF010) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on January 12, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Ms. MURKOWSKI for the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

*Ryan Zinke, of Montana, to be Secretary of the Interior.

*James Richard Perry, of Texas, to be Secretary of Energy.

By Mr. ALEXANDER for the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

*Elisabeth Prince DeVos, of Michigan, to be Secretary of Education.

By Mr. RISCH for the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

*Linda E. McMahon, of Connecticut, to be Administrator of the Small Business Administration.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session on January 31, 2017, at 2:30 p.m. in room SH–219 of the Senate Hart Office Building.

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

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Commander Dan Hurd, U.S. Coast Guard, a fellow in my office, be granted floor privileges for the remainder of the week.

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

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that all time during recess or adjournment of the Senate count post-cloture on the Tillerson nomination; further, that following the prayer and pledge, the remaining post-cloture time be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees.

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

PROGRAM

Mr. RUBIO. The Senate is about to adjourn.

Under the standing order, we will convene at 12 noon tomorrow. Following the prayer and pledge, we will resume consideration of the Tillerson nomination post-cloture.

For the information of all Senators, the post-cloture time on the Tillerson nomination will expire at approximately 2:30 p.m. Eastern Time tomorrow, and the Senate will vote on confirmation at that time.

VOTE ON MOTION TO ADJOURN

Mr. RUBIO. I move to adjourn.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion to adjourn.

The motion was agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate stands adjourned until 12 noon tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 8:01 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, February 1, 2017, at 12 noon.

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate January 31, 2017:

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ELAINE L. CHAO, OF KENTUCKY, TO BE SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

IN RECOGNITION OF CAROL HUTCHINS RECEIVING THE ATHENA INTERNATIONAL LEADERSHIP AWARD

HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 31, 2017

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize University of Michigan Head Softball Coach Carol Hutchins for receiving the ATHENA International Leadership Award. Coach Hutchins has had a distinguished career and helped the University of Michigan softball team achieve success on and off the field.

Coach Hutchins joined the University of Michigan softball program in 1983 as an Assistant Coach and became Head Coach in 1985. During her tenure, the Wolverines have become one of the premier softball programs in the country and have reached the Women's College World Series in 12 of the last 22 seasons. In addition, Coach Hutchins has won over 1,400 career victories with the team, more than any other coach in Michigan athletics history. In recognition for her teams' stellar performance, Hutchins has earned 16 Big Ten Conference Coach of the Year honors, 9 National Fastpitch Softball Association Regional Coach of the Year awards, and was inducted into the NFCA Hall of Fame in 2006. Hutchins' teams have also excelled academically, with the team achieving 100% graduation rate and 135 student-athletes earns Academic All-Big Ten honors.

Coach Hutchins has also distinguished herself through her service to the Ann Arbor community. In 2010, she founded the Michigan Softball Academy, a one-night on-field clinic for adults that raises funds for the American Cancer Society's Making Strides Against Breast Cancer initiative. To date, Coach Hutchins and the Michigan Softball Academy have raised nearly $750,000 for the organization. This level of support underscores her commitment to helping those in need. In addition, Coach Hutchins has been a fierce advocate for Title IX and works to support LGBTQ equality as well.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Carol Hutchins for receiving the ATHENA International Leadership Award. She is more than deserving of such an honor, and it is my hope that she continues to excel on the field and in the community.

RECOGNIZING SCOTT GRAVES, STAFF DIRECTOR OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

HON. RALPH LEE ABRAHAM

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 31, 2017

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Scott Graves, the outgoing Staff Director of the House Committee on Agriculture. You have heard a lot of fine things about Scott today, and all of them are deserved. Instead of talking about what Scott has done for the members of the Ag Committee, or the greater agricultural sector, which would keep me here into next week, I would like to recognize Scott for what he has meant to my staff and to me.

When I arrived here some two years ago I knew a fair bit about farming. I've been growing rice, corn and soybeans in the fertile lands of Northeast Louisiana most of my life. Scott has helped me take that experience and apply it to crafting our Nation's agriculture policies. Policies that help farmers and producers grow the finest commodities in the world and deliver them to dinner tables across the planet. Scott and his staff have been instrumental in helping my staff and I understand the finer intricacies of these policies and practices. They have gone to great lengths to help me, and all the members of the Committee, work to make sure the American farmer can not only endure, but prosper.

Scott has spent 12 years working on Ag policy on the Hill, and his absence over at 1301 Longworth will be profoundly felt by many, myself included.

RECOGNIZING NORTHWEST INDIANA'S NEWLY NATURALIZED CITIZENS

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 31, 2017

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure and sincerity that I take this time to congratulate thirty individuals who will take their oath of citizenship on Friday, February 3, 2017. This memorable occasion, presided over by Magistrate Judge Paul R. Cherry, will be held at the United States Courthouse and Federal Building in Hammond, Indiana.

America is a country founded by immigrants. From its beginning, settlers have come from countries around the world to the United States in search of better lives for their families. Oath ceremonies are a shining example of what is so great about the United States of America—that people from all over the world can come together and unite as members of a free, democratic nation. These individuals realize that nowhere else in the world offers a better opportunity for success than here in America.

On February 3, 2017, the following people, representing many nations throughout the world, will take their oaths of citizenship in Hammond, Indiana: Maria Alvarado, Maria Angeles Avalos, Martha Patricia Bello, Esteban Campos, Grace Carrillo, Erick Chay, Maribel Galicia, Jose Dolores Garcia, Jessica Elizabeth Hopkins, Maria Dolores Ibarra, Kristina Kiselinova, Brenda Melina Larson, John Richard Latka, Judith Love, Ivica Jovan Markovic, Matilde Martinez, Ivan de Jesus Martinez Desiderio, Hector Gabriel Martiniez, Janice Uyen Nguyen, Adrian Nunez, Blagoja Petkovski, Lidia Esther Guevara Galindo, Yolanda Ramirez, Simona Simental, Fellisia Suboh, Jeidi Torres, Jonathan Treto, Luz Valdez, Froylan Vega, and Enrique Vilches.

Although each individual has sought to become a citizen of the United States for his or her own reasons, be it for education, occupation, or to offer their loved ones better lives, each is inspired by the fact that the United States of America is, as Abraham Lincoln described it, a country ". . . of the people, by the people, and for the people." They realize that the United States is truly a free nation. By seeking American citizenship, they have made the decision that they want to live in a place where, as guaranteed by the First Amendment of the Constitution, they can practice religion as they choose, speak their minds without fear of punishment, and assemble in peaceful protest should they choose to do so.

Mr. Speaker, I respectfully ask you and my other distinguished colleagues to join me in congratulating these individuals who will become citizens of the United States of America on February 3, 2017. They, too, will be American citizens, and they, too, are guaranteed the inalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. We, as a free and democratic nation, congratulate them and welcome them.

100TH BIRTHDAY OF MICHELENA ''MINNIE'' CUCCHIA

HON. DANIEL M. DONOVAN, JR.

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 31, 2017

Mr. DONOVAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 100th Birthday of Staten Island's Michelena Cucchia.

