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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. ROTHFUS).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
March 1, 2017.

I hereby appoint the Honorable KEITH J. ROTHFUS 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.

HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN CUBA

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, appalling human rights violations take place in my native homeland of Cuba on a regular basis and have only gotten worse in the past few years. Just last week, the Castro regime sentenced a man to a year in prison. What was his crime? He did not watch Fidel Castro's funeral on the television. And just a few months ago, Danilo Maldonado, also known as El Sexto, was arrested for writing ''he's gone'' on a wall after Fidel Castro's death.

Mr. Speaker, the Cuban people lack the most basic of human rights, and they are punished for any sentiment that is not in accordance with the Castro regime. The former administration of this wonderful country failed the people of Cuba.

Since the change in the Cuba policy, reports show that the humanitarian crisis has only gotten worse on the island. The 2017 Freedom in the World report put out by Freedom House showed that arbitrary arrests were at the highest level in 7 years. The Cuban Commission for Human Rights and National Reconciliation documented a monthly average of 862 arbitrary detentions between January and November of last year.

Raul Castro tries to silence the Cuban people by subjecting human rights defenders, journalists, and peaceful protesters to arbitrary arrest and short-term detentions. Castro also tries to cut any relation between the opposition and outside groups.

Just last week, Mr. Speaker, Luis Almagro, the Secretary General of the Organization of American States, the OAS, was denied entry to Cuba. He was to receive the first Oswaldo Paya Liberty and Life Award. Paya was a human rights activist murdered by the Castro regime just 5 years ago. Almagro was to be presented with the award by Paya's daughter, but the Castro regime called this ''an unacceptable provocation''—receiving an award.

Similarly, the former Education Minister of Chile denied entry to Cuba and former Mexican President denied entry to Cuba simply because they planned to meet with true human rights activists and defenders on the island.

I challenge these U.S. congressional delegations that go to Cuba to march with the Ladies in White on any given Sunday. Here they are. Here are their faces. Will they be brave enough to do so, to march with these defenseless ladies, or do they just want a junket to glamorize Cuba?

Not to mention the many human rights abuses that go unreported, Mr. Speaker. Instead, the Cuban people risk their lives to record abuses, to report them to outside organizations.

The Ladies in White, Las Damas de Blanco, march every Sunday, peacefully protesting the unjust and barbaric imprisonment of dissidents.

Look at these images, Mr. Speaker, and the stories of the women on these posters. They are regularly beaten and arrested, yet they continue fighting for the freedom of their country. Protesters like Xiomara de las Mercedes Cruz Miranda, who has been in prison since last April; or Maria del Carmen Cala Aguilera, in prison since April of 2015; or Juana Castillo Acosta, who was beaten in her own home, and then sentenced to 5 years in house arrest.

There are so many women to highlight, so I will flip the posters.

Here are some other faces and other names: Yunet, Marieta, Jacqueline, Marta, and Aymara Nieto Munoz, right over here, just a handful of the many women who are in prison today in Castro's gulags.

Mr. Speaker, these are just a few of the many who are persecuted daily for opposing the Castro regime. That is their crime. They are simply tossed in jail in Castro's effort to silence the people. But the Cuban people remain strong in the face of the repressive Castro regime. They do not give up hope of seeing a free and democratic Cuba.

I see that same hope, Mr. Speaker, in the eyes of my constituents, Cuban Americans like me and my family, who were given the opportunity to create a life in a country—our country—that stands for everything that Castro is against: freedom of speech, assembly, petition, the rule of law, and democracy.

☐ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., ☐ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.
Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

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Mr. Speaker, we must stand with the people of Cuba. We must stand against a Castro regime that seeks to benefit only itself. We must give the Cuban people hope and commit to help them achieve freedom and democracy.

It is the duty of the new administration to review the previous administration's failed policy and start working for the people of Cuba and against the Castro regime.

WE MUST RESIST NOW

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, in this Chamber last night, as I listened to the President's address to the joint session, I could only think of one word: ''resist.''

Whether one voted for Donald Trump or not, we are all obligated to resist his incoherent and contradictory pledge to dismantle the protections of the Affordable Care Act with empty slogans.

Perhaps the most revealing moment of the Trump administration so far was his declaration Monday in his meeting with America's Governors that health care is complex. ''Who knew?'' he said.

Well, anybody who has done any work, any research, or had even had conversations with the people who rely on health care, who study health care, or deliver health care. This was not a secret that it is complex. Yet, for months, he has made reckless, misleading comments and has unleashed efforts to make the Affordable Care Act less effective and to destabilize insurance markets.

We should resist his cynical and cruel step of singling out people who have somehow been harmed by illegal immigrants as a special category. Why not an office dealing with the far greater number of Americans whose lives are turned upside down as a result of gun violence—which, by the way, is the method of choice for homegrown terrorists who, experts in his own government point out, are responsible for more terrorist acts and violence and death of Americans than people who are foreign-born.

We should resist empty promises to rebuild and renew America by failing to provide any meaningful detail. That squanders an opportunity for bipartisan cooperation and a badly-needed effort to revitalize America and put millions of Americans to work at jobs that can't be outsourced overseas and that will strengthen each community. It is important to resist an administration program long on divisive rhetoric, misinformation, and lost opportunities.

The least popular new President in our history, as near as we can tell, has mobilized millions of Americans to be involved, to resist. It is critical that Americans of good conscience, who care about the future of their country and want to change the trajectory and tone of politics, dive in now to protect programs they care about which are under assault, to reject shortsighted policies that will spend billions of dollars on things we don't need, like even more nuclear weapons. How many times do we have to be able to blow up the world in order to achieve deterrence?

We should resist spending less on critical parts of our defense. For example, the diplomacy and international aid saves human lives; it undercuts the calls to radicalism for people without hope. Making the job of our diplomats and our aid workers harder and more dangerous and less effective should be resisted at every turn.

We should resist draconian budget cuts and hiring freezes that undercut the opportunity to take care of our veterans, especially their health. Their health is a long overdue promise that Trump has occasionally talked about but is now actively undermining.

We should resist unparalleled potential budget assaults on things that make a difference to our communities, like arts, public broadcasting, programs for children, things that matter deeply.

Together, we can resist these destructive policies in Congress, in the budget, and in legislation, while we strengthen their support for similar programs at home. Everybody should resist by being involved in their community. There is something every one of us cares about at home and on the national stage. We should resist politics of division, hatred, and hopelessly flawed and failing priorities.

We should resist. It is within our power to dramatically change the political equation. Remember, Donald Trump lost the popular vote by almost 3 million votes, while Democrats picked up seats in the House and the Senate. The country is much more evenly divided, and they are not united in support of this administration.

By doing our job now, it makes it possible to build on the successes by making sure everyone has a chance to participate in the voting process. Fight efforts at voter suppression.

It is time for all of us to engage in that resistance that adds energy and hope across America. It must start now and will continue until we defeat hate, bigotry, shortsighted policy, and misallocated priorities.

America can halt and reverse the damage that has been set in motion. We should resist. We should resist now.

RARE DISEASE WEEK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. LANCE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, this week we recognize the work of the tireless advocates fighting rare diseases.

I have the honor of serving as the Republican chair of the House of Representatives Rare Disease Caucus. I consider it one of the greatest responsibilities of my service to work for innovative treatment and new technologies and to build an atmosphere of appreciation and understanding in Congress for the hard work of all of the patient advocates. Their passion is often driven by the care of loved ones, and their personal stories are profiles in courage.

Hearing from thousands of advocates, many of whom are here in Washington this week, gives the members of the caucus renewed energy and purpose. Events held during Rare Disease Week here on Capitol Hill and at the NIH in Bethesda highlight what has been accomplished and what still needs to be done.

One of those champions joined us in the House Chamber just last evening. I was very proud that President Trump invited New Jersey resident Megan Crowley to his joint session address. Megan's story of combating a terrible rare disease is a testament to the American spirit. Megan is now a student at Notre Dame. I salute her, her parents, and her family for their courage.

Passage of the 21st Century Cures Act was a major accomplishment in the last Congress—indeed, in my opinion, it was the most important piece of legislation passed during the 114th Congress. We worked in a bicameral, bipartisan way. We worked with the White House and with the Department of Health and Human Services. It passed overwhelmingly in the House and in the Senate, and now it is the law of the land.

I am encouraged that the Trump administration will carefully implement its provisions to our healthcare system, improving the healthcare system and to help spur the next great medical innovations.

Congress will join and help direct that effort and proceed through the appropriations process to match progress and research funds.

□ 1015

Right now it takes 15 years for a new drug to move from the lab to the local pharmacy. The CURES Act modernizes clinical trials to expedite the development of new drugs and devices, removes regulatory uncertainty in the development of new medical apps, and breaks down barriers to facilitate increased research collaboration.

Patients with degenerative conditions, cancers, and rare diseases await the genius of these new solutions. We need to do everything we can to help find these cures.

I have met with many rare disease patients, advocates, and their loved ones. Their work is inspiring, and it gives our caucus a mission and a purpose.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join the Rare Disease Caucus and help us in this great cause. In this, the week that we recognize the work of the tireless advocates across the Nation, I salute all of them for what they are doing for the American Nation.

CONNECT THE DOTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. JEFFRIES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, we have a reality show host masquerading as President of the United States of America who came to this Chamber yesterday in a Hollywood-style production and pretended to act Presidential.

But the question that we confront is one that Richard Nixon actually first raised, in November of 1973, when he said that the American people deserve to know whether or not the President is a crook. That was an observation that Richard Nixon made in the context of the Watergate scandal which began as a nickel-and-dime break-in at the Democratic National Committee headquarters in the summer of 1972, and, obviously, concluded with impeachment proceedings and the ultimate resignation of a President in disgrace.

Nixon made the observation that the American people deserve to know whether or not the President is a crook, and many people across the country are raising a similar question because 17 different intelligence agencies have concluded that the Russians, at the explicit direction of Vladimir Putin, interfered in our election for the purpose of helping Donald Trump. Yet, it is hard to get an independent investigation going in this place because my friends on the other side of the aisle continue to put party ahead of the country.

But that is just the beginning. We know that, as early as December of 2015, at least four different cronies of Donald Trump were in regular communication with Russian intelligence agents at the same time these individuals were hacking into the DNC, the DCCC, and the Clinton campaign, interfering with our democracy. These individuals were Michael Flynn, who came to become Trump's first national security adviser; Carter Page, who was his former foreign policy adviser; Paul Manafort, who was the chairman of the Trump campaign; and Roger Stone, a longtime affiliate.

If they were having these conversations at this time, we know they probably weren't talking about Russian vodka. What were they talking about? The American people deserve to know.

We also are aware that Michael Flynn had an illegal conversation, in December of 2016, with the Russian Ambassador where he discussed sanctions that were imposed on Russia because of their hacking. He then apparently lied about this conversation to the Vice President who then went out and misrepresented facts to the American people, and then Michael Flynn resigned in disgrace. But we still can't get an independent, nonpartisan investigation in this place.

But that is not all. We know that Donald Trump has not been bashful when going after our allies like Mexico or Australia or NATO or the European Union or, this past weekend, France. He is not bashful about being critical, but he can't say a negative word about Vladimir Putin, a brutal dictator. It appears that this President is more determined to make the Kremlin great again.

But that is not all. He refuses to release his taxes despite promising the American people that he was going to do so prior to November of last year. What exactly is he hiding in these tax documents? Yet, we still can't get an independent investigation.

We also know that the White House Chief of Staff engaged in potentially unlawful conversations with the FBI, perhaps trying to get them to obstruct justice in the public sphere in the midst of an ongoing investigation.

All we are saying is connect the dots. This should not be a Democratic issue or a Republican issue. The American people deserve to know whether or not the President is a crook.

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

MONROE COUNTY ROADS PROJECT

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

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor today to congratulate and express my gratitude to Monroe County leaders who recently took steps to address the impact sea level rise is having on roads and infrastructure in my district.

Earlier this year, the Monroe County Board of County Commissioners took action that sets new standards for determining elevation of future county road improvement projects to account for future sea level rise. This is a problem my district is already facing. The 2015 King Tides led to flooding that lasted more than 3 weeks in several neighborhoods, causing damage to homes and businesses and leaving my constituents unable to move freely to and from their homes.

Mr. Speaker, few cities or counties around the United States are as advanced in sea level rise planning and implementation as Monroe County. I am grateful for their leadership, and I am committed to continuing to support their efforts any way I can here in Washington, from advocating for transportation infrastructure research grants that will help ensure we have the best engineering at our disposal to working with my fellow members of the Climate Solutions Caucus to discuss and build consensus for proposals that will mitigate the effects of rising sea levels.

It is critical we continue to work toward an infrastructure package that will give our communities the funds they need to bring our roadways like those in Monroe County into the 21st century.

NATIONAL DEBT

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss one of the most serious issues facing the United States—the staggering national debt that will reach $20 trillion this month, or $62,715 per person living in our country. While the national debt grew over $9 trillion under President Obama, we now have a new opportunity here in this Congress to work together with the new administration to propose and debate solutions that will address our country's debt and get our fiscal house back in order.

Every day, families across my district sit around the dinner table and make tough decisions about how they will spend their money. Most stick to their budgets because they don't have a choice, and their government should be no different.

In 2015, I was proud to support a 2-year bipartisan budget agreement that implemented new caps on discretionary spending for both fiscal years 2016 and 2017. Too often, enormous sums are wasted due to unpredictable budget cycles and government shutdown threats. With the adoption of this 2-year budget, Congress was able to reduce wasteful spending by providing certainty to agencies as they plan for the future.

The budget also included reforms to entitlement programs, which is the largest percentage of national debt. It is important that we protect programs like Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid—the invaluable safety net for those who need the help—while working to implement reforms to make these programs solvent for future generations.

Mr. Speaker, my constituents sent me back to Washington to continue to build consensus with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to advance solutions that will rein in our national debt, and that is exactly what I plan to do. It is our duty, as elected officials, to leave our children and grandchildren with the same economic opportunities as previous generations, and that will continue to be one of my main priorities here in Congress.

SMALL BUSINESS HIGHLIGHT

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I have never had much of a sweet tooth, but it has recently been brought to my attention that my district is home to some thriving small businesses that are putting south Florida on the map for desserts.

Not far from my district office, Night Owl Cookie Company, recently named Forbes 30 Under 30, is delivering fresh-baked cookies to constituents across West Kendall. Since starting the business in 2015, when he would make and deliver cookies from his parents' kitchen, Andrew Gonzalez's success has flourished to three brick-and-mortar locations across Florida.

Further south is Knaus Berry Farm in the Redlands where families from all across south Florida will travel to pick up fresh produce and, of course, to wait in line for fresh, homemade cinnamon

rolls. Founded as a family farm in 1956, Knaus Berry has since become a Miami staple, with generation after generation making the trip to south Dade to pick up fresh produce and baked goods. The farm's success has spread, leading to partnerships with other south Florida small businesses that use their cinnamon rolls to create Knaus Berry Farm-inspired doughnuts and ice cream.

It is important that we celebrate these small businesses, Mr. Speaker, because they provide hope, opportunity, and jobs to so many Americans in my district and across the country. It is critical for us to continue advancing policies in this Congress that will continue allowing these small businesses the opportunity to provide hope and jobs for so many Americans.

A NEW AMERICAN CENTURY

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

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, 100 years ago next month, on April 2, 1917, President Woodrow Wilson stood in this Chamber and asked Congress to declare war on Germany. While the proximate cause for America's entry into World War I was Germany's campaign of unrestricted submarine warfare, Wilson and his supporters were also motivated by the belief that they, and the force of American arms, could deliver Europe from its intractable squabbles and, in so doing, make the world safe for democracy.

It was not until the following spring that the American doughboys were committed to the Western Front in large numbers, but they provided not only the additional combat power needed to break the exhausted Germans within months, but also imbued a sense of moral purpose into what had been nearly 4 years of futile slaughter.

A generation later, millions of American GIs returned to help free Europe from Adolf Hitler, while millions more pushed Japan back from its imperial conquests in Asia. This time we stayed—the living to keep the peace and prevent one form of tyranny being replaced by another and the dead as silent witnesses to the cost of liberation.