Michelena, or Minnie, as she is known to her friends and family, was born on January 21, 1917, in Manhattan to Charles and Grace Sciascia. After moving to Staten Island in 1932, Minnie met the love of her life, Salvatore ''Sam'' Cucchia. On December 19, 1936, Minnie and Sam were married at St. Joseph's Church. Afterward, they moved to a home in New Dorp on Staten Island to raise their daughters, Angela and Grace, and their son, Steve.

At the age of 100 years young, Minnie Cucchia is still active. With six grandchildren, eight great-grandchildren, and two great-great-grandchildren, she certainly enjoys spending time with the many members of her family. Moreover, she continues to partake in her favorite hobbies, such as crocheting blankets, hats, and scarves for babies that she then donates to a local hospital. To this day, Minnie still lives in the house in New Dorp where she and Sam raised their wonderful children. She truly is a lifelong Staten Islander.

Mr. Speaker, I wish Minnie Cucchia a very happy 100th birthday. I applaud the tremendous life she has led. I am proud to call her

one of my constituents, as she embodies the very essence of the American spirit.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BOBBY L. RUSH

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 31, 2017

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, on January 3 to January 6, January 9 to January 10, and on January 13, 2017, circumstances beyond my control necessitated my absence from the House and I, therefore, missed votes. I expect my absence to continue through February 3, 2017 and therefore am requesting a leave of absence from the House.

CONGRATULATING MR. AND MRS. BRADLEY AND KATHERINE MORROW UPON THE BIRTH OF THEIR SON, FINNEGAN FOX MORROW

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 31, 2017

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor constituents of mine, Mr. and Mrs. Bradley and Katherine Morrow, on the birth of their son, Finnegan Fox Morrow. Bradley and Katherine are residents of Jefferson City, Missouri and welcome their new son into their family along with older brother Bennett.

Bradley and Katherine were married on September 15, 2012 and Finnegan was born on September 15, 2016, which made for a wonderful 4th wedding anniversary present. Bradley works for Division of Professional Registration with the State of Missouri and Katherine is a marketing designer for a Jefferson City magazine.

Many family members have been excited to welcome Finnegan, including maternal grandparents Milton and Cherie Barr, paternal grandparents Sally, Michael and Elizabeth Morrow, and paternal great-grandparent Joseph Morrow.

I ask you to join me in congratulating the Morrow family on this new addition to their family.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LUIS V. GUTIÉRREZ

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 31, 2017

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably absent in the House Chamber for roll call votes 66 and 67 on Monday, January 30, 2017. Had I been present, I would have voted "Yea" on roll call votes 66 and 67.

TRIBUTE TO ABBY BERNSTEIN

HON. PETER A. DeFAZIO

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 31, 2017

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Abby Bernstein, a passionate advocate for the rights of the aviation safety inspector and technician workforce of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). Abby is retiring from the Professional Aviation Safety Specialists (PASS) union this month after 33 years of service. I am confident that and all of my colleagues who have worked with her, will miss her wise advocacy and kind demeanor.

Abby's career with PASS began in 1984, when she was the union's first, and only, employee. She remained PASS's only employee and ran the union's legislative and membership departments singlehandedly for many years thereafter. Throughout her career, Abby has fought to ensure safety inspectors and technicians are able to do their important work on behalf of the American people in keeping our aviation system running safely and smoothly.

For years, Abby has fought tirelessly for increased aviation safety inspector staffing and improved FAA oversight of the aviation system, and I hope she will retire knowing that the flying public is safer as a result of her work. She was pivotal in joining my colleagues and me in key legislative efforts at various points in the 2000s to improve the FAA's oversight of maintenance, repair, and overhaul work performed on U.S. airlines' fleets at foreign repair stations. She also worked relentlessly to preserve the inspector workforce from unnecessary delegations of authority to the private sector.

Not only has Abby worked to improve aviation safety, but she has also vigorously protected the rights and interests of PASS's members at every turn. When Congress exempted FAA employees from Federal personnel and procurement rules in 1996, Abby fought hard, and successfully, to preserve the rights of FAA employees to organize and to bargain collectively. From the 1990s to today, Abby has been a key ally in efforts to prevent the privatization of FAA air traffic control jobs. She has remained steadfast in her belief that the employees who safeguard the safety and efficiency of the aviation system must remain Federal employees. I would be remiss if I did not note, in particular, Abby's invaluable assistance in the last Congress to counteract, once again, ill-advised efforts to privatize the air traffic control system.

In my own work with Abby on important issues of aviation safety and policy, I have come to know her as a thoughtful, inquisitive, and intellectually curious advocate. In fact, she has such a strong desire to learn and expand her horizons that, having graduated from the University of Maryland in 1981 with a bachelor's degree in management and consumer studies, she returned to her alma mater and obtained a second degree eight years later in computer and information sciences.

Abby's retirement will mark the end of an era for PASS and, indeed, for all of us who have collaborated with her over the years in pursuit of a safer, better aviation system. Although we will miss her, I hope my colleagues will join me in helping send Abby into retirement with all of our very best wishes and most of all, with tremendous thanks for a job well done.

DECLARATION OF FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2017, AS HARMONY HOUSE DAY

HON. BILLY LONG

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 31, 2017

Mr. LONG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Harmony House of Springfield, Missouri, for all the work the organization does on behalf of survivors of domestic violence and declare that Friday, February 10, 2017, be Harmony House Day.

Since 1976, Harmony House has been an active force for good in the Springfield-Greene County community. What started out as an all-volunteer grassroots network sheltering survivors of abuse in their own homes, has over the past 41 years answered more than 76,000 SAFEline calls, served over 450,000 meals and provided over 408,000 safe bed nights to more than 16,000 women and children from around Greene County, Missouri.

February 10, 2017, will mark the beginning of a new era for Harmony House. Going forward, Harmony House will continue to serve those in need and continue to change lives but in a new location with both enhanced and expanded capabilities. Harmony House's empowering work, as the only domestic violence shelter in the area, will reach more people and help more families operating from a newly renovated, top of the line, facility.

I am honored to recognize Harmony House and commend the organization for its service and hard work over the years. On behalf of Missouri's Seventh Congressional District, I ask all of my colleagues to join me in honoring Harmony House and observing Friday, February 10, 2017, as Harmony House Day.

HONORING THE WALKER COMPANY

HON. ANDY BARR

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 31, 2017

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor a very special group of Kentuckians. They are the Walker family; Arthur, Sr. (Deceased), Arthur, Jr., Art III and Bryce Walker. They make up the Walker Company, which was created in 1933 and whose corporate office is located in Montgomery County, Kentucky.

The Walker Company has been chosen by Gateway Area Development District to receive the Regional Outstanding Business for 2016 Award. They have been a major employer over the years, employing hundreds of people and enabling them to provide a good living for their families.

The Walker family has made many philanthropic contributions, mostly anonymously, to needy projects over the years, including GED programs, scholarships for students, and the recent BuildSmart Campaign of the MCTC new Rowan Campus. The Walkers were instrumental in the location of the Maysville Community Technical College Satellite location in Mt. Sterling.