The United States worked to create the United Nations and a host of other international organizations designed to bind together humanity and avoid another catastrophic world war. We extended aid and friendship to our former enemies through the Marshall Plan and rebuilt Western Europe into an alliance of democracies, a shining contrast to the Soviet Union's eastern satellites.

America's commitment to peace was matched by an equally resolute willingness to defend freedom. When the Soviet Union blockaded Berlin in 1948, in an attempt to force the Western allies out of their half of the city, American pilots flew missions around the clock for 11 months to keep the city supplied until the Soviets relented.

Walls, barbed wire, and stifling oppression characterized the Soviet bloc and Communist Asia. Against this, the United States marshaled its greatest weapons—individual liberty, democratic governance, and a market economy to discredit and defeat communism.

When the Cold War ended four decades after it had begun, it was the fall of the Berlin Wall that symbolized the triumph of freedom and seemingly heralded a new era of peace and prosperity.

Nearly three decades have passed since communism's collapse and the global harmony that many hoped for has been replaced by an international order more challenging to American leadership and American ideals than any we have seen in my lifetime.

□ 1030

Intolerance, ultra-nationalism, and crude populism are rising across the developed world and threaten to undo the work of decades. After a century of American leadership of the international community, there was a sense among many here at home and around the world that we have lost our will to lead, that we will no longer honor President Kennedy's commitment to ''pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival and the success of liberty.''

The world sees President Trump's executive orders on immigration and asks: Where is the America that welcomed millions to its shores?

Well, I am happy to say that America is alive and well in communities across this great Nation, where people from every continent live together, eat each other's food, celebrate each other's holidays, and it also lives on in the hundreds of State Department officials who signed a Dissent Channel memorandum opposing that policy.

The world sees President Trump's threats to withdraw from Europe and Asia unless our allies ''pay up,'' and asks whether America will still defend its friends. That America, the one that stands shoulder-to-shoulder with NATO and South Korea, can be found in our troops stationed in the Baltics, Poland, and along the DMZ; and it can be found here in Congress, where there is broad support for our alliances and our allies.

The world sees President Trump threatening to drastically cut our foreign assistance budget, the literal difference between life and death for millions of the world's most vulnerable people, and asks: Where is America's legendary generosity?

That America, Mr. Speaker, is alive and well, too. Our USAID professionals, our Peace Corps volunteers, and the thousands of individual Americans working as medical missionaries or with NGOs are still making a difference around the globe every day.

The world sees President Trump's embrace of Vladimir Putin and his seeming disdain for key allies like Germany and Australia and wonders whether we will remain committed to democracy and the rule of law, or we will abandon principle in favor of expedience and flattery.

That America—the America that stood with Solidarity in Poland, with Nelson Mandela in South Africa, and with Aung San Suu Kyi in Burma—is still here, too. Millions of Americans, Democrats and Republicans, the old and young, still stand with those who seek freedom, and we will never allow this President to abandon our ideals.

And finally, Mr. Speaker, the world has seen the rise of Donald Trump and wonders whether Americans will still fight for their own democracy—are we still worthy heirs to Washington, Lincoln, and Roosevelt? The answer to that is on display every day across this country. From the millions who clogged our nation's streets on January 21st, to the calls pouring into Congress every day to demand a full investigation of the Russia scandal, the American people are engaged and ready to fight for our democracy here at home and for freedom around the world.

To those who doubt us, or wonder whether we remain true to our ideals, whether we will stand up for what we believe, and defend not only America but the beautiful idea it represents, let me borrow a phrase from John Paul Jones, the Revolutionary War hero. ''We have not yet begun to fight.''

HAPPY 150TH BIRTHDAY, NEBRASKA

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

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate my home State of Nebraska on 150 years of Statehood.

On March 1, 1867, Nebraska became the 37th State admitted to the Union. Today, as we celebrate this milestone 150 years later, we honor the legacies of the pioneers who took great risks and overcame countless obstacles in pursuit of opportunity.

Our State's pioneer heritage has always inspired me. I am proud to be a fifth-generation resident of Scotts Bluff County, Nebraska. My family was part of the Homestead Movement, settling in western Nebraska and working as sugar beet laborers to build a bright future for generations to come.

The pioneer spirit is still alive and well today, which is one of the many reasons the ''Good Life'' is such a great place to live. Nebraskans' work ethic is second to none. From the producers who have made the Third District the top-producing agriculture district in the country, to the small businesses which employ nearly half of Nebraska's workforce, productivity is a hallmark of our State.

In addition to our pioneer spirit, Nebraskans are known for their kindness. I am proud of our State's reputation as ''Nebraska Nice'' and enjoy introducing my colleagues in Washington, D.C., to Nebraska visitors any chance I get.

From Huskers football to world-class research facilities, from Runza to

Dorothy Lynch, and from the Oregon Trail to the Homestead National Monument, there is an endless list of unique reasons for Nebraskans to be proud.

I am honored to represent some 65,000 square miles of the Cornhusker State in Congress, and I will continue working every day to uphold our legacy of opportunity.

In celebration of Nebraska's 150th birthday, it is only fitting to close in true Nebraska fashion: Go Big Red.

DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE

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

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, this morning, the President is being lauded for a speech that stayed on message and was optimistic. Those accolades would be deserved if his actions bore any resemblance to his words. But, instead, we were subjected to a barrage of third grade sound bites, falsehoods, and half-truths, just like always.

The President condemned the vandalism at the Jewish cemeteries. Yet, earlier the same day, he suggested that these anti-Semitic acts were a ''false flag'' operation possibly committed by Jews themselves; which is very similar, by the way, to what White supremacist talking points circulated by David Duke are all about.

The President also condemned the racist hate crime murders in Kansas of an Indian engineer.

But why did it take him nearly a week to break his silence? Didn't this act of domestic terrorism deserve a tweet?

He didn't commit to doing anything about it until he was nudged by a tweet by Hillary Clinton.

The President says he wants to fix health care, but all the House Republicans can agree on is to kick 30 million people off their insurance.

Yes, Mr. Trump, we already knew that health care was complicated. It is good to know that you finally understand it as well.

The President said he wanted to invest in women's health, but his own party is committed to defunding Planned Parenthood. Planned Parenthood offers health care to one in five women in this country.

The President said he supports democratic ideals, but he won't advocate them around the globe. He says he supports diplomacy, but his budget cuts the State Department by 37 percent.

The President says he wants to invest $1 trillion in infrastructure, but congressional Republicans have already implied they won't give him the money.

The President said he supports the rule of law, but he is violating the Constitution's Emoluments Clause every single day.

And worst of all, the President says he supports the troops. Then he blames the military for his own botched raid. This disgraceful abandonment of responsibility makes a mockery of the grief of Chief Petty Officer Owens' widow, who wept in front of all the American people watching the speech on TV last night.

His comments earlier in the day blaming the military are really indescribable. I agree that we must never forget Ryan Owens' sacrifice, and that is why we must understand the circumstances that led to his death and follow through with his parents' request for an independent investigation.

This speech demonstrates that the President can read from a teleprompter that he so derided during his campaign. Last night, he showed a calm and civilized face to the Nation. Was this a one-night stand or a changed man who recognizes the ominous responsibilities of being President of the United States?

We have seen the President's Mr. Hyde face in his tweets and his unhinged press conferences. I think the question before us now is: Will a single night of soothing platitudes be sufficient?

Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde is something we read. What we do know is that Dr. Jekyll could not suppress his dark side. The question is: Can the President?

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

TEXAS DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

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

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker:

''Delegates of the People of Texas in General Convention at the town of Washington on the 2nd day of March, 1836.

''When a government has ceased to protect the lives, liberty, and property of the people, from whom its legitimate powers are derived, and for the advancement of those whose happiness it was instituted, and so far from being a guarantee for the enjoyment of those . . . inalienable rights, becomes an instrument in the hands of evil rulers for their oppression.

''When the Federal Republican Constitution of their country, which they have sworn to support, no longer has a substantial existence, and the whole nature of their government has been forcibly changed, without their consent, from a restricted federative republic, composed of sovereign states, to a consolidated central military despotism, in which every interest is disregarded but that of the army . . . both the internal enemies of civil liberty, the everready minions of power, and the usual instruments of tyrants.''

''When, in consequence of such acts of malfeasance, and abdication on the part of the government, anarchy prevails, and civil society is dissolved into its original elements. In such a crisis, the first law of nature, the right of self-preservation, the inherent and inalienable rights of the people to appeal to first principles, and take their political affairs into their own hands in extreme cases, enjoins it as a right towards themselves, and a sacred obligation to their posterity, to abolish such government, and create another in its stead, calculated to rescue them from impending dangers, and to secure their future welfare and happiness.''

''The Mexican government, by its colonization laws, invited and induced the Anglo-American population of Texas to colonize its wilderness under the pledged faith of a written constitution, that they should continue to enjoy that constitutional liberty and republican government to which they had been habituated in the land of their birth, the United States of America.

''In this expectation they have been cruelly disappointed, inasmuch as the Mexican nation has acquiesced in the late changes made in the government by General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, who having overturned the constitution of his country, now offers us the cruel alternative, either to abandon our homes, acquired by so many privations, or submit to the most intolerable of all tyranny, the combined despotism of the sword and the priesthood.''

''It has suffered the military commandants, stationed among us, to exercise arbitrary acts of oppression and tyranny, thus trampling upon the most sacred rights of the citizens, and rendering the military superior to the civil power.''

''It denies us the right of worshipping the Almighty according to the dictates of our own conscience, by the support of a national religion, calculated to promote the temporal interest of its human functionaries, rather than the glory of the true and living God.

''It has demanded us to deliver up our arms, which are essential to our defence, the rightful property of freemen, and formidable only to tyrannical governments.

''These, and other grievances, were patiently borne by the people of Texas, untill they reached that point at which forbearance ceases to be a virtue. We then took up arms in defence of the national constitution. We appealed to our Mexican brethren for assistance. Our appeal had been made in vain. . . .

''The necessity of self-preservation, therefore, now decrees our eternal political separation.

''We, therefore, the delegates with plenary powers of the people of Texas, in solemn convention assembled, appealing to a candid world for the necessities of our condition, do hereby resolve and declare, that our political connection with the Mexican nation has forever ended, and that the people of Texas do now constitute a free, Sovereign, and independent republic, and are fully invested with all the rights and attributes which properly belong to independent nations; and, conscious

of the rectitude of our intentions, we fearlessly and confidently commit the issue to the decision of the Supreme arbiter of the destinies of nations.''

181 years ago, the Republic of Texas was born. God bless Texas.

□ 1045

NITTANY THEATRE AT THE BARN

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 celebrate a true treasure in central Pennsylvania, actually in Boalsburg, Pennsylvania, the Nittany Theatre at the Barn. This one-of-a-kind theater has a storied history which started in the late 1800s as the service barn on a working farm.

The Boal family settled the region for which the town Boalsburg is named. This town was on the main road for travelers from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh. The Boal Mansion estate, which dates to 1789, is a national registered landmark.

The fourth generation of the Boal family, Colonel Theodore Davis Boal, married a descendant of Christopher Columbus and brought the Columbus Chapel to the Boal Mansion from Spain in 1909. This included an admiral's desk said to belong to Columbus himself. By the 1930s, the estate's aging barn was retired from farm use, but it would eventually take on a whole new life.

Pierre Boal retired from the diplomatic service for the country following World War II. He wanted to make the family's estate into a regional museum to display the family's vast collection of treasures and artifacts. Mr. Boal hired Lillian Dickson-Major, an English stage and film actress and lover of history, to be the first curator of the new Boal Mansion Museum. She arrived in 1953 and immediately began preparing the estate for museum service. Lillian looked at the emptied barn and saw its potential as the site for a ''most unusual theatre.''

At the same time, theater professionals throughout the country and at nearby Penn State University wondered how theater would continue to survive in a world that was captivated by television and Technicolor motion pictures. Pierre and Lillian invited several Penn State professors and theater specialists to make their plans. To close the deal, Pierre Boal leased the old barn to the newly formed Centre County Theatre Association for the generous sum of zero dollars as a means to invite and encourage culture and theater in Centre County. Entrusted to oversee the construction of a state-of-the-art arena theater, the Centre County Theatre Association brought life to Lillian's vision of the barn as a ''most unusual theatre.''

After several years of preparations and construction, the theater opened at the barn in the summer of 1959 and was a tremendous success. Many audiences enjoyed the summer performances in the old barn for decades. After a long run, the community theater company let the old barn go dark, but it was only for a brief time before Nittany Theatre at the Barn took up the cause to breathe new life once again into the historic community treasure. State-of-the-art advancements were made at the barn, merging the latest technologies with good, old-fashioned summer stock theater.

The house is stocked with 99 seats, retaining all the charm and intimacy that made the barn legendary. In addition, to enhance audiences' experiences, brand-new, state-of-the-art LED lighting and Broadway quality sound systems were installed. Nittany Theatre also partners with Penn State's School of Theatre to allow Penn State's young actors to share the stage with local seasoned actors.

Mr. Speaker, this theater is full of history and full of life. For nearly 60 years, audiences in Happy Valley have enthusiastically embraced summer theater in Pennsylvania's oldest arena barn theater. I congratulate all those who have kept this community gem open for business throughout the years. As they say in the business, ''break a leg'' this summer.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 48 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:

Dear Lord, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

We use this moment to be reminded of Your presence and to tap the resources needed by the Members of this people's House to do their work as well as it can be done.

Send, O God, Your healing grace upon those torn nations and upon the Members of this assembly who struggle to see the shared hope for a better future in those with whom they disagree.

For many Americans, the holy season of Lent begins tomorrow, and foreheads are marked this day in recognition of our limits as men and women and as a reminder of Your power to forgive and heal the harms done through our failures.

All this day and through the week may our Representatives do their best to find solutions to pressing issues facing our Nation. Please hasten the day when justice and love shall dwell in the hearts of all peoples and rule the affairs of the nations of Earth.

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 Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. BILIRAKIS 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.

RESIGNATION FROM THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The SPEAKER laid before the House the following resignation from the House of Representatives:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 1, 2017.

Hon. PAUL RYAN,
Speaker of the House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER RYAN: I would like to bring to your attention the attached resignation letter I have sent to Governor Steve Bullock of Montana.

I have enjoyed my tenure as Montana's sole Congressman, and I look forward to continuing my service to Montana and our nation as Secretary of the Interior.

If I can be of any assistance during this transition, please let me know. I would be glad to help however I can.

Sincerely,

RYAN ZINKE.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 1, 2017.

Gov. STEVE BULLOCK,
Office of the Governor, Helena, MT.

DEAR GOVERNOR BULLOCK: I would like to inform you that I am resigning from my position as the United States Congressman for Montana's At-Large District on March, 1, 2017, in order to assume the Secretary of the Interior position. Thank you for the support and partnership that you have provided my office during these last few years.

I have enjoyed my tenure as Montana's sole Congressman, and I look forward to continuing my service to Montana and our nation as Secretary of the Interior.

If I can be of any assistance during this transition, please let me know. I would be glad to help however I can.

Sincerely,

RYAN ZINKE.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. Under clause 5(d) of rule XX, the Chair announces to the

House that, in light of the resignation of the gentleman from Montana (Mr. ZINKE), the whole number of the House is 430.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

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

NATIONAL EATING DISORDERS AWARENESS WEEK

(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, as we observe National Eating Disorders Awareness Week, I urge our south Florida community to attend the Alliance for Eating Disorders Awareness Walk this Saturday, March 4, at Tradewinds Park. The walk will celebrate everybody's shape and also encourage screening for eating disorders.

Eating disorders impact millions of Americans and has a proportionate impact on teens and young adults. That is why, Mr. Speaker, I have led bipartisan legislation that urges the Federal Trade Commission to uphold its duty to protect the next generation by promoting fair and responsible advertisements, especially for products geared for children and teens.

I was so proud that last year we were able to enact into law the Anna Westin Act, which I introduced with my colleague TED DEUTCH, in order to allow an avenue for millions of young Americans impacted by eating disorders to seek the help that they need.

Let's celebrate and commemorate Eating Disorders Awareness Week, and I encourage everyone to help spread awareness and promote authentic healthy body images.

THE COST OF BORDER WALLS

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

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Review reported that the cost of then-candidate Trump's wall along the southern border will be up to $40 billion for every 1,000 miles of wall. With the potential of a 2,000-mile wall along the border, American taxpayers can expect to pay up to $80 billion for a wall at the southern border—$80 billion for a wall we were told Mexico would pay for, and Mexico said they will not pay for that wall.

Last year, a leading Republican Governor also suggested that we should explore building a wall along the northern border. The northern border wall would be 5,000 miles. A northern border wall would cost about $400 billion using the MIT report estimates. Obviously, Canada, like Mexico, will not pay for a silly wall.

Mr. Speaker, $480 billion to wall in the United States. What is it with Republicans and walls? What are they afraid of? What we need is a new infrastructure bill not to build walls, but to build bridges and roads and to build infrastructure to put Americans back to work and to grow the American economy.

PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP FULFILLS PROMISES

(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. Madam Speaker, last night President Donald Trump spoke to a joint session of Congress and to the American people in a powerful and positive address.

From day one, President Trump committed himself to fulfilling the promises he made to the American people, and last night he outlined his bold agenda. I was grateful to hear his plans to repeal regulations, reduce taxes, create jobs, repeal and replace ObamaCare, and promote veterans.

As the chairman of the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Readiness, I appreciated his determination to rebuild our military by providing them with the resources they need to promote peace through strength.

The President's speech received an overwhelmingly optimistic response, with nearly 60 percent of viewers having a positive reaction. Additionally, 70 percent of the viewers said the President's policies would move the country in the right direction.

I look forward to working with the President and Speaker PAUL RYAN to achieve the bold, positive vision for American families.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

Congratulations to Interior Secretary RYAN ZINKE and his wife, Lola, a great team for America.

PRESERVING AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE

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

Ms. DELBENE. Madam Speaker, too often we forget that the Affordable Care Act is about more than numbers. It is about real people. So for the next 6 weeks, I will be highlighting the voices of my constituents who have flooded my inbox with heart-wrenching stories about why the law must be preserved, constituents like Paul from Snohomish, whose son-in-law died of cancer before the Affordable Care Act.

His disease started small, but, growing up, his family couldn't afford insurance, and he delayed seeking care. By the time he got a job with health coverage, the disease had progressed too far, and he died at the age of 29. Paul wrote to me and said: ''The certificate of death says my son-in-law died from cancer, but I believe he died from a broken healthcare system.''

We can't go back to a time when getting sick meant going bankrupt. Across the country, Americans like Paul are telling Congress not to repeal the Affordable Care Act. We should heed their advice.

REDUCING PRICE OF PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

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

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Madam Speaker, as President Trump remarked in his joint address, we must work to bring down the high price of prescription drugs. Too often we have seen the price of lifesaving medication skyrocket due to bad actors taking advantage of monopolies in the market. We witnessed it in 2015 when Turing Pharmaceuticals hiked the price of Daraprim, a drug to treat HIV patients. We saw it again with Mylan Pharmaceuticals raising the cost of the EpiPen by 400 percent.

We cannot allow this to continue.

I am proud to join my colleague, Congressman KURT SCHRADER, to introduce the Lower Drug Costs Through Competition Act. Our bill is a bipartisan approach to tackle the issue of high drug costs head-on. Our legislation uses the free market to incentivize competition among drug makers, encouraging them to bring new generic drugs to market.

My constituents in Florida and folks nationwide need relief. Let's get this done.

IMMIGRANTS ALSO SAVE LIVES

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

Mr. POLIS. Madam Speaker, yesterday President Trump launched a rather ridiculous effort called the Victims of Immigration Crime Engagement Office, or VOICE. They are going to be focusing on talking about people who were victimized by people who are here illegally.

First of all, the statistics aren't with him. It turns out that people who are undocumented are among the least likely groups to commit illegal acts, and studies show that they are one-fifth to one-half less likely to commit a crime.

So I want to start an effort that is similar. I am going to start a task force called SAINT, Saved by American Immigrants National Taskforce, to talk about Americans whose lives were saved by people who are here undocumented—people like Dr. Alfredo Quinones-Hinojosa, who became a brain surgeon, saving countless lives; people like Antonio Diaz Chacon, who chased down a child abductor and saved a 6-

year-old girl from a horrific fate, even though he is undocumented; and another undocumented immigrant named Jesus Manuel Cordova, who rescued a 9-year-old boy in the Arizona desert.

These are the kinds of lifesaving efforts from our undocumented immigrants where they save American lives. I bet our efforts at SAINT talking about saving American lives will match, life for life, all of the things that President Trump tries to drum up through his VOICE effort.

Of course there are good and bad people. Of course there are good and bad hombres. Let's celebrate the good with the bad. I look forward to sharing their stories with my colleagues.

PRESIDENT HITS HOME RUN

(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, President Trump hit a home run in the State of the Union Address last night. As he said, the way to renew the American spirit is to put Americans first—their jobs, their safety, their education, and their health. He also focused on border security. The rule of law will stop drugs and protect American jobs and lives.

A recent poll found that, by a 2-to-1 ratio, voters feel that the President has kept his promises to the American people. Another poll revealed that 78 percent of Americans had a positive response to President Trump's State of the Union speech. No doubt Americans will rally behind him and support his efforts to put Americans first.

President Trump's words will be long remembered: ''My job is not to represent the world. My job is to represent the United States of America.''

ANTIOCH BAPTIST CHURCH

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

Mr. PITTENGER. Madam Speaker, I rise today in honor of Antioch Baptist Church in Robeson County, North Carolina.

This year, Antioch Baptist celebrates their 200th anniversary. What an incredible testimony of faithfully spreading God's Word and ministering to the community.

In 1817, the church was founded in the swamps of Robeson County as Burnt Island Baptist, with meetings under a brush arbor on the same spot where the church meets today.

In 1842, the church was renamed Antioch, after the city from which the Apostle Paul launched his three missionary journeys. The name was chosen to signify the church's commitment to missions.

More recently, Antioch Baptist took on the mission of providing a solid education alternative for the people of Robeson County by opening Antioch Christian Academy.

Later this year, I look forward to joining Pastor MARK MEADOWS and the congregation of Antioch Baptist Church to celebrate their 200th anniversary.

God bless them.

□ 1215

KEEPING HEALTHCARE PROMISE

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

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, last night, in this Chamber, we heard President Trump call on the 115th Congress to repeal and replace ObamaCare with reforms that expand patient choice, increase their access to substantive health care, lower costs for our friends and neighbors, and, at the same time, provide better quality health care.

I am here today to say that my colleagues and I are doing just that. We have listened to the families who have lost income and access to their doctors. My own corner of northeast Georgia is full of individuals who work tirelessly to care for their families, and ObamaCare has made it harder for them to see their doctors.

The first promise that ObamaCare broke was that if people liked their insurance, they could keep it. As the insurance market continues its death spiral, we see insurance providers offering less coverage for more money.

Now, my colleagues and I have a choice to make: rescue our failing healthcare system by repealing ObamaCare and returning competition and innovation to the healthcare landscape, or go down in history as leaders who did not keep their promises; as leaders who allowed their neighbors to suffer under what may be the most misguided, destructive policy of our generation.

The choice is clear. The choice is urgent. The choice is simple: Republicans are leading in healthcare reform that will bring relief to Americans who have only experienced the broken promises of ObamaCare. We are offering affordable, flexible healthcare options that prioritize patients over bureaucrats, and we are doing it together.

IMMIGRANTS ARE THE CORNERSTONE

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

Mr. PANETTA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to express my continued disappointment with President Trump's anti-immigrant stance, especially based on his joint session remarks last night.

I admit I was very honored to attend my first joint session as a Member of Congress, but as a Member of Congress, as an American, and as a grandson of an Italian immigrant, I was disheartened that the President doubled down on his divisive and dangerous rhetoric against immigrants and continued to create fear by focusing on the worst in people.

Before I came to Congress, I was a prosecutor. I understand and believe that those who commit serious and violent felonies should be prosecuted and deported. But I also grew up on the central coast of California, and I realize and appreciate how much immigrants contribute to our community.

That is why I want to ask President Trump to come down from his gold tower, come out of the White House, and come to the green and fertile Salinas, San Juan, and Pajaro Valleys. He will see that immigrants are the reason why my district is called the salad bowl of the world. He will see that immigrants are the cornerstone, the foundation not only of that economy, not only of that community, but of our country.

NEBRASKA SESQUICENTENNIAL

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

Mr. BACON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 150th Statehood Day of the great State of Nebraska.

This day is a proud day for all Nebraskans. Today, we honor the long and rich history of our State and the contributions our citizens have made to our country and the world.

On March 1, 1867, Nebraska became the 37th State, and much has happened since then. In a century and half, Nebraska has grown to not only be the leader in agriculture, but also in technology and business.

From the Sandhills of western Nebraska to the many neighborhoods of Omaha, one can see each day the evidence of the extraordinary industriousness of my fellow Nebraskans. Across nearly 49,000 farms and ranches, our proud citizens are responsible for a multi-billion-dollar agriculture market producing food that fuels the world.

Nebraska is home to many great and wonderful things, but what I celebrate about Nebraska Statehood Day more than anything is the State's wonderful people.

In roughly 30 years in the Air Force, I had 16 assignments, taking my family all over the world. During these 16 assignments, I found that nowhere were the people nicer and more accommodating to military families than Nebraskans. We found out that there is no place like Nebraska, and we are happy to call Nebraska home. Nebraska truly is the good life.

REPLACE ACA EXCHANGES AND MEDICAID EXPANSION

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

Mr. MARSHALL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to support our President's plan to replace the Affordable Care Act, but I want to stop and salute my colleague, my neighbor to the north, General DON BACON, and the great State of Nebraska. As I tell people, I have never met a bad person from Nebraska yet. General BACON continues to represent his State in a great manner, and I appreciate his friendship.

Madam Speaker, I rise to support the President's plan to replace the ACA exchanges and Medicaid expansion. This is simply in a death spiral right now. It is not working in Kansas. It is not working in the country. We cannot afford to go in that direction.

I am committed to helping those with long-term health issues, as well as those that get insurance outside the workplace, to truly find quality, affordable health care. We are not going to turn our backs on anybody. We are going to ensure there is a quality transition time for all patients.

REPEAL OBAMACARE

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

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, we are excited today about the renewal of the American spirit. One big step in that renewal is the repeal of ObamaCare.

The ACA is failing and the American people are suffering because of it. Premiums have skyrocketed and healthcare decisions are no longer being made by patients and doctors but by out-of-touch Washington bureaucrats often motivated by their own self-interests.

In my State of Louisiana alone, some insurance providers have projected rates to increase as much as 41 percent in 2017. There is nothing about that number that is affordable, and many are choosing to forego healthcare coverage altogether, rather than suffer under the weight of the new, increased costs.

Some would suggest that a higher cost should imply a higher quality of care, but even that is not true under our current system. In many areas across the United States, ObamaCare has removed nearly all competition in the marketplace and has left consumers with only one or two providers to choose from, further removing patient choice from the process.

Patient-centered care is critical to a productive healthcare system, and Republicans in Congress have been working tirelessly to create a plan that benefits all Americans. Quality, affordable health care is within our reach. Contrary to what many in the media would have you believe, we will not pull the rug out from under the American people. Our focus is protecting patients, and what we are offering is a real solution to the disaster that is ObamaCare.

KEEPING OUR PROMISES

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

Mr. ARRINGTON. Madam Speaker, we have a new era that has dawned on American politics. Our citizens are demanding that we don't conduct our business as usual.

These are times that call for bold leadership and bold action. Over the last couple of years, my observation is that we don't need new solutions. We have reforms for immigration, reforms for regulations, reforms for our Tax Code. What we need is courage: courage to act, courage to keep our promises, as our President said last night, and finish what we started.

ObamaCare is a disaster, to repeat what the President said. The facts are undisputable. This isn't a situation where we have a leaky roof in need of repair. We are on faulty foundation, and it is shifting under our feet. If we don't act swiftly and decisively, the house will collapse.

Leadership is about courage. Leadership is about keeping our promises. We all owe it to the American people to act accordingly.

READY FOR GROWTH AND INNOVATION

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

Mr. ALLEN. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of the Searching for and Cutting Regulations that are Unnecessarily Burdensome Act, or the SCRUB Act.

This legislation establishes a commission to review existing Federal regulations and report to Congress those that should be repealed to reduce unnecessary costs to the economy—kind of like a regulation report card.

Federal rules and regulations have sucked the life out of our small businesses for the last 8 years. Unlike some lawmakers, I have the unique experience of having operated a business under Obama-era rules and regulations. Let me tell you that it was very difficult. Our struggles were not an isolated event. Georgians and Americans across the country bore those same burdens.

We are ready for growth and innovation and an environment that encourages an economy like we have never seen before. The SCRUB Act is a solid step forward in restoring life to the American small-business community.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1004, REGULATORY INTEGRITY ACT OF 2017, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1009, OIRA INSIGHT, REFORM, AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 156 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 156

Resolved, That at any time after adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1004) to amend chapter 3 of title 5, United States Code, to require the publication of information relating to pending agency regulatory actions, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. The bill shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. No amendment to the bill shall be in order except those printed in part A of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

SEC. 2. At any time after adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1009) to amend title 44, United States Code, to require the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs to review regulations, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 115-4. That amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. All points of order

against that amendment in the nature of a substitute are waived. No amendment to that amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in part B of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. Any Member may demand a separate vote in the House on any amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole to the bill or to the amendment in the nature of a substitute made in order as original text. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN). The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 1 hour.

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

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

There was no objection.

□ 1230

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of the rule. It is a fair rule that enables thoughts and ideas from both sides of the aisle to be considered on the House floor today. It enables us to proceed with the work that the American people have sent us here to accomplish. It is of great measure of the work that we are doing today. We had an extensive and long committee hearing at the Committee on Rules yesterday with witnesses from both sides of the aisle, Republicans and Democrats, who felt strongly about the issues and ideas that were before them and the ideas which will be presented on the floor of the House of Representatives today, the underpinning of which are entitled to give the American people a better shot at a better life not only from a business perspective, economic development, but also the creation of jobs in the United States of America.

Madam Speaker, I also rise in support of the underlying legislation contained in this rule. These bipartisan initiatives will enhance transparency, provide for a check on Federal agencies, and I believe help create a better process in the Federal Government for the people we serve, which are the people of this great Nation.

Congress enacted the Administrative Procedure Act in 1946 to ensure that the public had an opportunity to provide expertise, opinions, and other comments during the rulemaking process that takes place in the administration. It was designed to provide guarantees of due process in administrative procedures for self-governing American citizens who have to live under these rules that are promulgated by those unelected and not necessarily known by the American people.

The Administrative Procedure Act, known as the APA, as it is commonly referred to, was designed to require agencies to keep the public informed of the information and ideas, procedures, and rules, and to provide a means for public participation in the rulemaking process that would take place here in Washington, D.C.

Unfortunately, as is too often the case, Federal bureaucrats over years and previous administrations have exploited the broad language of the Administrative Procedure Act to focus the rulemaking process solely for special interest reasons. Sometimes it is groups, sometimes it is ideas, and sometimes it is against the voices of the average American who wishes to participate in this process. This clearly was not the APA's legislative intent and reflects yet another encroachment on Congress' Article I powers which are enshrined in the United States Constitution.

This shift away from the intent of the Administrative Procedure Act, known as the APA, has meant that most agency deliberations are carried out without a record or even a public review of those decisions that are made. Additionally, and possibly more troubling, agencies have undermined the purpose and the spirit of the notice-and-comment process by actively campaigning in support of their ideas using government resources and processes to that advantage.

The clearest example of this abuse can be found recently and numerously at the Environmental Protection Agency, known as the EPA. After issuing the waters of the United States notice of proposed rulemaking, the EPA undertook a public campaign utilizing social media platforms to solicit support for what was, at the time, a promulgated rule. Following this abuse, the GAO issued a report finding that the EPA violated propaganda and anti-lobbying provisions concerning the use of their fiscal year 2014 and 2015 appropriations.