The Walkers support recreation and sports in many ways. They have been involved since the beginning with Easy Walker Park in Montgomery County, where thousands of children

across many states have enjoyed the park facilities. They also worked with Menifee County on their new Little League Baseball field, where 70 children play every day for most of the year.

Disaster assistance is no stranger to the Walkers. If a major event happens in a surrounding county, they drop everything and will even pull off of a job and bring their equipment and operators to help open roads, clear debris, just to help their neighbors. Morgan and Menifee Counties can both attest to this when the tornadoes hit in 2012.

The Walkers give of their time to serve on boards on the local, state and federal level and share their business expertise and professional engineering experience with others. The Walker Company members continue to be remembered for their generosity and I am honored to recognize them before the United States House of Representatives.

IN HONOR OF JOHN W. WIESNER

HON. KEVIN BRADY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 31, 2017

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of John W. Wiesner. On January 26, 2017, the Wiesner family lost a father, a grandfather and a great-grandfather, and our district lost an icon. Those who knew John W. Wiesner are better people today thanks to his wise counsel. His philanthropy, business, faith, and family are all admirable examples of what to aspire to because John made the most of his 88 years.

While known locally as the chairman and CEO of the Wiesner auto dealerships, John's story is admirable. Born in Richmond on November 13, 1928, John was raised in Hempstead where he met and married his childhood sweetheart, Elizabeth. Shortly after, they started a family and built an automotive empire. A graduate of Southern Methodist University and member of the Alpha Tau Omega Fraternity, John went from working in his father-in-law's Sorsby Motor Company to later purchasing it in 1954. John and Elizabeth moved to Conroe in the 1970's and purchased the Buick Pontiac Dealership. Throughout the last few decades, the Wiesner dealerships continued to expand, employing over 500 people in Conroe, Huntsville, Tomball and Rosenberg.

A consummate gentleman, John leaves a legacy to be proud of with his son, Don, his six grandchildren and great-grandchild. However, because John did not showcase his good deeds, the full extent of his philanthropy may never be known.

As a Mason, a Shriner, a Paul Harris Fellow, Sam Walton Business Leader, Time Magazine Quality Dealer, Man of the Year, and Key Man—just to name a few of his many accolades—family, faith, and doing business the right way mattered the most to my friend.

Since 1974, Don Wiesner has been working alongside his father who was proud to welcome the 4th generation to serve in the family business. It is no surprise that the Houston Business Journal acknowledged the Wiesners as a top 10 Family Owned Business in Houston.

John's community spirit lives on in his dedication to the First United Methodist Church in Conroe and numerous boards and organizations from the YMCA, County Fairs, the Appraisal District, Youth Services, Economic Development, Chambers, Rotary, the Salvation Army, American Heart Association, Junior League, the performing arts, scholarships, the American Cancer Society, Boy Scouts, Crime Stoppers, Montgomery County Performing Arts, National Dealer Council, Houston Automotive Dealers Association, GMAC Dealer Advisory Board, Texas Automobile Dealers Association, Pontiac-GMC Division Dealer Council, South Central Region Dealer Council, Nations Bank Conroe, Conroe Symphony Orchestra, and more.

When I served as a local chamber executive, I had the privilege of working alongside John on key projects such as the creation of the North Harris Montgomery Community College (now Lone Star College System). This is just one example of how John's involvement helped make our community a better place. John and Elizabeth, their sons Howell and John III, are together again in the loving arms of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

IN RECOGNITION OF EMILY TORRANCE RECEIVING THE ATHENA YOUTH LEADERSHIP AWARD

HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 31, 2017

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Emily Torrance for receiving the ATHENA Youth Leadership Award in recognition of her public service to better the Ann Arbor community. Emily's advocacy on behalf of less fortunate in the Ann Arbor community has helped improve the lives of the homeless.

Ms. Torrance has distinguished herself with her volunteer and philanthropic achievements that have achieved concrete results on behalf of Ann Arbor's homeless population. As a sixth grader, Ms. Torrance started S4 the Homeless after an encounter with homeless people on a cold day. In order to provide resources for those in need, Ms. Torrance hand knit and sold scarves. With the profits from these sales, she began bulk purchasing subzero sleeping bags at discounted rates. She was able to contact social services and work with these organizations to distribute the sleeping bags to help those in need. These provided shelter and warmth during the cold winter months in southeast Michigan. Ms. Torrance has since pivoted the organization's direction to sell services and better provide for the needs of the homeless.

Ms. Torrance is now in 9th grade but continues her work to provide aid to those in need through S4 the Homeless. She advocates for the homeless through her school and in the community at large, and her efforts are instrumental to raising awareness and driving action to better provide for these individuals. Emily has motivated others to be more active within their communities, and it is inspiring to see her begin the journey of public service at such a young age. It is my hope that Ms. Torrance continues to serve her community in new and innovative ways in the years ahead.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Emily Torrance for her years of service to the Ann Arbor community through S4 the Homeless. Ms. Torrance's advocacy on behalf of those less fortunate is inspiring and worthy of commendation.

STOP, OBSERVE, ASK AND RESPOND (SOAR) TO HEALTH WELLNESS ACT

HON. STEVE COHEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 31, 2017

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, today during National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month, I introduced the Stop, Observe, Ask and Respond (SOAR) to Health and Wellness Act along with my colleagues Representatives ADAM KINZINGER, TONY CÁRDENAS and ANN WAGNER. It is a companion to S. 1446, which was introduced by Senators HEIDI HEITKAMP and SUSAN COLLINS. This bipartisan bill supports efforts underway at the Department of Health and Human Services to combat human trafficking by directing the Secretary to establish a pilot program to be known as 'Stop, Observe, Ask and Respond to Health and Wellness Training' to provide training on human trafficking to health care providers at all levels.

Human trafficking is a modern-day form of slavery that uses force, fraud or coercion to lure millions of men, women and children in countries around the world annually, including here in the United States. Human trafficking includes both sex and labor trafficking, and generates billions of dollars in profits each year, making it the second most profitable form of transnational crime behind drug trafficking.

Recognizing the key indicators of human trafficking is the first step in identifying victims, providing life-saving help and bringing traffickers to justice. Human trafficking, however, is a hidden crime and victims rarely seek help because of cultural barriers or out of fear of their traffickers or law enforcement.

While victims are often difficult to identify, a reported 68 percent of trafficking victims end up in a health care setting at some point while being exploited, including in clinics, emergency rooms and doctor's offices. Despite this, out of more than 5,680 hospitals in the country, only 60 have been identified as having a plan for treating patients who are victims of trafficking and 95 percent of emergency room personnel are not trained to treat trafficking victims.

Our bill aims to ensure health care professionals are trained to identify and assist victims of human trafficking, and help close the gap in health care settings without plans for treating trafficking victims. I want to urge my colleagues to pass this important legislation so that health care professionals can better identify trafficking victims, provide victim centered care and help bring perpetrators of human trafficking to justice with the help of law enforcement as well as social and victims service agencies and organizations.

HONORING THE PRINCE HALL UNIVERSAL LODGE NUMBER 1 OF ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA

HON. DONALD S. BEYER, JR.

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 31, 2017

Mr. BEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 172 years of service of the Prince Hall Universal Lodge Number 1 of Alexandria, Virginia. The Prince Hall Free Masonry began in Alexandria in 1845. Over the past 172 years, Universal Lodge Number 1 has worked on significant issues such as slavery, education and schools, church buildings, and the general welfare of African Americans. I greatly commend their many years of service to the Alexandria community.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LOUISE McINTOSH SLAUGHTER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 31, 2017

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained and missed Roll Call vote numbers 66 and 67. Had I been present, I would have voted Aye on both.

IN HONOR OF SCOTT GRAVES

HON. RICHARD HUDSON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 31, 2017

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the career of Mr. Scott Graves the pride of Bronte, Texas. For more than 12 years, Scott has been a leader in the field of agriculture policy and helped shape a better vision and future for our nation.

Since coming to work as an intern on Capitol Hill, Scott has demonstrated his ability to master complex policy issues and work with members and staff to craft unique solutions. He continually equips members of the House Committee on Agriculture, and the Republican Conference as a whole, with the knowledge and resources we need to serve the American public. His leadership of the Agriculture Committee has positioned them for tremendous success as they begin to reauthorize the Farm Bill this Congress.

I have known Scott for many years and have always known that he was someone I could count on to get the job done. Scott and I worked together for two years and he succeeded me as Chief of Staff to Mr. CONAWAY from Texas. I think fondly on the time we spent together and am proud of what we accomplished. I am even more proud of the character of the husband, father, and colleague I now simply call friend.

Personally and professionally Scott is fun to be around, and he makes everyone around him better. There is no doubt that Scott will be sincerely missed, but I am excited for what the future holds for this extraordinary public servant.

Mr. Speaker, please join me today in recognizing the impressive career of Mr. Scott Graves and wishing him well as he, Haley, and Bronte begin the next chapter of their lives.

HONORING STEPHEN B. HOVEN UPON HIS RETIREMENT AFTER 19 YEARS OF SERVICE TO SSM HEALTH

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 31, 2017

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a constituent of mine, Mr. Stephen B. Hoven, on his retirement from SSM Health as the Vice President of Public Affairs following 19 years of service.

In August 1997, Mr. Hoven joined SSM Health, founded by the Franciscan Sisters of St. Mary, as the Vice President of Public Affairs. In this position Mr. Hoven provided leadership in multiple external markets. He has also collaborated with public policy leaders in municipal affairs, and local, state and federal governments which have positively benefitted SSM Health. Additionally, Mr. Hoven has coordinated civic and community events throughout Missouri. Mr. Hoven has helped further SSM Health's vision and mission throughout the communities they serve during his 19 years of service. The passion Mr. Hoven has shown for his job, the people who work at SSM, those they serve and his country has been a true asset to SSM.

Mr. Hoven began his career in public affairs in 1982 as the Manager of Public Affairs for Ozark Air Lines in St. Louis during which time he oversaw the coordination of state legislation in 25 states. Additionally, as Manager of Public Affairs, he managed civic affairs for 65 cities and handled the corporate charitable program. In 1986 he moved to the St. Louis Regional Commerce and Growth Association. From 1986 to 1990 he was the Administrative Assistant to the president of that association. Then from 1990 to 1994 he was Vice President of Government Affairs and Transportation. In 1994 Mr. Hoven stepped into the role of Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of a 4,000 member chamber of commerce. This chamber of commerce was committed to increasing their regional cooperation and also expanding their economic growth opportunities in the St. Louis region.

Mr. Hoven has volunteered many hours throughout his professional career to numerous civic and charitable organizations, including the boards of the Museum of Transportation, the Japan-American Society, the American Cancer Society, the Leadership Council of Southwestern Illinois, the Boys and Girls Town of Missouri, the Associated Industries of Missouri, the St. Louis Sports Commission and the St. Louis Regional Commerce and Growth Association's Public Policy Council. Each one of these groups has been positively impacted by Mr. Hoven's service.

With this retirement Mr. Hoven will now be able to spend more time with his wife Jill, and they look forward to spending more time with their beloved dogs. Mr. and Mrs. Hoven are planning to live part of the year in Colorado and will be RV traveling as well, but will still be a regular presence in their Warren County home in Missouri's 3rd District.

I ask you in joining me in recognizing Mr. Steve Hoven on his retirement. The commitment he has shown to the SSM Health and his community is a commendable accomplishment.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BILL HUIZENGA

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 31, 2017

Mr. HUIZENGA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today regarding missed votes on Monday, January 30, 2017. Had I been present for roll call vote number 66, H.R. 374, To remove the sunset provision of section 203 of Public Law 105–384, and for other purposes, I would have voted "yea." Had I been present for roll call vote number 67, H.R. 538, the Ocmulgee Mounds National Historical Park Boundary Revision Act of 2017, I would have voted "yea."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JAMES B. RENACCI

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 31, 2017

Mr. RENACCI. Mr. Speaker, I missed votes on Monday, January 30, 2017. Had I been present, I would have voted Yea on Roll Call No. 66 and Yea on Roll Call No. 67.

TRIBUTE TO ALL-TIME SCORING LEADER FOR MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY WOMEN'S BASKETBALL TORI JANKOSKA

HON. JOHN R. MOOLENAAR

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 31, 2017

Mr. MOOLENAAR. Mr. Speaker, today, I, along with Representative BISHOP pay tribute to Tori Jankoska, the all-time scoring leader for Michigan State University Women's Basketball.

Tori was born and raised in Freeland, where she grew up with a passion for competition. As a young girl, Tori was unable to compete with her peers. She grew up with asthma and other illnesses that kept her from playing with the other kids. Through her own perseverance, she was able to play with her siblings and her passion for sports started to grow. As a student at Freeland High School, Tori raised the bar for her own team and her competitors. It wasn't long before her talent was noticed by the coaches at MSU.

When starting her basketball career at MSU, Tori knew that was where she wanted to be. She also knew that she had a chance to do something great. Regarded by her coaches as having the highest basketball IQ on the court, Tori has proven her acumen time and again. Now, as the all-time point leader for MSU, she has written her own legacy into the record book as one of the best college women's basket players of all time.

Tori has overcome obstacles and excelled at the highest level of competition. On behalf

of the Fourth & Eighth Congressional Districts of Michigan, we are honored today to recognize Tori Jankoska for her lifetime of work on and off the court and wish her all the best in her future endeavors.

IN RECOGNITION OF ANA SKIDMORE OF TWOFOOT CREATIVE FOR RECEIVING THE ATHENA ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP AWARD

HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 31, 2017

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ana Skidmore, entrepreneur and founder of TwoFoot Creative, for receiving the ATHENA Organizational Leadership Award. Ana has achieved business success through her hard work and vision in founding TwoFoot Creative, a wedding and event planning organization that has successfully served the community for 10 years.