The Regulatory Integrity Act of 2017 helps ensure transparency in the rulemaking process by prohibiting Federal agencies from anonymously issuing statements for propaganda purposes, in other words, an agency lobbying for itself, its ideas, as opposed to the public comment period, final rulemaking, and then issues and ideas being discussed with and by the people of the country. Specifically, H.R. 1004 requires agencies to make available online information about public communications on pending regulatory actions.

Further, H.R. 1004 requires that agencies ''expressly disclose that the Executive agency is the source of the information to the intended recipients.''

Why is this important?

This is important because too many times information is provided without the basis of the facts behind it. It is opinion, Mr. Speaker. When members of the public see information that is provided, a source should be behind that information.

Further, H.R. 1004 prohibits agencies from ''soliciting support for or promoting . . . pending agency regulatory action.'' A simple concept of transparency and, I believe, professionalism that both sides of the aisle should not only demand, but also welcome from any executive agency, regardless of who is in the White House. It is in the best interest of the American public, and transparency and honesty related to that should be above reproach. Unfortunately, this has also not been the instance, as there are abuses and overreach by Federal agencies and unelected bureaucrats.

Presidents of both parties have required a centralized review of regulations since the 1970s. This has largely been handled by the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, or OIRA, as it is commonly referred to. Every President since President Ronald Reagan has required a centralized review of regulations at OIRA so that an agency can do cost-benefit analysis of regulatory actions, which means there is a centralized process for the administration to look at what they do.

In 1993, President Bill Clinton put into place Executive Order 12866 to designate OIRA as the repository of expertise concerning regulatory issues. The executive order limited OIRA's review of regulations to only significant rules changes, those that have an annual effect on the economy of $100 million or more. This office is responsible for reviewing the regulatory actions at both the proposed and final rulemaking stages. Unfortunately, lately, agencies have blatantly ignored the principles of the executive order from President Clinton, Executive Order 12866, and other governing authorities, including those requiring State, local, and tribal consultation in the rulemaking process have been ignored.

According to a policy center at George Mason University, agencies usually satisfy 60 percent or less of the requirements called for in the regulatory analysis, meaning that certain times we have found the executive branch did not even follow the well-known processes that are there to protect the people who they are trying to

provide services to. Mr. Speaker, we believe that is partially why we are here today, to clarify and correct these problems.

For example, between 2000 and 2013, 98 percent of the Environmental Protection Agency's final rules contained no estimated compliance costs. That means that the agency chose not to follow the process that is prescribed by the executive order. Additionally, the EPA routinely justifies its regulatory activities by claiming benefits from matters unrelated to the underlying legislation. Mr. Speaker, you can well see why there is consternation not only among people in the United States, but uncertainty with business that is attempting to follow the well-understood rules and regulations and the processes that go therein only to find out that our government chooses not to follow the rules and regulations that they should be following.

H.R. 1009 codifies the requirement for OIRA to conduct a review of significant regulations to ensure the regulations are consistent with applicable law and the principles set forth in the executive order. It also establishes new transparency measures such as requiring increased disclosure when extending review time, explanations about regulations that are dropped from the unified agenda, and a redline of changes that agencies make to regulations while it is under review by OIRA.

OIRA review is important to provide a double check on agencies to ensure not only compliance with the law, but the well-understood proposals that are made by agencies and the processes that they expect to understand in that process. That is why the main tenets of the underlying legislation have been supported by Presidents in the past, Members of Congress in the past, and even the judiciary that should expect that processes and procedures are followed properly.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a note, if I can, and add into the RECORD a Statement of Administration Policy that came from one of our former colleagues, now the Director of the OMB, the Honorable Mick Mulvaney. Mr. Mulvaney, in his new duties as the Director of the OMB, provided his first Statement of Administration Policy. It is concerning exactly the act that we are speaking about. I would like to congratulate the young Director of the OMB for his ascension to not only an important role, but helping the United States Congress to clarify for the American people that which is in their best interest.

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

STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY

H.R. 998—SEARCHING FOR AND CUTTING REGULATIONS THAT ARE UNNECESSARILY BURDENSOME (SCRUB) ACT

(Rep. Smith, R–MO, and three cosponsors)

H.R. 1004—REGULATORY INTEGRITY ACT OF 2017

(Rep. Walberg, R–MI, and eight cosponsors)

H.R. 1009—OIRA INSIGHT, REFORM, AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

(Rep. Mitchell, R–MI, and four cosponsors)

The Administration is committed to reducing regulatory burden on all Americans. On January 30, 2017, President Trump signed Executive Order 13771, Reducing Regulation and Controlling Regulatory Costs, which provides for repeal of two regulations for every new one issued. This historic step accelerates the retrospective review process to make common-sense reforms to regulations across the Federal Government. Legislation is helpful where it amends agencies' regulatory processes to ensure they are transparent, and appropriately balance costs and benefits.

Each of these bills would address different aspects of the regulatory process. The SCRUB Act, H.R. 998, addresses the numerous outdated, duplicative, and otherwise unnecessary regulations that have accumulated throughout government. The Regulatory Integrity Act of 2017, H.R. 1004, would restrict the use of agency funds to advocate on behalf of regulations, and the OIRA Insight, Reform, and Accountability Act, H.R. 1009, would codify specific executive branch regulatory review procedures.

The Administration supports the SCRUB Act, the Regulatory Integrity Act, and the OIRA Insight, Reform, and Accountability Act. The Administration looks forward to working with the Congress on technical and other amendments to these bills.

The Administration appreciates the efforts of the Congress to rationalize the regulatory system and looks forward to continuing to work together to reform the regulatory process.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me the customary 30 minutes. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, today I rise in opposition to the rule and both underlying bills, H.R. 1009, the OIRA Insight, Reform, and Accountability Act; and H.R. 1004, the Regulatory Integrity Act.

These two bills that would be debated under this rule were both reported out of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform without a single Democratic vote. So these are not bipartisan bills. They were reported out of committee only by Republicans. The bills threaten transparency, undermine the independent authority of government agencies, and weaken the separation of powers between our three branches of government at a time in our history when we need it the most.

I sat in this Chamber last night as President Trump spoke about fixing healthcare and immigration systems, but we haven't seen those plans yet. Instead, all we have seen are these kinds of not-bipartisan bills that don't accomplish a lot.

Now, these two bills claim to offer accountability and integrity in the rulemaking process, but when you look past their title, you see what they really are is just another backdoor attack on American workers, an attack on our environment and protecting our public health.

First with regard to H.R. 1009, much has been said since the start of this Congress about the importance of our checks and balances in our system. We have a new President who isn't shy about blurring the lines of separation between the executive, legislative, and even the judicial branches of government. He publicly condemned a judge based on his ethnicity in a private case. He also attacked a judge who struck down his order on immigration. I find it troubling to be debating a bill that would make government agencies even more dependent on the judgment of the White House when many of us question the judgment of the gentleman currently occupying the Oval Office.

Under current law, independent agencies, like the Environmental Protection Agency, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, and many others don't need approval from the administration to move forward with a new rule or regulation. Misleadingly characterized as simplifying the existing executive order, what this bill would actually do is require all rules made by independent government agencies to be sent to the White House, centralizing the power of the White House and the power of the President.

□ 1245

This bill effectively mandates improper influence by the White House.

In addition, the bill repeals language that exempts rules considered to be lifesaving from having to undergo a full review process.

If those reasons weren't enough to dissuade my colleagues from voting in favor of this rule, let me briefly discuss the unlimited review window this bill would create to derail and delay important rules. Frankly, important provisions like this are the reasons why the American people, often rightfully, accuse the government of waste, fraud, and abuse.

By giving the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs unlimited time to review rules, Congress would effectively allow the White House to bury rules in red tape and paperwork, the very red tape and paperwork and bureaucracy that the American people are frustrated with. This bill is a recipe to make government less efficient rather than more efficient. It would grind the rulemaking process to a halt by burying the very limited staff of the White House under a whole array of rules from independent agencies that, with no timeline, would simply sit in the White House either going nowhere or being studied by committee after committee after committee. Perhaps, after several years, they will see the light of day after even more bureaucrats have had the chance, at your taxpayer expense, to read those rules.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle claim that this bill makes the

Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs somehow more accountable by Congress by authorizing the statute, but that is not the case. This bill, like many other bills we have seen in this Congress, frankly, is a solution in search of a problem.

I don't disagree that the rulemaking process should be simplified, but there is a collaborative, bipartisan way to do that. This bill does not represent that idea. If passed, H.R. 1009 would reduce the ability of independent government agencies to work effectively, create additional paperwork and bureaucracy, and transfer significant power and authority to the White House and the President.

Frankly, this bill is a serious threat on our checks and balances at a time we need it the most. I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to take that into account when voting on the rule and the bill today.

The second bill under this rule is H.R. 1004, the so-called Regulatory Integrity Act. It is another example of Republican attacks on health and safety protections.

The Regulatory Integrity Act of 2017 requires executive agencies to provide extensive and, often, gratuitous information on their websites related to any pending regulatory action they are seeking to make. Again, it is difficult to find a Member of this body who doesn't believe that we want more transparency, more accountability, and more streamlining of regulations. Of course, those are priorities for the country. This bill does not do that.

I don't believe an outright attack on our rulemaking process meant to protect our health, meant to protect people from fraud and abuse, and giving yet more hoops for agency officials to jump through in doing the job that Congress has asked them to do, in no way is that the correct way to go about increasing transparency in government. This bill makes it more difficult for all of the agencies that we have set up, that we have directed, to do their job: to protect the American public.

The new reporting requirements that are included in this bill will distract agencies from their core missions of keeping Americans safe and, again, bury them under mounds and mounds of additional paperwork requirements. Many of these agencies have seen their budgets cut by the Republicans, and the reporting requirements will take up even more of their very limited capacity that they have under the budget constraints they operate at.

As many of us know, this bill was born out of a 2015 GAO study that determined that the Environmental Protection Agency had violated certain restrictions during the rulemaking process for waters of the U.S. To me, the fact that that determination was made by an independent government agency is proof that our oversight process works. If there is a bipartisan bill we can do to implement best practices, I think that we could have strong Democratic support for that. This bill does not do that.

Republicans are ignoring the fact that the GAO also concluded that ''the agency complied with the applicable requirements,'' and were so concerned with providing the public with opportunities to comment that the EPA and Army Corps of Engineers conducted over 400 meetings across the country. If this bill passes the House, the ability of agencies to do those kinds of outreach efforts and stakeholder involvement efforts would be limited. It would be limited by vast and unnecessary additional work, red tape, and bureaucratic reporting requirements that would be mandated under this bill with the same limited resources they have today. I think that it would be better use of their limited resources to do those kinds of field opportunities across the country, giving American stakeholders and people involved the opportunity to testify about how those rules affect them.

The most immediate and certain effect of this bill would be to virtually prohibit agencies from disclosing to the public any benefits that agency actions would have in protecting the American people. If an agency is no longer allowed to explain how the rulemaking process would benefit and protect the American people, the public, of course, would view this as some sort of burdensome regulation. Perhaps that is the goal of this bill from a propaganda perspective.

Finally, this bill will ban agencies from soliciting support for their regulations, seemingly forgetting that current law already does this. If there is need to clarify it again, we can certainly do so in a bipartisan way.

This unsettling trend of trying to, in fact, regulate regulations actually leads to additional bureaucracy and paperwork. It is a disservice to American workers and families, to our environment, and to many Americans who don't know if they can make their rent or have health insurance at the end of the month. It is a disservice to the thousands of military and civilian workers no longer able to seek employment in the Federal Government and a disservice to so many American children and adults.

The fact that we are even considering these bills illustrates that the priorities in Congress are not in line with the priorities of the people that we represent. I have not heard an outcry from my constituents on any of these issues. I hear about health care. I hear about immigration reform, improving our schools, making college more affordable, not that we need more administrative hurdles to the rulemaking process. I haven't heard it once from a single constituent at 51 townhalls I had last session.

The passage of this bill will put a significant administrative burden on government agencies that issue rules to protect Americans. It would limit the ability of the agencies that we set up under our authorizing statutes to do their job: to protect the health and safety of the American people.

I urge my colleagues to reject this rule and reject these bills.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I appreciate the gentleman's thoughtful observations on this rule and on the bills. I will acknowledge that yesterday at the Rules Committee there was a vigorous discussion—I thought, professional on both sides—where there was an idea about the intent of this bill and what it would, in essence, lay off on the administration, or any administration, in trying to make sure that they complied with the law.

I will tell you that our Appropriations chairman, as well as the Appropriations Committee, would be able to deal effectively with this if they believed they needed more money in order to accomplish these efforts. But I think that transparency is an important issue, and I think that our authorizing and appropriating committees will understand that, as they deal with agencies, a better dialogue, whether it be Republican or Democrat in office, needs to be able to deal with Congress, provide us information, provide the American people with information, and be forthright about the decisions that they are going to make.

I think that the new Director of the OMB, the Honorable Mick Mulvaney, responded in his advice back—meaning the statement of administrative policy that directly took on this issue—that he looked forward to not only working with Congress on their needs, but also complying with the spirit of the law. I believe, Mr. Speaker, that what we are doing today is providing information to a brand-new administration and saying to a brand-new administration that it is okay if you have your ideas about those issues that you would wish to take up, but you have to be forthright about what you are doing. You have to provide information not only to Congress, but the American people; and when you propose changes or rules, you have to be honest and forthright in doing that.

It may be a little bit more money, but this Congress will stand behind this. And I believe that the new Trump administration, at least through my conversations with our new President and the head of OMB, they intend for across the government, across a new administration to attempt to be forthright and direct about what they are doing and why we are doing it. Now, more than ever, whether you are a Republican or Democrat or not—you could be a person back home—you are entitled to try and clarify and ask information. That is what we are doing.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 10 minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. NEWHOUSE), a member of the Rules Committee, who served his State honorably as their agriculture commissioner.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my good friend from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS), the chairman of the Committee on Rules, for yielding me this time.

I am certainly in favor of the Regulatory Integrity Act of 2017, which I think will provide necessary transparency in the regulatory process by requiring agencies to post all public comments issued during a proposed rulemaking, which sounds simple enough. I cosponsored this legislation because I strongly believe, and I firmly believe, the public comment process is critical to ensure Federal regulations are drafted to protect the American people and not to punish them.

Unfortunately, far too often, agencies either ignore or fail to incorporate the public's input and suggestions when proposing and finalizing these important rules. Many regulatory actions impose billions of dollars in compliance and other costs on industries, on consumers, on small businesses, on farmers, and on families while bureaucrats ignore the meaningful input, suggested improvements, and the real concerns being voiced by the very people that will be most affected by their actions.

Mr. Speaker, this measure requires more transparency and accountability of Federal agency communications about proposed and pending regulations. Agencies like the Environmental Protection Agency have continually violated Federal laws and appropriations restrictions that prohibit the use of Federal funds for lobbying, advocacy, and propaganda efforts.

I know many are aware of the EPA's unlawful social media campaign advocating for the waters of the United States rule, the WOTUS rule; however, an even more egregious example recently occurred in my own home State of Washington. The EPA-funded What's Upstream campaign used grant awards to fund a website, radio ads, and billboards depicting dead fish and polluted water, alleging that farmers and the agriculture industry were responsible. The website helped visitors email their State legislators to advocate for 100-foot stream buffer zones around farms and other agricultural operations, despite prohibitions against such advocacy.

As a lifelong farmer, I have got to tell you, Mr. Speaker, I was insulted by the blatant lies this campaign had spread about farmers; and as a Member of Congress, I am outraged that the EPA continues to award grant funding to the entities responsible for this, I think, despicable and deceitful antifarmer campaign. I believe Congress must ensure Federal agencies follow the law to prevent future libelous campaigns like What's Upstream from ever receiving another cent of taxpayer dollars.

H.R. 1004 prohibits lobbying in support of proposed rules and requires agencies to track the details of all public communications about pending regulatory actions, while establishing clear standards for prohibited activities. This will guarantee that both the public and Congress understand how Federal agencies communicate with the public about pending regulations, and these reasonable restrictions will support transparency and accountability across the Federal Government.