Founded in 2007 by Ms. Skidmore, TwoFoot Creative has established a reputation as a premier wedding and planning organization that effectively serves its clients. The organization offers full service wedding planning services, including negotiating contracts, invitation design and comprehensive scheduling of the wedding week for clients. TwoFoot Creative has received many accolades for its outstanding service, including being named a Knot ''Best Of'' wedding planning company for seven years in a row. In addition, colleagues have named TwoFoot as having the ''Best Team'' at the wedding industry's Event Professionals in Class Awards that are held annually in Metro Detroit. These awards and distinctions speak to the high quality of work and effective service that the organization provides to its clients.

The success and acclaim of TwoFoot Creative speaks to the vision and tireless efforts of Ms. Skidmore and the other team members. Starting a successful company requires a unique combination of entrepreneurial spirit, vision and leadership that few possess. Having created an award-winning organization that consistently wins praise from its clients and other industry professionals, Ms. Skidmore has proven to exemplify these values. I am proud to recognize Ms. Skidmore and TwoFoot Creative for their success, and it is my hope that they continue to grow and serve the community in the coming years.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Ana Skidmore for her outstanding entrepreneurial success. The acclaim and business success of TwoFoot are inspiring and deserving of the ATHENA Organizational Leadership Award.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 31, 2017

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted NAY on Roll Call No. 68.

INTRODUCTION OF THE JOINT RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL OF THE FINAL RULE OF THE UNITED STATES FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE RELATING TO MITIGATION POLICY

HON. DAN NEWHOUSE

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 31, 2017

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce legislation disapproving of the Compensatory Mitigation Policy (CMP) rule finalized in the final days of the Obama administration. On December 23, 2016, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) released its final Endangered Species Act (ESA) CMP, which violates existing environmental law and puts future economic development across the country at risk. This rule establishes policies that are a significant departure from existing practices regarding compensatory mitigation and limits private-sector, voluntary involvement in developing compensatory mitigation plans. My legislation utilizes the Congressional Review Act to block this dangerous rule and will prevent the potential catastrophic impacts it would have on our nation's economy.

The CMP exceeds USFWS' statutory authority by adopting the mitigation goals of ''net conservation gain'' and ''no net loss,'' which are not grounded in federal statute. This directive is a significant departure from existing practice and runs counter to current law. The policy will lead to an extensive, time-consuming valuation process in which development projects are required to initiate an assessment process, as well as undertake advance mitigation that could tie up many economic projects in burdensome, costly procedures.

This overbroad policy could jeopardize an extensive range of economic development activities in every corner of the U.S., while also impacting a wide-range of industries, including: agriculture, forestry, mining, natural resource development, energy production, conservation projects, and building and road construction. The final CMP will also have significant strategic, legal, and financial implications for development projects large and small, while ensnaring future economic growth in a maze of permitting setbacks and bureaucratic red-tape.

We must protect our country's economic future and ensure burdensome rules and regulations promulgated by a bloated bureaucracy do not threaten desperately needed job creation and economic growth. The integrity of the law is threatened by misguided federal policies like the USFWS's CMP rule, and I urge all members to join me in supporting this legislation to block yet another oppressive and overreaching regulation promulgated by the previous administration.

RECOGNIZING SCOTT GRAVES

HON. DAVID ROUZER

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 31, 2017

Mr. ROUZER. Mr. Speaker, Scott Graves will soon be leaving his post as staff director for the House Agriculture Committee to pursue new opportunities, and it is my privilege to recognize his many contributions over the years to farm and ranch families all across America.

Scott has served as a trusted advisor to Chairman MIKE CONAWAY for nearly twelve years. His start as an intern is a familiar one to many Capitol Hill staffers. In Scott's case, he started out as an intern for the House Agriculture Committee in January 2005. It was at that time when I first met Scott. I was a staffer myself back in 2005, working for U.S. Senator Elizabeth Dole.

Scott's knowledge, sound judgment and strong work ethic eventually elevated him to staff director of the Committee where he has led efforts to increase innovation in agriculture, improve markets, strengthen our farm economy, reform the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, repeal the Country of Origin of Labelling law and much more. Without question, Scott has been a vital contributor to the many legislative successes of the House Agriculture Committee.

There's no doubt Scott will continue to have great success in his new endeavors. On behalf of the fine farm families and consumers all across North Carolina, thank you, Scott, for your hard work and dedication to America's farm and ranch families and our rural communities. You will certainly be missed.

HONORING BRUCE DEPUYT

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 31, 2017

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Bruce DePuyt, who will be leaving NewsChannel 8 this week after over two decades of outstanding journalism and service to Washington, D.C. and the national capital region.

For 23 years, Washingtonians have turned to Bruce for insight and in-depth reporting on local and national news. Bruce had a talent for bringing local and regional voices together—from elected officials and police chiefs to community leaders—to speak and inform D.C. and area residents on a host of topics important to this region and the nation. Even before arriving at NewsChannel 8, however, people could turn to Bruce for trusted journalism wherever he was reporting.

A graduate of the University of Maryland in 1984, Bruce got an early start in journalism as a college radio station student-host calling women's basketball. After graduating, he went on to work as a reporter and anchor at WVIR in Charlottesville, Virginia, and produced an award-winning weekly talk show, ''21 This Week,'' on Cable News 2 in Montgomery County, Maryland, where he won a Cable Ace award. In 1993, Bruce joined the team at NewsChannel 8, where he has been ever since.

Bruce's career at NewsChannel 8 has been marked by smart commentary, excellent reporting, and penetrating questioning. In 2013, he was named the Best TV Personality by the Washington Blade magazine, and Washington City Paper readers named him the Best Newsmaker in 2010. For his brilliant reporting, Bruce was also awarded the Cronkite Award

by the University of Southern California's Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism. Since 2002, Bruce has been the host of Newstalk, a daily mid-morning news show, where he has hosted more than 11,000 guests over 3,300 episodes. Bruce continues to be an active and beloved member of both his community and his church, the All Souls Unitarian Church, where he was a former trustee. For his work, Bruce was given the Pillar of Faith Award by the Howard University School of Divinity.

Mr. Speaker, Members of Congress are familiar with Bruce's excellence here on television. I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Bruce DePuyt for 23 years of extraordinary work and service as news anchor and reporter with NewsChannel 8 and as a favorite of the national capital region.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PETER A. DeFAZIO

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 31, 2017

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, January 30, 2017, I was not present for votes due to illness. Had I been present, on Roll Call vote 66, I would have voted YES, and on Roll Call vote 67, I would have voted YES.

IN RECOGNITION OF SUE SCHOONER OF GIRLS' GROUP FOR RECEIVING THE ATHENA ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP AWARD

HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 31, 2017

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Sue Schooner, founder of Girls' Group, for receiving the ATHENA Organizational Leadership Award. Sue has leveraged her background in management to create a first-class organization that helps girls in need.

Ms. Schooner founded Girls Group in 2003 to provide support for young women to achieve self-sufficiency by becoming first-generation college graduates. The group supports approximately 300 middle school through college age girls through a variety of programs. These include in-school programs in participating middle and high schools that promote academic and college planning, as well as one-on-one mentoring and homework support groups to provide further academic assistance. Girls Group also offers College Prep tours to historically black colleges and universities as well as other colleges in the Midwest. This comprehensive offering has been integral to providing young women with access to opportunities and establishing support networks to help them succeed academically and professionally.

The growth and success of Girls Group is a testament to Ms. Schooner's hard work and dedication to the organization. Through the work of Girls Group staff and volunteers, hundreds of young women have been empowered to pursue their dreams. The group has also played a pivotal role in helping the girls' emotional and life skills development, and the record of success in improving these girls' lives speaks to the impact that Girls Group has had. The organization and staff continue to inspire, and it is my hope that the organization continues to be a positive force in the community in the years ahead.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Sue Schooner for her work with Girls Group. The group has enabled young women in southeast Michigan to achieve their academic and life goals through its multifaceted academic and support programs.

CELEBRATING THE 80TH BIRTHDAY OF MR. CHESTER ZAWADSKI OF PACIFIC, MISSOURI

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 31, 2017

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a constituent of mine, Mr. Chester Zawadski, who celebrated his 80th birthday in November 2016. His family is looking forward to celebrating this momentous occasion with him in February of this year.

Mr. Zawadski bravely served our nation in the Army during the Korean War. His years of service included time at Ft. Leonard Wood, Missouri and also in Germany.

Hammond, Indiana is where Mr. Zawadski was born and raised. He and his wife Beverly lived in Indiana until his retirement from serving as a Lake County Probation Officer in 2009. At the time of his retirement Mr. and Mrs. Zawadski moved to Pacific, Missouri to live closer to their grandchildren. Chester and Beverly were married for 40 years until her passing.

Throughout his life Mr. Zawadski has enjoyed staying up to date on current political events, spending time with his grandchildren, raising chickens and reading. He has also been involved with Toastmasters and the Knights of Columbus.

I ask you to join me in recognizing Mr. Chester Zawadski on the celebration of his 80th birthday.

PRESIDENT TRUMP'S DISGRACEFUL EXECUTIVE ORDER

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 31, 2017

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in opposition to President Trump's disgraceful Executive Order indefinitely suspending the settlement of Syrian refugees and banning anyone from six other Muslim-majority countries from coming to America. This ill-conceived and unconstitutional action is immoral, un-American, and a threat to our national security.

The refugees President Trump is turning away are in desperate circumstances. Like the millions of American Immigrants who came before them, they are searching for a better future for themselves and their families. By banning their entry, the Trump Administration dishonors the commitment we made to countless women and children from Syria who have successfully complied with our strict vetting process. This irresponsible executive order does little to protect us from terrorism, but it does institutionalize a prejudice against Muslims. Moreover, it makes us more susceptible to home-grown terrorism. In a nation founded by immigrants, it is our duty as Americans to call upon President Trump to rescind this executive order.

Daily Digest

HIGHLIGHTS

Senate confirmed the nomination of Elaine L. Chao, of Kentucky, to be Secretary of Transportation.

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S499–S540

Tillerson Nomination—Agreement: Senate continued consideration of the nomination of Rex W. Tillerson, of Texas, to be Secretary of State, post-cloture. **Pages S503–37**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that all time during recess or adjournment of the Senate count post-cloture on the nomination; and that following the prayer and pledge, the remaining post-cloture time be equally divided between the two leaders, or their designees. **Page S503**

Nomination Confirmed: Senate confirmed the following nomination:

By 93 yeas to 6 nays, 1 responding present (Vote No. EX. 35), Elaine L. Chao, of Kentucky, to be Secretary of Transportation. **Pages S501–03**

Messages from the House: **Page S539**

Executive Communications: **Page S539**

Executive Reports of Committees: **Pages S539–40**

Additional Statements: **Page S537**

Authorities for Committees to Meet: **Page S540**

Privileges of the Floor: **Page S540**

Record Votes: One record vote was taken today. (Total—35) **Page S503**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 12 noon and adjourned at 8:01 p.m., until 12 noon on Wednesday, February 1, 2017. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Acting Majority Leader in today's Record on page S540.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry: Committee ordered favorably reported an original resolution authorizing expenditures by the Committee, and adopted its rules of procedure for the 115th Congress.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: Committee ordered favorably reported the following business items:

An original resolution authorizing expenditures by the committee, adopted its rules of procedure for the 115th Congress; and

The nominations of Ryan Zinke, of Montana, to be Secretary of the Interior, and James Richard Perry, of Texas, to be Secretary of Energy.

Also, Committee announced the following subcommittee assignments:

Subcommittee on Energy: Senators Gardner (Chair), Risch, Flake, Daines, Sessions, Alexander, Hoeven, Cassidy, Portman, Manchin, Wyden, Sanders, Franken, Heinrich, King, Duckworth, and Cortez Masto.

Subcommittee on Public Lands, Forests, and Mining: Senators Lee (Chair), Barrasso, Risch, Flake, Daines, Gardner, Sessions, Alexander, Hoeven, Cassidy, Wyden, Stabenow, Franken, Manchin, Heinrich, Hirono, and Cortez Masto.

Subcommittee on National Parks: Senators Daines (Chair), Barrasso, Lee, Gardner, Alexander, Hoeven, Portman, Hirono, Sanders, Stabenow, Heinrich, King, and Duckworth.

Subcommittee on Water and Power: Senators Flake (Chair), Barrasso, Risch, Lee, Sessions, Cassidy, Portman, King, Wyden, Sanders, Franken, Manchin, and Duckworth.

Senators Murkowski and Cantwell are ex officio members of each subcommittee.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Foreign Relations: Committee ordered favorably reported an original resolution authorizing expenditures by the Committee, and adopted its rules of procedure for the 115th Congress.

Also, Committee announced the following subcommittee assignments:

Subcommittee on Near East, South Asia, Central Asia, and Counterterrorism: Senators Risch (Chair), Rubio, Johnson, Young, Portman, Kaine, Menendez, Murphy, and Booker.

Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere, Transnational Crime, Civilian Security, Democracy, Human Rights, and Global Women's Issues: Senators Rubio (Chair), Johnson, Flake, Gardner, Isakson, Menendez, Udall, Shaheen, and Kaine.

Subcommittee on Europe and Regional Security Cooperation: Senators Johnson (Chair), Risch, Barrasso, Portman, Paul, Murphy, Markey, Menendez, and Shaheen.

Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health Policy: Senators Flake (Chair), Young, Barrasso, Isakson, Paul, Booker, Coons, Udall, and Merkley.

Subcommittee on East Asia, the Pacific, and International Cybersecurity Policy: Senators Gardner (Chair), Risch, Rubio, Barrasso, Isakson, Markey, Merkley, Murphy, and Kaine.

Subcommittee on Multilateral International Development, Multilateral Institutions, and International Economic, Energy, and Environmental Policy: Senators Young (Chair), Flake, Gardner, Barrasso, Portman, Merkley, Udall, Coons, and Markey.

Subcommittee on State Department and USAID Management, International Operations, and Bilateral International Development: Senators Isakson (Chair), Risch, Rubio, Portman, Paul, Shaheen, Coons, Booker, and Udall.

Senators Corker and Cardin are ex officio members of each subcommittee.