Mr. Speaker, agencies should consider comments from the public and incorporate reasonable changes so that proposed Federal regulations can be revised and refined using that valuable public feedback before they are finalized. However, too often, Federal bureaucrats simply go through the motions and end up ignoring the public's input while they happily flout Federal law and create campaigns designed to garner support for their preferred proposals. Federal agencies must not treat their proposed regulations as final. By doing so, they are ignoring the voice and the will of the American people.

I urge my colleagues to support this important rule and the underlying bill; then, together, we can return transparency, we can return accountability, and we can return public input to the Federal rulemaking process once and for all.

□ 1300

Mr. POLIS. I would like to inquire if the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS) has any remaining speakers?

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, as a matter of fact, I do not have additional speakers. I would wish to not only close myself, but to present a little bit more information. I would allow the gentleman, if he were prepared to offer his close, I would do the same.

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

Mr. Speaker, we are all deeply concerned over the reports from our intelligence community regarding foreign interference in our most recent election. When we defeat the previous question, I will offer an amendment to the rule to bring up bipartisan legislation, H.R. 356, the Protecting Our Democracy Act, which would create an independent commission to investigate the foreign interference in our 2016 election.

This is not a partisan matter. Both Democrats and Republicans have called for this investigation and a full accounting for the American people. Frankly, the American people deserve to know what happened, and Congress has the responsibility to get to the bottom of it.

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 (Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Colorado?

There was no objection.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, when I was back in my district earlier this year, again, I didn't have a single constituent raise issues over regulatory reform. I did have people ask if we can have a full accounting of foreign interference with our more recent election, and, if we defeat the previous question, that will give us an opportunity to do that.

I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' and defeat the previous question. I will also urge them to vote ''no'' on the rule, and ''no'' on the underlying bills.

Just so no one is here under any illusions, Republicans do currently control the House, and the Senate, and the White House. Frankly, they have the ability to set the agenda, and they could use that agenda to advance real reforms like infrastructure, or tax reform, or fixing our broken immigration system, repairing broken roads and bridges. Today, instead, we are debating something so obscure that I don't think the American people know what OIRA does or how to pronounce it; another bill that has to deal with whether regulations are seen and signed off on by the staffers in the White House; and two bills that don't do anything but undermine the separation of powers, undermine the authority of this institution, the United States Congress, and make it harder for public agencies to do the job that we have instructed them to do to keep the American people safe.

For these reasons, Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to defeat the previous question so we can bring up H.R. 356, the Protecting Our Democracy Act, and oppose the underlying legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, the debate today has been fair and above board. I want to congratulate and thank the gentleman from Colorado not only for his service on the Rules Committee, but his service today in annunciating not just his party's policies and ideas on this, but also his own, as he brings a vast business experience not only to Congress and to the Rules Committee, but to serve the people of his congressional district.

However, with that said, Mr. Speaker, I think that this will be overwhelming success on a bipartisan basis today, and the reason why is, because what we are doing is in the best interest of the American people.

We are doing this because the American people want and need an opportunity, as they petition their government, to know that they were heard, for their issues and ideas to be seen. And I would think now more than ever, especially if it were a prior administration, we would be accused of trying to jam down their throats something that we saw that was trying to put an undue burden on another administration. But, in fact, we are not.

And so the thoughts and ideas today should be—regardless of the administration, regardless whether you completely agree, or somewhat disagree,

we would want that government, that agency to be able to operate with the confidence of the American people. And that means that they are not there for their own purposes, or special interests, or for them to skew facts or information that might be provided to the American people, but, in fact, were opinions as opposed to something that was reasonably gained as a result of a scientific fact or information that was based on facts of the case.

Mr. Speaker, the regulatory state in this country has grown exponentially and, really, to unprecedented levels. Unelected bureaucrats have exceeded their authority, they are creating regulations, they are negatively impacting the marketplace, which causes a problem for me back home, and Members of Congress back home, as businesses talk about following rules and regulations rather than the marketplace, and trying to add employees and to turn the cash register.

Accordingly, the American Action Forum, when totaling all available regulatory costs reported by executive agencies, the Obama administration imposed more than $600 billion in regulatory costs from 2009 to 2014. That is $600 billion worth of regulatory costs imposed on the American people by unelected bureaucrats that have increasingly become unaccountable, not only to economic growth, but also to the American people, and I believe to Congress.

Other studies have produced the same conclusion and it is this: that runaway regulations have a disastrous effect on the United States economy, impacting not only job creation, but also the effective opportunity for the free enterprise system to exist.

Federal agencies should exist to serve the American people. And as such, they should heed and respect their views and comments, while staying within the parameters of laws passed by lawmakers or ensuring the rulemaking process is transparent and free of propaganda.

Mr. Speaker, we appreciate you allowing us time to debate this on behalf of the American people today. This rule and the underlying legislation will provide an important check on the regulatory state that we find exists today in the United States, and to return transparency, responsiveness, and, I believe, honest dignity to the American people that we serve, for this overreaching process. I urge my colleagues to support this rule and the underlying legislation.

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

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 156 OFFERED BY MR. POLIS

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

SEC 3. Immediately upon adoption of this resolution the Speaker shall, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 356) to establish the National Commission on Foreign Interference in the 2016 Election. 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 Foreign Affairs. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions. If the Committee of the Whole rises and reports that it has come to no resolution on the bill, then on the next legislative day the House shall, immediately after the third daily order of business under clause 1 of rule XIV, resolve into the Committee of the Whole for further consideration of the bill.

SEC. 4. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H.R. 356.

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

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

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

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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

SEARCHING FOR AND CUTTING REGULATIONS THAT ARE UNNECESSARILY BURDENSOME ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. NEWHOUSE). Pursuant to House Resolution 150 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 998.

Will the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. ROGERS) kindly take the chair.

□ 1309

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 998) to provide for the establishment of a process for the review of rules and sets of rules, and for other purposes, with Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky (Acting Chair) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The Acting CHAIR. When the Committee of the Whole rose on Tuesday, February 28, 2017, amendment No. 7 printed in House Report 115–20 offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHI) had been disposed of.

AMENDMENT NO. 8 OFFERED BY MS. BONAMICI

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 8 printed in House Report 115–20.

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 31, after line 24, add the following new title (and update the table of contents accordingly):

TITLE VI—EXEMPTIONS

SEC. 601. EXEMPTION RELATING TO CONSUMER PROTECTIONS FOR STUDENT LOAN BORROWERS.

The provisions of this Act do not apply to any rule or set of rules prescribed by the Secretary of Education with respect to providing consumer protections for student loan borrowers.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 150, the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. BONAMICI) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Oregon.

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Chair, I rise today in support of the amendment to protect student loan borrowers from the dangerous provisions of the SCRUB Act.

More than 40 million Americans have student loan debt. Roughly one-quarter of these borrowers are behind on their payments either in delinquency or default. The Federal Government has a responsibility to protect these borrowers and American taxpayers from unscrupulous institutions that saddle students with exorbitant debt in exchange for an education of dubious value.

Hardworking students, like those who attended Corinthian Colleges or ITT Tech, could be harmed if Congress passes a law that potentially strips them of a clear process for having their debt forgiven after institutions fabricate job placement figures or close unexpectedly.

This bill could allow institutions like Corinthian Colleges to require pre-dispute arbitration clauses, and prohibit class-action lawsuits—making it much less likely that students will get the justice they deserve when a school misrepresents the quality of its programs.

Millions of borrowers who rely on popular income-driven repayment plans could be left without options for keeping their payments affordable.

Active-Duty servicemembers could lose access to deferment benefits.

Rules banning incentive pay could be undone, exposing student veterans and others to aggressive marketing.

This bill could weaken Federal protections for millions of student loan borrowers when, instead, Congress should be working together to make college more affordable.

I encourage my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on this amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Chair, I claim the time in opposition.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Florida is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Chairman, as we pointed out yesterday, the SCRUB Act requires the commission to identify regulations that should be repealed. The commission focuses on rules and regulations that are out of date, no longer useful, and otherwise unnecessary or obsolete.

As I stated yesterday, no regulations should be exempt from this bill. Not all consumer protection regulations are created equal. If the regulation is important, effective and still relevant, then let it stand. If the regulation is not effective, no longer valuable and unnecessary, then why keep it around?

This amendment is just another wrong-headed carve-out that will end up hurting student loan borrowers more than it could possibly help them.

And for those reasons, Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to oppose this amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Chair, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. DAVIS), the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Development.

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Chairman, I rise to protect student loan borrowers. Protecting our young people should be a priority for every single Member of this Chamber. A major way that we are able to defend our students is through the safeguards that are at stake today.

These protections, like provisions which ensure students are able to find gainful employment or have recourse if a school misleads them, have been integral in the wake of unethical practices by certain schools. We have seen the damage that schools like ITT Tech and Ashford University have done in districts like mine. And as a military town, the students in San Diego are particularly vulnerable to bad actors in the for-profit education industry.

I can tell you, Mr. Chair, I have heard from students who can't get the degrees they need to provide a better life for their families; veterans who write to me imploring us to protect the men and women who would have spent their lives protecting us; students who write to me frustrated by this Chamber's insistence on deregulation for deregulation's sake; and many more who write letters saying, education is important to us. And we believe it should be important to you as well.

Let's prove them right, Mr. Chair. Let's show that education is important to us, and let's commit to keeping key provisions for students intact.

□ 1315

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Chairman, everybody wants to see gainful employment for our students, our college students especially.

Those institutions that have preyed on these students also are as a result of a regulatory environment that has allowed that to happen. That same regulatory environment would be under review, under oversight by the SCRUB Act. For those reasons particularly, we need to make sure that we do not have this amendment, but, more importantly, that we do allow for the underlying bill.

For those reasons, again, I urge opposition to this amendment by my colleague.

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

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Chair, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. POLIS), the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Chair, I rise in strong support of Congresswoman BONAMICI's amendment.

Today, our country owes over $1.3 trillion in student debt. In Colorado, the average student loan borrower owes $26,000.

Why would we want to risk abolishing consumer protections for our borrowers?

These are very personal numbers. The stories I hear, the burden of student loan debt affects people's ability to own a home or buy a car.

A recent report from the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau found that the number of student loan borrowers over the age of 60 has quadrupled. People haven't even paid off their loans as they enter retirement age.

Now, the Obama administration did take important steps to protect and support student loan borrowers. They made it easier for them to pay back their loans and ensured they were treated fairly by student loan services. Rolling back these protections would have far-reaching negative effects for our borrowers.

I strongly support Congresswoman BONAMICI's amendment, exempting Federal protections that support consumer protections for student loan borrowers from the SCRUB Act. The last thing we need to scrub away is protections for people to take out student loans.

I urge my colleagues to vote ''yes.''

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Chairman, the SCRUB Act is completely unnecessary. Agencies can already review and repeal regulations that are no longer needed. The only thing this bill does for people with student loan debt is give them less certainty that their investment will be worth it.

At a time when a college degree or credential is a critical tool for securing a family-wage job, it makes no sense to threaten to rescind rules that shield Americans from career programs that leave students with large debts and low wages.

I encourage all of my colleagues to adopt this amendment to safeguard consumer protections for student loan borrowers.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. BONAMICI).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Oregon will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 9 OFFERED BY MS. BONAMICI

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 9 printed in House Report 115–20.

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 31, after line 24, add the following new title (and update the table of contents accordingly):

TITLE VI—EXEMPTIONS

SEC. 601. EXEMPTION RELATING TO ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION ACT OF 1965.

The provisions of this Act do not apply to any rule or set of rules relating to title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.).

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 150, the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. BONAMICI) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Oregon.

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of the amendment to exempt rules related to title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act from the misguided provisions of the SCRUB Act.

Title I is the core feature of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, a critical civil rights law that holds States accountable for helping all students succeed.

The SCRUB Act threatens rules for implementing title I, which, in turn, threatens students. For example, title I rules clarify important accountability requirements that we passed into law just last session with strong bipartisan support.

Clear rulemaking is necessary to give education leaders certainty so they can benefit from the law's new flexibility and innovate on behalf of students.

Title I rules also include important details about the use of assessments in schools. These rules were negotiated with broad consensus. Would the SCRUB Act repeal them and deny States clarification about reducing the burden of testing?

My colleagues across the aisle may argue that no rule should be exempt from the SCRUB Act and that somehow the unelected commission in the bill will identify only bad rules. I am not so sure. The commission in the bill could create any methodology for targeting rules and, without knowing the commission's method, it is disingenuous to say that essential rules, good rules, wouldn't be affected.

Additionally, rules are rarely black and white as the majority suggests. Title I accountability rules, for example, sometimes push States to report on how they are serving each subgroup of students. But where some local officials may complain, these rules make sure that low-income and minority families are being counted.

Will the commission hear the concerns of those families?

I ask my colleagues to protect vulnerable students across the country by supporting this amendment.

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

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Chair, I claim the time in opposition.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Florida is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Chair, this amendment would exclude from the commission's review regulations under title I, part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended.

ESEA provides financial assistance to local educational agencies and schools with high numbers or high percentages of children from low-income families to help ensure that all children meet challenging State academic standards.

No regulation should be exempt from the review process, especially those regulations that impact low-income students across the country. It is imperative that we have smart, targeted, cost-effective regulations that actually help the people that need the help.

Imposing ineffective regulations on schools and educational agencies cost taxpayers money—this must be given the opportunity for oversight, as is given under the SCRUB Act—and overburden our already exhausted educators, and can cause more harm rather than good.

Why not take a look at these regulations and just consider whether they are working? And, if they are, then let's leave them alone. But if not, then, let's change them there.

There is no reason why we should create, again, a special carve-out from the commission's consideration. For those reasons, Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to oppose this amendment.

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

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. POLIS), the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong support of Congresswoman BONAMICI's amendment, which I am also proud to cosponsor.

When ESEA, or the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, was first passed in 1965, it truly was a landmark and important piece of civil rights legislation. It is written with the intent that every student—no matter their race, their economic background, their ZIP Code—deserves a great education in our country.

Title I of ESEA gets at the heart of the civil rights spirit for providing additional funding for schools with significant populations of high-needs and at-risk students. Now, title I also provides important performance and equity parameters for States and districts and gives some direction about how States can comply with these requirements to support our most struggling schools.

Of course, the text of the law doesn't do everything, which is why we rely on the protections that have been put in place through rule.

The SCRUB Act would allow an unelected panel to carelessly do away with important civil rights protections and transparency, the opposite of the legislative intent in the ESEA.

The Department of Education regularly goes through an extensive process for finalizing regulations, and to do away with these protections on a whim by an unelected, all-powerful panel may somehow score political points, but it is at the expense of students across our country.

I strongly support Representative BONAMICI's amendment that would exempt title I from this harmful bill, and I urge its passage.

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Chairman, since 1965, when the ESEA was passed, we have gone from chalkboards to iPads. Things have changed. The regulatory environment has changed.

May I remind my colleagues that, under the SCRUB Act, the bipartisan review committee would make these recommendations for changes in the regulatory scheme to Congress, who would have the final say as to whether any regulations need to be changed.

Again, for those reasons, Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to oppose this amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Chair, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. DAVIS), the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Development.

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Chairman, I rise to suppose the ESEA title I protection amendment.

We all know education, at its core, is a civil rights issue. We have a responsibility to ensure that every student has access to a world-class education, and this is especially true for children who come from families with limited means.

For our working class families, a quality education can be—and actually is—the ladder which raises an entire family's prospects. The protections that we are debating today ensure that these students and their schools are not shortchanged from the resources they need in order to be successful. These are resources that they are entitled to by law.

Last year's Every Student Succeeds Act was a very successful bipartisan compromise, so let's not gut the protections that are crucial for its effective implementation before it is even given a chance.

A student's ZIP Code should not determine the quality of his or her education. A family's income should not determine their child's career prospects, and a school's location should not determine its resources.

Let's come together to protect our most vulnerable students because, as we all know, today's investments in education will determine our future.

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Chair, may I inquire to the remaining time, please?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from California has 1 minute remaining.

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Chair, title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act is a key Federal law for advancing equity in our Nation's classrooms. The rules implementing title I provide important details that make sure historically underserved students have access to an equal public education. These rules are too important to entrust to a mysterious commission.

I am very proud of the work I did in the State legislature repealing unnecessary education rules and statutes. We did it in a very collaborative, bipartisan manner through existing processes. That is what we should be doing, not going through this SCRUB Act.