NORTH KOREA

Committee on Foreign Relations: Committee concluded a hearing to examine confronting the North Korea threat, focusing on reassessing policy options, after receiving testimony from Nicholas Eberstadt, American Enterprise Institute, and Scott A. Snyder, Council on Foreign Relations, both of Washington, D.C.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions: Committee ordered favorably reported the nomination of Elisabeth Prince DeVos, of Michigan, to be Secretary of Education.

Committee adopted its rules of procedure for the 115th Congress; and

Committee announced the following subcommittee assignments:

Subcommittee on Children and Families: Senators Paul (Chair), Murkowski, Burr, Cassidy, Young, Hatch, Roberts, Casey, Sanders, Franken, Bennet, Kaine, and Hassan.

Subcommittee on Employment and Workplace Safety: Senators Isakson (Chair), Roberts, Scott, Burr, Paul, Cassidy, Young, Franken, Casey, Whitehouse, Baldwin, Murphy, and Warren.

Subcommittee on Primary Health and Retirement Security: Senators Enzi (Chair), Burr, Collins, Cassidy, Young, Hatch, Roberts, Scott, Murkowski, Sanders, Bennet, Whitehouse, Baldwin, Murphy, Warren, Kaine, and Hassan.

Senators Alexander and Murray are ex officio members of each subcommittee.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Indian Affairs: Committee ordered favorably reported an original resolution authorizing expenditures by the Committee, and adopted its rules of procedure for the 115th Congress.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship: Committee ordered favorably reported the following business items:

An original resolution authorizing expenditures by the committee, adopted its rules of procedure for the 115th Congress; and

The nomination of Linda E. McMahon, of Connecticut, to be Administrator of the Small Business Administration.

BUSINESS MEETING

Select Committee on Intelligence: Committee ordered favorably reported an original resolution authorizing expenditures by the committee during the 115th Congress.

INTELLIGENCE

Select Committee on Intelligence: Committee held closed hearings on intelligence matters, receiving testimony from officials of the intelligence community.

Committee recessed subject to the call.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 27 public bills, H.R. 753–779; 1 private bill, H.R. 780; and 11 resolutions, H.J. Res. 50–55; H. Con. Res. 15; and H. Res. 73, 75–77 were introduced.

Pages H817–820

Additional Cosponsors: **Page H821**

Report Filed: A report was filed today as follows:

H. Res. 74, providing for consideration of the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 36) providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the final rule of the Bureau of Land Management relating to ''Waste Prevention, Production Subject to Royalties, and Resource Conservation'', and providing for consideration of the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 37) disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of Defense, the General Services Administration, and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration relating to the Federal Acquisition Regulation (H. Rept. 115–8).

Page H817

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Fleischmann to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. **Page H749**

Recess: The House recessed at 11:06 a.m. and reconvened at 12 noon. **Page H757**

Suspensions: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measures:

Amending title 49, United States Code, to ensure reliable air service in American Samoa: H.R. 276, amended, a bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to ensure reliable air service in American Samoa; **Pages H771–72**

Agreed to amend the title so as to read: ''To amend title 49, United States Code, to ensure reliable air service in American Samoa.''. **Page H772**

First Responder Identification of Emergency Needs in Disaster Situations Act: H.R. 58, amended, to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to submit a study on the circumstances which may impact the effectiveness and availability of first responders before, during, or after a terrorist threat or event; **Pages H772–75**

Department of Homeland Security Insider Threat and Mitigation Act of 2017: H.R. 666, to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish the Insider Threat Program; **Pages H775–76**

Department of Homeland Security Clearance Management and Administration Act: H.R. 697, to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to improve the management and administration of the security clearance processes throughout the Department of Homeland Security; **Pages H776–78**

Fusion Center Enhancement Act of 2017: H.R. 642, to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to enhance the partnership between the Department of Homeland Security and the National Network of Fusion Centers; **Pages H778–81**

Counterterrorism Advisory Board Act of 2017: H.R. 526, amended, to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish in the Department of Homeland Security a board to coordinate and integrate departmental intelligence, activities, and policy related to counterterrorism; **Pages H781–82**

Airport Perimeter and Access Control Security Act of 2017: H.R. 665, to modernize and enhance airport perimeter and access control security by requiring updated risk assessments and the development of security strategies; **Pages H782–83**

Border Security Technology Accountability Act of 2017: H.R. 505, amended, to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to strengthen accountability for deployment of border security technology at the Department of Homeland Security; **Pages H784–85**

CBRN Intelligence and Information Sharing Act of 2017: H.R. 677, to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear intelligence and information sharing functions of the Office of Intelligence and Analysis of the Department of Homeland Security and to require dissemination of information analyzed by the Department to entities with responsibilities relating to homeland security; **Pages H785–86**

Department of Homeland Security Support to Fusion Centers Act of 2017: H.R. 678, to require an assessment of fusion center personnel needs;

Pages H786–87

Department of Homeland Security Stop Asset and Vehicle Excess Act: H.R. 366, to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to direct the Under Secretary for Management of the Department of Homeland Security to make certain improvements in managing the Department's vehicle fleet;

Pages H788–89

Department of Homeland Security Acquisition Documentation Integrity Act of 2017: H.R. 347, to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to provide for requirements relating to documentation for major acquisition programs; **Pages H790–91**

Transit Security Grant Program Flexibility Act: H.R. 549, to amend the Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007 to clarify certain allowable uses of funds for public transportation security assistance grants and establish periods of performance for such grants; **Pages H791–92**

First Responder Access to Innovative Technologies Act: H.R. 687, to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish a process to review applications for certain grants to purchase equipment or systems that do not meet or exceed any applicable national voluntary consensus standards; **Pages H792–93**

Cyber Preparedness Act of 2017: H.R. 584, to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to enhance preparedness and response capabilities for cyber attacks, bolster the dissemination of homeland security information related to cyber threats; **Pages H793–94**

Gains in Global Nuclear Detection Architecture Act: H.R. 690, to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to enhance certain duties of the Domestic Nuclear Detection Office; **Pages H794–96**

Securing the Cities Act of 2017: H.R. 655, to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish the Securing the Cities program to enhance the ability of the United States to detect and prevent terrorist attacks and other high consequence events utilizing nuclear or other radiological materials that pose a high risk to homeland security in high-risk urban areas; **Pages H796–97**

Medical Preparedness Allowable Use Act: H.R. 437, to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to codify authority under existing grant guidance authorizing use of Urban Area Security Initiative and State Homeland Security Grant Program funding for enhancing medical preparedness, medical surge capacity, and mass prophylaxis capabilities; and **Pages H797–98**

United States-Israel Cybersecurity Cooperation Enhancement Act of 2017: H.R. 612, to establish a grant program at the Department of Homeland Security to promote cooperative research and development between the United States and Israel on cybersecurity. **Pages H798–H800**

Disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of the Interior known as the Stream Protection Rule—Rule for consideration: The House agreed to H. Res. 70, providing for consideration of the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 38) disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of the Interior known as the Stream Protection Rule, by a recorded vote of 236 ayes to 186 noes, Roll No. 69, after the previous question was ordered by a yea-and-nay vote of 236 yeas to 183 nays, Roll No. 68. **Pages H761–71**

Quorum Calls—Votes: One yea-and-nay vote and one recorded vote developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H801 and H801–02. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 7:09 p.m.