I urge my colleagues to protect title I rules, stand up for educational equity, and support the amendment.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. BONAMICI).

The amendment was rejected.

AMENDMENT NO. 10 OFFERED BY MR. RASKIN

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 10 printed in House Report 115–20.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 31, after line 24, add the following new title (and update the table of contents accordingly):

TITLE VI—EXEMPTIONS

SEC. 601. EXEMPTION RELATING TO CLEAN AIR ACT.

The provisions of this Act do not apply to any rule or set of rules relating to the enforcement of the Clean Air Act (Public Law 88–206; 42 U.S.C. 7401 et seq.).

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 150, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. RASKIN) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Maryland.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Chairman, my amendment would protect all rules relating to the enforcement of the Clean Air Act, which are in danger now under H.R. 998, the SCRUB Act, which seeks to authorize a brand new $30 million Presidential commission of unelected and unaccountable bureaucrats to wipe out agency rules across the whole field of government.

Mr. Chairman, last night in this Chamber, the President of the United States came and articulated policy areas where he said his administration ''wants to work with Members of both parties.'' One of these was to promote clean air and clean water. I was happy to hear it because earlier in the day he signed an executive order to clear the way for weakening safe drinking water standards through redefinition of which small bodies of water are covered under the Clean Water Act.

Now, the amendment I propose provides a chance for all of us to start fresh in demonstrating our seriousness about this new bipartisan commitment to protect the water we drink and the air that we breathe.

The SCRUB Act proposes to create a commission to do what Federal agencies and commissions already do, which is to review and update their rules. That is why a lot of us are deeply skeptical about spending $30 million to create a new roving commission to hack away at rules protecting the public interest.

This commission would be made up of five members appointed directly by the President at his discretion and four members by the President from congressional nomination, too, from each party.

The advocates for this legislation say it is not about dismantling the rules that protect the water that our children drink or the air that our children and our grandparents breathe or the food that all of us eat. It is just about getting rid of unnecessary and obsolete and profligate regulations. And I take them at their word that that is what it is about.

□ 1330

So let's all agree that the new super-commission that you seek to establish under the SCRUB Act will not touch, in any way, the rules adopted under the Clean Air Act. If that is not the purpose of this legislation, to undermine the Clean Air Act regime, as its advocates repeatedly insist, then there should be no problem having us formalize this commitment on a bipartisan basis.

Right now, the SCRUB Act does not explicitly protect clean air—or clean water, for that matter—from the prospects of a roving bureaucratic attack. Thus, it exposes all of us to unnecessary harm, threatening to scrub away the rules that protect the air we breathe.

What will that mean for 17 million Americans with asthma, for the millions of people with lung cancer and other respiratory diseases, for more than 30,000 people struggling with cystic fibrosis? All of these people are potentially in danger simply because of an overblown ideological attack on regulations, which are just the rules that we adopt as a constitutional democracy to protect ourselves from harm.

In answer to objections about the bill, the majority says that Congress will still have its say; but if you read it carefully, you see that congressional authority has actually been placed in a straitjacket. The bill requires an up-or-down vote on the commission's recommendations as a complete omnibus package rather than voting on each proposal individually.

So if you agreed with loosening some regulations, for example, in the Title X Family Planning program, which has a lot of rules, but you don't want to eviscerate the regulatory infrastructure under the Clean Air Act or the Clean Water Act, you would have to vote on the entire package at once. This makes Congress into an embarrassing rubber stamp for a nine-person body effectively controlled by the executive branch.

Dear colleagues, let's not play games with the health and safety of our constituents. If this bill passes as is, rules that govern the very air we breathe would be subject to the SCRUB Act's unelected, unaccountable, and unbounded practitioners. My amendment closes a gaping and dangerous hole in the legislation. I ask my colleagues to think about public health and safety first, and not the magical thinking and scientifically ungrounded cost-benefit analysis promised by the SCRUB Act.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Florida is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Chairman, this bill, again, requires the commission to identify regulations which should be repealed. The commission focuses on rules and regulations that are, again, out-of-date, no longer necessary, no longer useful, or otherwise obsolete.

Regulations promulgated under the Clean Air Act need to be examined and updated just as much as any other regulations. Reviewing and revisiting regulations promulgated decades ago allows the opportunity to improve upon existing standards.

According to the Competitive Enterprise Institute, the Environmental Protection Agency regulations cost the public $353 billion a year. Given the high costs associated with EPA regulations, excluding these regulations from this review process just doesn't make any sense. $353 billion—more than one-third of a trillion dollars—needs review.

Importantly, this bill has several significant procedural hurdles to pass before any regulation would be repealed: the commission must determine the regulation is no longer necessary; the commission must recommend repealing the regulation; and, most significantly, Congress would need to vote to get rid of the regulation. No regulation would be repealed without a vote by Congress.

This is reinstating the authority that this body has, and for these foregoing reasons, Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to oppose this amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Chairman, I yield such time as he may consume to my colleague from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS).

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Chairman, I support this amendment to exempt rules under the Clean Air Act from this bill.

According to a 2011 study by the Environmental Protection Agency, the central benefits of the Clean Air Act exceed costs by a factor of more than 30 to 1, and the high benefits exceed costs by 90 times. Cleaner air provides exceptional economic benefits because it results in the improved health and productivity of Americans and reduces medical expenses for air pollution-related health problems.

The Clean Air Act will prevent thousands of early deaths; and its air quality and health benefits, including the prevention of heart attacks and the reduction of pulmonary diseases like chronic bronchitis, will grow over time.

Representative RASKIN's amendment, which would exempt all rules that relate to the Clean Air Act, is based on common sense. Cleaner air benefits every man, woman, and child in the country. If the Environmental Protection Agency is prevented or delayed from promulgating new regulations relating to the Clean Water Act because of cost, the children of this country will pay a very heavy price.

I hope that all Members will understand the need for exempting rules that result in cleaner air for our children and support this amendment.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Chairman, this bill, when passed, does nothing to remove any regulation. What it does is exactly what we were elected to do: provide transparency and oversight over existing regulations to determine whether they are necessary or not. For those reasons, Mr. Chairman, I would again urge opposition to this amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. RASKIN).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Maryland will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 11 OFFERED BY MS. MOORE

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 11 printed in House Report 115–20.

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 31, after line 24, add the following new title (and update the table of contents accordingly):

TITLE VI—EXEMPTIONS

SEC. 601. EXEMPTION RELATING TO TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS.

The provisions of this Act do not apply to any rule or set of rules—

(1) relating to any obligation of the Federal Government with respect to a Tribal government; or

(2) supporting Tribal sovereignty and self-determination.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 150, the gentlewoman from Wisconsin (Ms. MOORE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Wisconsin.

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Chairman, my amendment is very simple. It just says that the provisions of the SCRUB Act will not apply to any rule or set of rules relating to any obligation of the Federal Government with respect to tribal government or supporting tribal sovereignty and self-determination.

Mr. Chair, the United States has a unique legal and political relationship with Indian tribal governments, as outlined in the Constitution, treaties, statutes, executive orders, and judicial decisions. However, too often they have been overlooked when it comes to Federal policies that will have a direct impact on that relationship and that sovereignty.

My concern is that, without explicit language, H.R. 998 would simply continue this mistake, which has had devastating consequences for our Native American brothers and sisters. It has been a decades-long policy of the Federal Government to engage Native American tribes in a government-to-government relationship that respects their right to self-government and self-determination, and my amendment seeks to ensure that nothing in this bill will undermine those efforts.

My amendment would exempt rules that will have an impact on this government-to-government relationship from the bill's requirements. This will, of course, require agencies and this commission to examine the impact on this special relationship in each rule that they bring to the chopping block. It makes clear that protecting the sovereignty and promoting the economic, political, and social self-determination for the Native American community remains a pressing priority.

Now, just 2 days ago, Mr. Chairman, the House considered and passed a bill, H.R. 228, the Indian Employment, Training and Related Services Consolidation Act, to make permanent a program that allows tribes to combine up to 13 different Federal, employment, childcare, and job training funding sources.

Of course, the sponsor of this legislation, Representative DON YOUNG, a true champion for Native Americans, described it well. He said: ''This program is what tribal self-determination is all about. Tribes understand their members best and know how to use these tools for creating expanding job opportunities in their communities.''

The same thing with NAHASDA, which has a lot of innovations, and I have worked with Congressman STEVE PEARCE and Representative COLE and others. Once NAHASDA reauthorization becomes law, it, too, might fall short because of this particular bill. I fear that the SCRUB Act's reckless rush to repeal rules based primarily only on one consideration, cost to the economy, will adversely affect Native Americans.

How will members of this commission be experts on the sovereignty and government-to-government relationship with tribes? There is no appointee for Native American communities on this commission, on the needs of native communities, on efforts by Congress to promote self-determination. The bill requires zero such knowledge and participation.

Additionally, simply requiring agencies to blindly—blindly—cut regulations is just nonsensical by itself.

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

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Florida is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Chairman, this amendment is the prime example of why we need the SCRUB Act. ''Federal Management of Programs that Serve Tribes'' was added to the Government Accountability Office biannual high-risk report released earlier this month. The GAO reported: ''For nearly a decade, we, along with inspectors general, special commissions, and others, have reported that federal agencies have ineffectively administered Indian education and health care programs and inefficiently fulfilled their responsibilities for managing the development of Indian energy resources.''

Look, the GAO found numerous challenges, including poor conditions at schools, inadequate healthcare oversight, and mismanagement of energy resources that limit the ability of tribes to create economic benefits and improve the well-being of their communities.

Clearly, the Federal Government is not getting this right, and we need to exercise our oversight. We need more attention to this issue, not less.

Exempting regulations relating to tribal governments is simply wrong. It keeps in place outdated and ineffective regulations that are burdening our tribal governments. For these reasons, Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to oppose this amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Chairman, this is precisely why the Members should adopt my amendment: because this is an unelected commission, and the relationship between Native American tribes is a government-to-government relationship.

If the gentleman is correct that we need to review regulations and change them, then that is something that

needs to happen with Native Americans seated at the table. As my good friend LINDA SÁNCHEZ often points out, when you are not at the table, you are definitely on the menu.

History has shown that failure by the Federal Government to consider the impact on tribal communities and to include their voices in Federal decisions has often left undesirable and devastating policy. Such consideration is disrespectful of their sovereignty and disrespectful of our Constitution. Such consideration is a critical need for us to create and maintain a strong and productive Federal-tribal relationship. I urge my colleagues to support my amendment.

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

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Chairman, the regulations that we are talking about in the GAO report that are so ineffective, that have been a failure, are those regulations that have been imposed by unelectable bureaucrats in the bureaucracy that we are trying to reach back and gain not only oversight, but transparency as well. The SCRUB Act needs to be there for that particular purpose, and, for those reasons, this amendment should be opposed.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Wisconsin (Ms. MOORE).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Wisconsin will be postponed.

□ 1345

AMENDMENT NO. 12 OFFERED BY MR. CUMMINGS

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 12 printed in House Report 115–20.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 31, after line 24, add the following new title (and update the table of contents accordingly):

TITLE VI—EXEMPTIONS

SEC. 601. EXEMPTION RELATING TO PROTECTIONS FOR WHISTLEBLOWERS.

The provisions of this Act do not apply to any rule or set of rules relating to—

(1) protections for whistleblowers; or

(2) penalties for retaliation against whistleblowers.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 150, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Maryland.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Chairman, my amendment would exempt from this bill any rule that protects whistleblowers or that imposes penalties on individuals who retaliate against whistleblowers. This bill would jeopardize all agency rulemakings—no matter how important—even rules that protect whistleblowers.

The Department of Energy issued a ruling in December that would authorize the department to impose civil penalties on Federal nuclear contractors who retaliate against whistleblowers who report information concerning nuclear safety. On January 31, 2017, DOE put a moratorium on that rule in response to President Trump's mandated freeze on rulemakings.

This is exactly the kind of rule that could become a casualty of this bill. We must ensure that agencies can issue rules that protect individuals who blow the whistle on waste, fraud, and abuse, as well as safety issues that can be a matter of life and death.

Mr. Chairman, I include in the RECORD a letter from the Project on Government Oversight supporting my amendment. That letter states: ''Whistleblowers are the first and best line of defense against significant problems on federal projects and must be protected from retribution for the act of reporting wrongdoing. Regulations to protect those whistleblowers should be exempt from the SCRUB Act 2017.''

PROJECT ON
GOVERNMENT OVERSIGHT,
Washington, DC, February 28, 2017.

Hon. PAUL RYAN,
Speaker of the House, House of Representatives, Washington DC.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Minority Leader, House of Representatives, Washington DC.

DEAR SPEAKER RYAN AND MINORITY LEADER PELOSI: On behalf of the Project On Government Oversight (POGO), I would like to voice my support for the whistleblower protection amendment to the Searching for and Cutting Regulations that are Unnecessarily Burdensome Act of 2017 (SCRUB Act) introduced by Ranking Member ELIJAH CUMMINGS of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee.

POGO is an independent nonprofit that has, for 35 years, investigated and exposed corruption and misconduct in order to achieve a more accountable federal government. As such, our organization is deeply committed to protecting whistleblowers within the federal government and its contractors. This amendment will explicitly protect any agency-promulgated regulations that protect whistleblowers or that lay out penalties for those who retaliate against whistleblowers from being targeted as ''unnecessarily burdensome'' under the SCRUB Act.

These regulations, like a Department of Energy (DOE) rule that would have allowed the Department to impose civil penalties against contractors who retaliate against whistleblowers, are already being disrupted by the current regulatory freeze. Whistleblowers are the first and best line of defense against significant problems on federal projects and must be protected from retribution for the act of reporting wrongdoing. Regulations to protect those whistleblowers should be exempt from the SCRUB Act of 2017.

We are happy to champion this amendment and hope it will receive the bipartisan support it deserves.

Sincerely,

DANIELLE BRIAN,
Executive Director.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Let me say that whistleblowers have played a very significant role in our committee, the Oversight and Government Reform Committee. As a matter of fact, many of the reforms that have come have come because people were bold enough to stand up and come forward and provide information that we would not have gotten. One of the things, Mr. Chairman, that we have said over and over again on a bipartisan basis is that we will protect whistleblowers.

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

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Florida is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Chairman, let me begin by saying that my colleague from Maryland, the ranking member of the full committee, has been and continues to be probably one of the strongest advocates for whistleblower protections, and I thank him and laud him for that. But I must disagree with him in regard to this amendment.

No one regulation is the perfect and ideal regulation that will last into perpetuity. All regulations need to be reviewed, and that is what this rule does. The commission focuses on rules and regulations that are out of date, no longer useful, and are otherwise unnecessary or obsolete.

Regulations that were promulgated with the original intent of protecting whistleblowers need updating and consideration as much as any other regulation does. Reviewing and revisiting regulations promulgated decades ago creates the opportunity to improve upon existing standards.

Excluding whistleblower regulations from this exercise means that whistleblowers would lose out on the chance to streamline regulations and reduce burdens that might be harming whistleblowers. In fact, this process could actually help protect whistleblowers in its oversight and transparency.

Importantly, this bill has several significant procedural hurdles to pass before any regulation would be repealed. The commission must determine that the regulation is no longer necessary; the commission would then recommend repealing the regulation; and, again, most significantly, Congress would need to vote on the regulation in order to get rid of it.

Again, for these reasons, I urge my colleagues to oppose this amendment.

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

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Chairman, may I inquire how much time I have remaining?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Maryland has 2½ minutes remaining.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Let me say this, Mr. Chairman, I have, as the ranking member of our committee, had many opportunities to sit and listen to whistleblowers who were shaking in their shoes. They were worried. But there was something that they wanted to do that was far more important to them than just that moment. They were trying to make sure that they did the right thing, and they brought it to the attention of people that they thought would listen to them and would do something about their concerns when they felt they had got to the point where, in many instances, they felt that they had nobody to go to.

This administration has been very interesting. If there is any time that we need to be protecting whistleblowers, it is right now because there are so many people in our government who feel that they are under threat. They see things changing, and many of them are in fear.

I appreciate what the gentleman said, but I don't care how you look at this. If somebody has the nerve to come up and say, I want my government to be better—some people have told me, I want to preserve my democracy. I want it to be a democracy for my children so they can have the democracy that I had when I was born—and they have the nerve to come up, then we have to do everything in our power. We have to send that message, and the message needs to come from here. It may not come from the White House, but it has got to come from here.

That is why this concerns me so much. Any message other than that says to those people that they have got to keep hiding, they have got to keep shaking in their boots, and they have got to keep silent when, deep in their souls, they want to make a difference.

We are better than that.

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

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Chairman, again, nothing in the SCRUB Act does anything to remove any of the protections that already exist for whistleblowers. This essentially makes it open for review, but, more importantly, as I agree with my colleague from Maryland, we need to protect the whistleblowers. And if it be the focus of Congress to do just that, then we must, irrespective of the SCRUB Act, focus on strengthening those laws that protect our whistleblowers to make our government run more transparently, more effectively, and more efficiently.

Again, I urge my colleagues to oppose this amendment.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Maryland will be postponed.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, proceedings will now resume on those amendments printed in House Report 115–20 on which further proceedings were postponed, in the following order:

Amendment No. 8 by Ms. BONAMICI of Oregon.

Amendment No. 10 by Mr. RASKIN of Maryland.

Amendment No. 11 by Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin.

Amendment No. 12 by Mr. CUMMINGS of Maryland.

The Chair will reduce to 2 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote after the first vote in this series.

AMENDMENT NO. 8 OFFERED BY MS. BONAMICI

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. BONAMICI) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 191, noes 235, not voting 3, as follows:

[Roll No. 109]

AYES—191

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
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Correa
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
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster (NH)
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham, M.
Luján, Ben Ray
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn B.
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McEachin
McGovern
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Halleran
O'Rourke
Pallone
Panetta
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Raskin
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Rosen
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
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)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOES—235

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
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
Costa
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
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

NOT VOTING—3

Amodei
Hudson
McNerney

□ 1419

Messrs. FERGUSON, PAULSEN, YOUNG of Iowa, MARSHALL, POE of Texas, BILIRAKIS, JENKINS of West Virginia, MULLIN, THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, and DUFFY changed their vote from ''aye'' to ''no.''

Messrs. PETERS, GALLEGO, and SUOZZI changed their vote from ''no'' to ''aye.''

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

AMENDMENT NO. 10 OFFERED BY MR. RASKIN

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. RASKIN) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIR. This will be a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 189, noes 231, not voting 9, as follows:

[Roll No. 110]

AYES—189

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
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Correa
Courtney
Crist
Crowley
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
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster (NH)
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
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)
Quigley
Raskin
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Ros-Lehtinen
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)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOES—231

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)
Comer
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costa
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
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
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.
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
Taylor
Tenney
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tipton
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

NOT VOTING—9

Collins (NY)
Cuellar
Hudson
McCaul
Pelosi
Rush
Stivers
Tiberi
Trott

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR (during the vote). There is 1 minute remaining.

□ 1427

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

AMENDMENT NO. 11 OFFERED BY MS. MOORE

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Wisconsin (Ms. MOORE) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIR. This will be a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 197, noes 229, not voting 3, as follows:

[Roll No. 111]

AYES—197

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
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Cole
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
Hurd
Jackson Lee
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Khanna
Kihuen
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster (NH)
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lucas
Lujan Grisham, M.
Luján, Ben Ray
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn B.
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McEachin
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Mullin
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan

Norcross
O'Halleran
O'Rourke
Pallone
Panetta
Pascrell
Payne
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Raskin
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Rosen
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Soto
Speier
Suozzi
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth
Young (AK)

NOES—229

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
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
Huizenga
Hultgren
Hunter
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
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
Luetkemeyer
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Marshall
Massie
Mast
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mitchell
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
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 (IA)
Zeldin

NOT VOTING—3

Hudson
Pelosi
Scott, David

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. COLLINS of Georgia) (during the vote). There is 1 minute remaining.

□ 1432

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

AMENDMENT NO. 12 OFFERED BY MR. CUMMINGS

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIR. This is a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 194, noes 231, not voting 4, as follows:

[Roll No. 112]

AYES—194

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
Clark (MA)
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
Fitzpatrick
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.
Jones
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Khanna
Kihuen
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster (NH)
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren
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)
Quigley
Raskin
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Rosen
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Soto
Speier
Suozzi
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth
Young (IA)

NOES—231

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
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
Huizenga
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger
Knight
Kustoff (TN)
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
Lewis (MN)
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)
Zeldin

NOT VOTING—4

Hudson Pelosi
Lowenthal Scott, David

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR (during the vote). There is 1 minute remaining.

□ 1436

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. FLEISCHMANN). There being no further amendments, under the rule, the Committee rises.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. COLLINS of Georgia) having assumed the chair, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 998) to provide for the establishment of a process for the review of rules and sets of rules, and for other purposes, and, pursuant to House Resolution 150, he reported the bill back to the House with sundry amendments adopted in the Committee of the Whole.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the rule, the previous question is ordered.

Is a separate vote demanded on any amendment reported from the Committee of the Whole? If not, the Chair will put them en gros.

The amendments were agreed to.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time and adopted.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

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

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

Mr. RASKIN. I am, indeed.

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

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Raskin moves to recommit the bill H.R. 998 to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with the following amendment:

At the end of the bill, add the following new title (and update the table of contents accordingly):

TITLE VI—EXEMPTIONS

SEC. 601. EXEMPTION FOR CERTAIN RULES OR SETS OF RULES.

The provisions of this Act do not apply to any rule or set of rules relating to—

(1) any law governing a potential conflict of interest of an employee or officer of the executive branch;

(2) any law governing the financial disclosures of an employee or officer of the executive branch; and

(3) bribery.

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

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

The purpose of this amendment is simply to carve out from the provisions of the legislation any rules that we have adopted in order to prevent conflicts of interest and in order to promote financial transparency and disclosure by executive branch employees.

Mr. Speaker, since I became a Member of the House in January and joined the Judiciary Committee, we have been subjected to an onslaught of bills seeking to free corporate polluters, lead paint and asbestos manufacturers, and other abusers of the rights of consumers and citizens from having to face the people they injure in court and having to comply with the rules that have been worked out over the decades to protect our air, our water, our land, our people, our health, and our workplaces.

In most cases, we don't even get hearings on these bills. In the Judiciary Committee, I have not seen a victim of toxic torts or lead poisoning or medical malpractice testify, but their rights are being flattened every single day by the legislative bulldozer that is running amuck.

These bills are flying at us with lightning speed—no hearings, no real debate, no time to study the measures, no time to do the proper information gathering for our constituents.

Now the SCRUB Act would establish an unelected roving commission with unlimited subpoena power. It would be controlled by the President who gets to appoint a clean majority—five members at his own discretion; and four more, two Republicans and two Democrats. So when they say it is bipartisan, remember what that means: Seven spots for majority appointees and two spots for minority appointees. More importantly, this roving commission can be lobbied behind closed doors by the special interests that want to splice and dice the regulations that we have worked out over the decades to protect the public against harm.

In all of the rules that our democracy has put in place—not just old rules, not just obsolete rules, not just silly rules—all of them are going to be in the crosshairs of this roving commission—no exceptions, no firewalls, no protections for rules governing public health and safety—like the Clean Water Act or like the Clean Air Act. They just rejected the amendment to carve that out. There are no protections, significantly, and this is what the amendment is about, for rules guaranteeing transparency in government and integrity in government.

My motion to recommit, Mr. Speaker, would incorporate into the underlying legislation an amendment that I advanced in committee that goes to the heart of the crisis of confidence in Washington, in America today. I think every Member of this body can support it without betraying any of their principles or their party. On the contrary, I think it strengthens all of our principles and it strengthens our parties by building public confidence in the political system as a whole. It makes sure we can keep draining the swamp, as the President of the United States said in this Chamber last night.

My amendment states very simply that the Commission may not target for destruction any rules relating to any law governing a potential conflict of interest of an employee or officer of the executive branch, or any law governing the financial disclosures of executive branch employees, and bribery.

Right now, we know there is a dangerous crisis in popular confidence in the national government. This administration has brought to Washington a web of complicated conflicts of interest, real or potential, attendant to a global business empire that engages in business with foreign governments, foreign and domestic corporations, and a huge host of regulated entities.

Just a mile from where we sit today, for example, the Trump Hotel is renting out guest rooms, ballrooms, meeting rooms, and whole floors to foreign governments, embassies, and large corporations in flagrant violation of the Emoluments Clause, article 1, section 9, which requires the President to come ask us—Congress—for permission to receive payments from foreign governments.

□ 1445

They even have a director of diplomatic sales now. Furthermore, the standard lease that the Trump Hotel has with the General Services Administration forbids any elected official of the United States Government or the District of Columbia from deriving any profit or value from the lease. Clearly, there is a breach in this lease right now. The problem is that the President is not only the tenant, he is, for all intents and purposes, the landlord too because he controls the GSA and appoints its director. So President-landlord Donald Trump would have to go to court to sue tenant businessman Donald Trump for breaching the lease by collecting money under it as a public official. This just scratches the surface of a welter of ethical conflicts.

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

Since I became a member of this House in January, my Freshman colleagues and I have been engaged in two activities. First, we've been sitting in hearings and trying to make sense of bills that fundamentally change the legal and regulatory structure of America—and we've done so without hearing from witnesses, without time to study measures, and without time to do the proper information gathering that I believe is necessary to serve our various constituencies. Second, we've come to the floor at the end of each day to cast votes on deregulation. This house has been in the business of loosening rules on everything. We've

made it easier to pollute, easier to harm consumers—all in the name of cutting regulatory costs. And so it's no surprise that a bill like this sailed through the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform to the floor.

This bill would establish an unelected commission with unlimited subpoena power and partisan majority to chop through the Federal Register with a chain saw. There are no exceptions, no firewalls, no protections for rules and regulations governing health and safety and there are no protections for rules guaranteeing transparency in government.

My motion to recommit would incorporate into the underlying legislation, an amendment I offered in committee. It's straightforward and unburdensome. In fact, when I offered it in committee one of my colleagues on the other side indicated that the priority of this bill is "major rules with massive costs."

If passed, this MTR would make certain that no provision of the SCRUB Act could be used to eliminate rules relating to laws that govern conflicts of interest of executive branch officers or employees. That's it—it reinforces existing law and clarifies provisions of this bill.

Surely, we can agree that rules designed to help maintain the public trust in those representing them in the Executive Branch are sacred enough to be explicitly protected. And if anyone should ask why it's so important, we don't have to look too far. This administration is a walking, talking billboard for the need to protect laws that protect the public trust.

I urge my colleagues to support this common sense measure.

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

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the motion.

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

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Speaker, it is interesting because creatively my friend from Maryland is trying to do unsuccessfully what they have done all along unsuccessfully, and that is just create a carve-out of regulations for review by the SCRUB Act.

Now, what regulation is so perfect it should never be reviewed again? None. And that is why the SCRUB Act is so important. You see, this bill went through regular order.

In the Oversight and Government Reform Committee, we went through a markup, and my friends across the aisle had an opportunity to make their amendments. We came to the floor. They had an opportunity to make their amendments. Two were accepted—made it a bipartisan bill.

But, more importantly, let's take the impact of this bill and what it does to our economy. The Small Business Administration says that annually each business must pay $20,000 a year in compliance costs because of our regulatory environment. The Competitive Enterprise Institute says that that is $15,000 per household.

Members, we were elected to be accountable to those who elected us; not to allow some unaccountable, unelectable bureaucracy to make rules and regulations that have filled up 178,000 pages of the Code of Federal Regulations.

Let us do what we were elected to do, and reach back and take that authority that we have given to these regulatory agencies. Let us pass this SCRUB Act so that we will have the opportunity to not only review, but eliminate those regulations that are no longer necessary, inefficient, and ineffective.

Members, I ask for you to oppose this motion and vote for the underlying SCRUB Act and let us regain the authority that the people have given us.

I yield back the balance of my time.

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

There was no objection.

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

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

RECORDED VOTE

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

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 and clause 9 of rule XX, the 5-minute vote on the motion to recommit will be followed by 5-minute votes on the passage of the bill, if ordered; ordering the previous question on House Resolution 156; and adoption of the resolution, if ordered.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 190, noes 235, not voting 4, as follows:

[Roll No. 113]

AYES—190

Adams
Aguilar
Barragán
Bass
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (MD)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
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
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster (NH)
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
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)
Quigley
Raskin
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Rosen
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Soto
Speier
Suozzi
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOES—235

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
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

NOT VOTING—4

Capuano
Hudson
Pelosi
Scott, David

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

□ 1500

Messrs. COFFMAN, DESJARLAIS, and Mrs. COMSTOCK changed their vote from ''aye'' to ''no.''

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

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

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

RECORDED VOTE

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

A recorded vote was ordered.

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

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 240, noes 185, not voting 4, as follows:

[Roll No. 114]

AYES—240

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Arrington
Babin
Bacon
Banks (IN)
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Bergman
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
Costa
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Cuellar
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
Gallagher
Garrett
Gibbs
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gottheimer
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
Huizenga
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
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
Mast
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mitchell
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Newhouse
Noem
Nunes
O'Halleran
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peterson
Pittenger
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Posey
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Rice (SC)
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney, Francis
Rooney, Thomas J.
Ros-Lehtinen
Rosen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce (CA)
Rush
Russell
Rutherford
Sanford
Scalise
Schrader
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smucker
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Suozzi
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—185

Adams
Aguilar
Barragán
Bass
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Biggs
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
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Correa
Courtney
Crist
Crowley
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
Gaetz
Gallego
Garamendi
Gohmert
Gonzalez (TX)
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hanabusa
Hastings
Heck
Higgins (NY)
Himes
Hoyer
Huffman
Jackson Lee
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Khanna
Kihuen
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster (NH)
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham, M.
Luján, Ben Ray
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn B.
Maloney, Sean
Massie
Matsui
McCollum
McEachin
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Panetta
Pascrell
Payne
Perlmutter
Peters
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Raskin
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Soto
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—4

Hudson
Pelosi
Rogers (KY)
Scott, David

□ 1507

Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER changed her vote from ''aye'' to ''no.''

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1004, REGULATORY INTEGRITY ACT OF 2017, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1009, OIRA INSIGHT, REFORM, AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON). The unfinished business is the vote on ordering the previous question on the resolution (H. Res. 156) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1004) to amend chapter 3 of title 5, United States Code, to require the publication of information relating to pending agency regulatory actions, and for other purposes, and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1009) to amend title 44, United States Code, to require the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs to review regulations, and for other purposes, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

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

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 233, nays 189, not voting 7, as follows:

[Roll No. 115]

YEAS—233

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)
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
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
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

NAYS—189

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
Clark (MA)
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, 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
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster (NH)
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
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
Pallone
Panetta
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Raskin
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Rosen
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Soto
Speier
Suozzi
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—7

Duncan (TN)
Green, Al
Hudson
Marshall
O'Rourke
Perlmutter
Scott, David

□ 1513

So the previous question was ordered.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

(By unanimous consent, Mr. SESSIONS was allowed to speak out of order.)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY COMMITTEE ON RULES REGARDING AMENDMENT PROCESS FOR H.R. 725, INNOCENT PARTY PROTECTION ACT; H.R. 720, LAWSUIT ABUSE REDUCTION ACT; AND H.R. 985, FAIRNESS IN CLASS ACTION LITIGATION ACT

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, this morning the Rules Committee issued announcements outlining the process for amendments for three measures likely to be on the floor next week.

An amendment deadline has been set for Monday, March 6, at 3 p.m. for H.R. 725, the Innocent Party Protection Act. And a deadline has been set for Tuesday, March 7, at 10 a.m. for H.R. 720, the Lawsuit Abuse Reduction Act; and H.R. 985, the Fairness in Class Action Litigation Act.

The text of these measures is available at the Rules Committee website, and feel free to contact me or my staff with any questions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, 5-minute voting will continue.

There was no objection.