Committee Meetings

MEDICAID OVERSIGHT: EXISTING PROBLEMS AND WAYS TO STRENGTHEN THE PROGRAM

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations held a hearing entitled ''Medicaid Oversight: Existing Problems and Ways to Strengthen the Program''. Testimony was heard from Ann Maxwell, Assistant Inspector General, Office of Evaluation and Inspections, Office of Inspector General, Department of Health and Human Services; Carolyn L. Yocom, Director, Health Care, Government Accountability Office; and public witnesses.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Full Committee began a business meeting on the committee's oversight and authorization plan; and markup on H.R. 396, the ''Tax Accountability Act of 2017''; H.R. 194, the ''Federal Agency Mail Management Act of 2017''; H.R. 702, the ''Federal Employee Antidiscrimination Act of 2017''; H.R. 679, the ''Construction Consensus Procurement Improvement Act of 2017''; H.R. 653, the ''Federal Intern Protection Act of 2017''; and H.R. 657, the ''Follow the Rules Act''.

FRAUD, WASTE AND ABUSE UNDER THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Subcommittee on Health Care, Benefits and Administrative Rules held a hearing entitled ''Fraud, Waste and Abuse under the Affordable Care Act''. Testimony was heard from Vicki Robinson, Senior Counselor for Policy, Office of Inspector General, Department of Health and Human Services; John Dicken, Director, Health Care, Government Accountability Office; and a public witness.

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION DISAPPROVING THE FINAL RULE SUBMITTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE, THE GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION, AND THE NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION RELATING TO THE FEDERAL ACQUISITION REGULATION; HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL UNDER CHAPTER 8 OF TITLE 5, UNITED STATES CODE, OF THE FINAL RULE OF THE BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT RELATING TO "WASTE PREVENTION, PRODUCTION SUBJECT TO ROYALTIES, AND RESOURCE CONSERVATION"

Committee on Rules: Full Committee held a hearing on H.J. Res. 37, disapproving the final rule submitted by the Department of Defense, the General Services Administration, and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration relating to the Federal Acquisition Regulation; and H.J. Res. 36, providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the final rule of the Bureau of Land Management relating to "Waste Prevention, Production Subject to Royalties, and Resource Conservation". The committee granted, by voice vote, a closed rule for H.J. Res. 36. The rule provides one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Natural Resources. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the joint resolution. The rule provides that the joint resolution shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against provisions in the joint resolution. The rule provides one motion to recommit. Additionally, the rule grants a closed rule for H.J. Res. 37. The rule provides one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the joint resolution. The rule provides that the joint resolution shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against provisions in the joint resolution. The rule provides one motion to recommit. Testimony was heard from Chairman Bishop of Utah, Chairman Foxx, and Representatives Lowenthal, Scott of Virginia, and Mitchell.

ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure: Full Committee held an organizational meeting for the 115th Congress. The committee adopted its rules, authorization and oversight plan, and subcommittee chairs and assignments.

ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: Full Committee held an organizational meeting for the 115th Congress. The committee adopted its rules and oversight agenda and approved resolutions pertaining to subcommittee ratios, vice-chairman and subcommittee chairman, subcommittee ranking members, subcommittee memberships, and committee staff.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2017

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on the Budget: to hold hearings to examine the Congressional Budget Office's budget and economic outlook, focusing on fiscal years 2017–2027, 10:30 a.m., SD–608.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: to hold hearings to examine a growth agenda, focusing on reducing unnecessary regulatory burdens, 10 a.m., SH–216.

Committee on Environment and Public Works: organizational business meeting to consider committee rules, an original resolution authorizing expenditures by the committee during the 115th Congress, and the nomination of Scott Pruitt, of Oklahoma, to be Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, 10:45 a.m., SD–406.

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions: to hold hearings to examine the Affordable Care Act, focusing on stabilizing the individual health insurance market, 10 a.m., SD–430.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: organizational business meeting to consider committee rules, and an original resolution authorizing expenditures by the committee during the 115th Congress; to be immediately followed by a closed briefing from Department of Homeland Security officials, 9:40 a.m., SD–342.

Committee on the Judiciary: to continue an organizational business meeting to consider committee rules, S. 178, to prevent elder abuse and exploitation and improve the justice system's response to victims in elder abuse and exploitation cases, and the nomination of Jeff Sessions, of Alabama, to be Attorney General, Department of Justice, 10:30 a.m., SD–226.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: to hold hearings to examine the nomination of David J. Shulkin, of Pennsylvania, to be Secretary of Veterans Affairs, 2:30 p.m., SD–106.

Special Committee on Aging: organizational business meeting to consider committee rules, and an original resolution authorizing expenditures by the committee during the 115th Congress; to be immediately followed by a hearing to examine stopping senior scams, focusing on developments in financial fraud affecting seniors, 2:30 p.m., SD–562.

House

Committee on Agriculture, Full Committee, organizational meeting for the 115th Congress, 10 a.m., 1300 Longworth.

Committee on Armed Services, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''The State of the World: National Security Threats and Challenges'', 10 a.m., 2118 Rayburn.

Committee on Education and the Workforce, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Rescuing Americans from the Failed Health Care Law and Advancing Patient-Centered Solutions'', 10 a.m., 2175 Rayburn.

Committee on Energy and Commerce, Subcommittee on Health, hearing entitled ''Strengthening Medicaid and Prioritizing the Most Vulnerable'', 10 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Energy, hearing entitled ''The Electricity Sector's Efforts to Respond to Cybersecurity Threats'', 10:15 a.m., 2322 Rayburn.

Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade; and Subcommittee on Europe, Eurasia, and Emerging Threats, joint hearing entitled ''Next Steps in the 'Special Relationship'—Impact of a U.S.-U.K. Free Trade Agreement'', 10 a.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Committee on Homeland Security, Full Committee, organizational meeting for the 115th Congress, 10 a.m., HVC–210.

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Empowering the Inspectors General'', 10 a.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Government Operations, hearing entitled ''Five Years Later: A Review of the Whistleblower Protection Enhancement Act'', 2 p.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Committee on Small Business, Full Committee, organizational meeting for the 115th Congress, 11 a.m., 2360 Rayburn.

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Building a 21st Century Infrastructure for America'', 10 a.m., 2167 Rayburn.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

12 noon, Wednesday, February 1

Senate Chamber

Program for Wednesday: Senate will continue consideration of the nomination of Rex W. Tillerson, of Texas, to be Secretary of State, post-cloture, and vote on confirmation of the nomination at approximately 2:30 p.m.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

10 a.m., Wednesday, February 1

House Chamber

Program for Wednesday: Complete consideration of H.J. Res. 38—Disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of the Interior known as the Stream Protection Rule. Consideration of H.J. Res. 41—Providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of a rule submitted by the Securities and Exchange Commission relating to ''Disclosure of Payments by Resource Extraction Issuers'' (Subject to a Rule).

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