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. POLIS. 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 234, noes 180, not voting 15, as follows:

[Roll No. 116]

AYES—234

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)
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
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
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
Sinema
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—180

Adams
Aguilar
Barragán
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
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
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
Gallego
Garamendi
Gonzalez (TX)
Gottheimer
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Hanabusa
Hastings
Heck
Higgins (NY)
Hoyer
Huffman
Jackson Lee
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Khanna
Kihuen
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster (NH)
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
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

Pallone	Ryan (OH)	Thompson (CA)
Panetta	Sánchez	Thompson (MS)
Payne	Sarbanes	Titus
Pelosi	Schakowsky	Tonko
Perlmutter	Schiff	Torres
Peters	Schneider	Tsongas
Peterson	Schrader	Vargas
Pingree	Scott (VA)	Veasey
Pocan	Serrano	Vela
Polis	Sewell (AL)	Velázquez
Price (NC)	Shea-Porter	Visclosky
Quigley	Sherman	Walz
Raskin	Sires	Wasserman Schultz
Rice (NY)	Slaughter	Waters, Maxine
Richmond	Smith (WA)	Watson Coleman
Rosen	Soto	Welch
Roybal-Allard	Speier	Wilson (FL)
Ruiz	Suozzi	Yarmuth
Ruppersberger	Swalwell (CA)	
Rush	Takano	

NOT VOTING—15

Bass	Gabbard	Lieu, Ted
Cleaver	Green, Al	Marshall
Correa	Gutiérrez	O'Rourke
Costa	Himes	Pascrell
Duncan (TN)	Hudson	Scott, David

□ 1520

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

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. Speaker, I was talking to constituents and reached a time when a very personal issue arose. Had I been present, I would have voted ''yea'' on rollcall No. 115 and ''yea'' on rollcall No. 116.

DISAPPROVING THE RULE SUBMITTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR RELATING TO ''CLARIFICATION OF EMPLOYER'S CONTINUING OBLIGATION TO MAKE AND MAINTAIN AN ACCURATE RECORD OF EACH RECORDABLE INJURY AND ILLNESS''

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 150, I call up the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 83) disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of Labor relating to ''Clarification of Employer's Continuing Obligation to Make and Maintain an Accurate Record of Each Recordable Injury and Illness'', and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the joint resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 150, the joint resolution is considered read.

The text of the joint resolution is as follows:

H.J. RES. 83

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That Congress disapproves the rule submitted by the Department of Labor relating to ''Clarification of Employer's Continuing Obligation to Make and Maintain an Accurate Record of Each Recordable Injury and Illness'' (published at 81 Fed. Reg. 91792 (December 19, 2016)), and such rule shall have no force or effect.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BYRNE) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Alabama.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BYRNE. 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 materials on H.J. Res. 83.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.J. Res. 83, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, America's workers deserve responsible, commonsense, regulatory policies to ensure safe and healthy working conditions. Let me say that again. America's workers deserve responsible, commonsense regulatory policies to ensure safe and healthy working conditions.

They deserve a Federal Government that holds bad actors accountable, and a government that takes proactive steps to help employers improve safety protections and prevent injuries and illnesses before they occur. Just as importantly, they deserve to know that Federal agencies are following the law.

For years, Republicans have called on OSHA to reject a top-down approach to worker protections and, instead, collaborate with employers to identify gaps in safety and address the unique challenges facing workplaces.

Unfortunately, under the Obama administration, our concerns usually fell on deaf ears. In fact, one of the administration's parting gifts to workers and small businesses was a regulatory scheme that reflects not only a backwards, punitive approach to workplace safety, but one that is completely unlawful.

Here's why. Under the Occupational Safety and Health Act, employers have long been required to record injuries and illnesses and retain those records for 5 years. The law explicitly provides a 6-month window under which OSHA can issue citations to employers who fail to maintain proper records; 6 months. It is written in the law. This approach helps ensure workplace hazards are addressed in a timely manner.

However, in 2006, OSHA took action against Volks Constructors for recordkeeping errors that occurred well beyond what the law allows, well beyond 6 months. The errors were from nearly 5 years earlier. That is why a Federal appeals court unanimously rejected OSHA's overreach. The opinion for the Court stated: ''We do not believe Congress expressly established a statute of limitations only to implicitly encourage the Secretary to ignore it.'' Even President Obama's Supreme Court nominee, Judge Garland, agreed OSHA's action was ''not reasonable.''

What came next was an outright power grab. OSHA decided to take its unlawful action one step further. This time it would not only ignore the law, but rewrite it. The agency finalized the ''Volks'' rule, unilaterally extending the statute of limitations from 6 months to 5 years. OSHA undertook for itself the power that only this Congress has to write laws.

The agency created significant regulatory confusion for small businesses. Many would likely face unwarranted litigation because of unlawful regulatory policies. Of course, further judicial scrutiny also means hardworking taxpayers will foot the bill when OSHA is forced to defend its lawless power grab once again.

Simply put, OSHA had no authority to do this. We have a Constitution that grants Congress, not Federal agencies, the power to write the law. But that is not the only reason we are here today. We are also here because this rule does nothing to improve workplace safety.

Maintaining injury and illness records is vitally important and can help enhance worker protections. But that is not the goal of this rule. This rule only serves to punish employers. As we have said repeatedly, OSHA should, instead, collaborate with employers to help them understand their legal responsibilities and ensure safe measures are in place to prevent workplace hazards in the future.

Fortunately, Congress has the authority to reject this failed approach to workplace safety and block an abuse of executive power that began under the Obama administration.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution, and I hope we can all work together to encourage a more proactive approach that prevents injuries and illnesses from happening in the first place.

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

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.J. Res. 83, the Congressional Review Act resolution of disapproval that will undermine workplace safety and health. It does so by overturning a clarifying rule issued by OSHA on December 9, 2016, to ensure accurate occupational injury and illness reporting.

Now, first of all, it is strange that we are reversing a rule through the Congressional Review Act that creates no new compliance or reporting obligation, imposes no new costs. It simply gives OSHA the tools to enforce an employer's continuing obligation to record injuries and illnesses.

Spurred by the court of appeals decision, which blocked OSHA from citing continuing violations outside the 6-month statute of limitations, OSHA updated its recordkeeping rule. This new rule makes it clear that employers have a continuing obligation to record serious injuries and illnesses on an OSHA Log if they failed to comply with the requirement to record the injury at the time the injury or illness occurred.

Since the enactment of OSHA in 1970, accurate data on workplace injuries and illnesses has been recognized as an

important tool for protecting worker safety and health.

Since 1972, employers in higher hazard industries have been required to record the occurrence of each serious occupational injury or illness within 7 days on a ''Log of Work-Related Injuries and Illnesses.''

□ 1530

An annual summary of this law must be posted for 3 months starting in February of each year in a conspicuous place where employees' frequent records must be kept for 5 years.

While most employers faithfully comply with OSHA's rules, there are a number of well-documented incentives for employers to underreport workplace injuries. These incentives include lower workers' compensation rates, more favorable treatment in public contracting, and a lower chance of having a future OSHA inspection.

Underreporting means that workplace hazards are masked, making it less likely that employers or employees become aware of patterns that would indicate the need to take corrective actions to prevent future injuries. If injuries and illnesses are not on the log, OSHA may overlook hazards at a worksite during an inspection and consequently leaving workers exposed to correctable dangers.

Mr. Speaker, because of underfunding, OSHA only has sufficient resources to inspect a workplace once every 140 years on average. So the likelihood that they might show up in the next 6 months is obviously remote. To be effective, OSHA must have reliable injury and illness data to target its scarce resources towards work sites where employees are facing the greatest dangers. Understated injury rates may mean that OSHA will bypass work sites that need to be inspected.

Without reliable recordable injury rates, private contractors and public sector officials will not be able to make sufficiently informed decisions when assessing the safety records of prospective contractors and subcontractors.

Mr. Speaker, OSHA's practice for the last 40 years and the decisions of the bipartisan and independent OSHA Review Commission have upheld the principle that every day an employer fails to record an injury was a continuing violation for the purpose of calculating time limits under OSHA's statute of limitations. That is not totally open-ended but limited to the 5-year requirement that employers are required to maintain these injury records.

In spite of this 40-year precedent, a 2012 D.C. Court of Appeals decision known as Volks Constructors upended the 40-year precedent when it held that OSHA did not have the authority to issue a citation for an occurrence of a violation that extended beyond the 6-month statute of limitations as set forth in OSHA. The court noted that OSHA's previous regulation provided for no specific articulated continuing obligation to record injuries beyond 7 days.

There was a concurrent opinion in the Volks decision which made it clear that a regulation, which expressly provides for an employer's continuing obligation, would be lawful.

Now, when you talk about what the court decided and what Mr. Garland wrote, that was on the previous regulation, not on this one.

Informed by the guidance of the court, OSHA has issued a new rule which does make it clear that an employer's duty to maintain an accurate record of workplace injuries and illnesses is, in fact, an ongoing obligation.

So let's be clear, eliminating this rule means that employers who want to underreport injuries will face no sanctions if the injuries go back more than 6 months. Rolling back this rule essentially creates a vast safe harbor for noncompliance and creates the perverse incentive for underreporting.

The premise behind the resolution today is that it is unlawful. If that is the case, Congress should repeal the regulation. But no court has reviewed this new rule, only the predecessor. There has been no appeal of the new rule that has been lodged since the new rule was issued in December.

The proper course of action is to have the courts decide the legal question since arguably they are in the best position to interpret the laws and evaluate the precedents. This especially makes sense since one of the concurring opinions in the Volks case identified abundant legal precedent for tolling the statute of limitations when there are continuing violations in other laws that are nearly identical to the reporting requirements in OSHA. These include the Consumer Credit Reporting Act and the Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act.

On the other hand, if the purpose of passing this resolution is just to eliminate the possibility of OSHA's clarifying rule could ever be found lawful, then it is obvious that H.J. Res. 83 is an ideological attack without any regard for consequences to worker safety.

On the other hand, if there is a bona fide view that OSHA lacks the adequate legal basis for the rule, then the constructive solution would be to amend OSHA and provide for the clarifying statutory authority. We should not be repealing the rule because we know what happens when this deterrent is eliminated. After OSHA lost its authority to enforce the violations outside the 6-month window under the Volks decision, there was a 75 percent reduction in the number of citations issued for underreporting, and that is according to OSHA data.

So, Mr. Speaker, there has been no hearing held on this final rule or this resolution. There has been no assessment of the consequences of underreporting of injuries which will occur if this resolution is adopted, and there has been no evaluation of any alternative way to ensure accountability for employers who flout the law. There has just been a headlong rush to push this resolution to the floor just a few days after its filing.

So given the complete lack of deliberation regarding this new rule, this Congressional Review Act resolution is premature, at best, but it will definitely have regrettable consequences to the health and safety of the people that we are charged to protect.

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

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I would like to read very briefly a quote from the court's decision: ''We find this statute to be clear and the agency's interpretation unreasonable in any event''—in any event.

There is no way to rewrite this regulation to comply with the law that is clear. There is no way for the agency's interpretation to become reasonable. It is unreasonable according to the court in any event.

My friend from Virginia talked about the fact that OSHA just updated the regulation to impose a continuing obligation. OSHA does not have that authority. Only this Congress has that authority. No agency can unilaterally decide to change a statutory provision that the court has said is clear. He said this applies to only a few categories of employers. It applies to nearly every category of employers that has 10 employees or more. So you could have an employer with 50 employees, and they are subject to this regulation. This applies to virtually any employer.

OSHA has 6 months to enforce this law—6 months—from any violation. Now, why 6 months? Because it is important to investigate these things quickly and determine whether there has been a violation because things get lost and people leave their employment. Congress made the decision for 6 months because that was a period of time in which OSHA could perform its duties reasonably, and we could get justice the way it ought to be done.

We can amend OSHA, but we have not chosen to do so. Until this Congress chooses to change OSHA, the agency has to comply with the clear wording of the statute as it has been passed by this Congress. The agency does not have the right to do this. It would be a waste of taxpayer money and time to force an employer to go challenge this in court when we already know what the result is going to be. It is not up to the committee or to the Congress to go back and review an agency interpretation we know, as a matter of law, is wrong.

So this is a responsible act to take, and I would suggest to the agency and to my fellow Members of Congress that if we want to reconsider a statute of limitations we do it on this floor and not in that agency.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from

North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) who is the chairwoman of our committee.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from Alabama for his able testimony in regard to this resolution.

I rise today in support of this resolution because it will reverse an unlawful power grab and restore responsible worker health and safety policies.

Article I of the Constitution is clear. It is the Members of this body—the legislative branch—who write the law. Why? Because we are closest to the people and, therefore, more responsive to the needs and demands of those we serve.

It is the responsibility of the executive branch to enforce the laws—not write them. Unfortunately, the previous administration failed to abide by this founding principle. President Obama boasted about his days teaching constitutional law, yet his administration tried time and time again to rewrite the law unilaterally through executive fiat.

The Volks rule is just one example of this unprecedented overreach. Under Occupational Safety and Health Act regulations, employers are required to record injuries and illnesses and retain those records for 5 years. This information has long been used by safety inspectors and employers to identify gaps in safety and enhance protections for workers.

To ensure hazards are addressed in a timely manner, the law explicitly provides a 6-month window under which an employer can be cited for failing to keep proper records—6 months. But never one to let the law stand in the way of its partisan agenda, the Obama administration decided to unfairly target a Louisiana construction company for recordkeeping errors from nearly 5 years earlier.

That's right, 5 years. Not even remotely close to what the law passed by Congress permits. The consequences of this unlawful power grab were predictable. Employers large and small faced significant regulatory confusion and legal uncertainty. Fortunately, a Federal appeals court unanimously struck down this power grab as my colleague from Alabama has cited. Even President Obama's nominee for the Supreme Court, Judge Merrick Garland, referred to OSHA's action as unreasonable.

How did the Obama administration respond to this judicial rebuke? It completely ignored the court's ruling. The agency doubled down on its abuse of power and tried to rewrite the law extending the threat of penalty from 6 months to 5 years.

Again, it is Congress that writes laws, not government agencies. That is precisely why we must support this resolution. By supporting H.J. Res. 83, we will provide more certainty for small businesses and uphold the rule of law. Just as importantly, we must demand a better approach to worker health and safety. To be clear, this rule does nothing—I repeat nothing—to improve the health and safety of America's workers.

Instead of shaming employers, OSHA should collaborate with employers and develop a proactive approach that will keep workers safe. That is exactly what Republicans have demanded for years, and we will continue to demand so in the years ahead no matter which party has the Presidency.

As my colleague from Alabama has said, this is exactly the appropriate way to block this unlawful rule, not only because the agency has no authority to do what it did, but because it is why we have the CRA.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to block an unlawful rule by voting in favor of H.J. Res. 83. I wish to thank the chairman of the Workforce Protections Subcommittee, Representative BYRNE, for his leadership on this important issue.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, prior to yielding, I just want to make a comment that the court struck down the previous rule, not the rule which is the subject of this resolution. The previous rule did not have a specific citation about a continuing obligation. This rule does. The excerpts from the Garland concurring decision says:

> None of this is to say, as the petitioner suggests in its opening brief, that a statute of limitations like OSHA's statute of limitations can never admit to a continuing violation for a failure to act. To the contrary, where a regulation or statute imposes a continuing obligation to act, a party can continue to violate it until that obligation is satisfied.

This regulation specifically cites the obligation as a continuing obligation.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

□ 1545

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Let me thank the gentleman for his very astute argument and his leadership on the committee.

I am going to narrow my argument to, I think, very realistic questions about whether or not we are procedurally in the context of overruling the OSHA decision out of the Federal courts or whether or not this is really a question of do we want to protect the rights of American workers and protect them from the years of injuries that preceded the establishment of OSHA. I want to fall on the side of the American worker.

Let me be very clear what we are talking about today. The ruling that we are speaking about went against 40 years of precedence in reporting workplace safety violations. Since 1972, every administration has maintained that the 5-year retention period for recording work-related injuries, illnesses, or death is standard practice. This DOL rule was simply put in place to codify and create some consistency that will benefit both employers and employees.

Thank you, President Obama, who recognized that it is not the Member of Congress who may slip on a rug in their privileged manner of coming to this august body and voting, but it is, in fact, the workers who come every day and pick up your garbage, the sanitation workers, the same workers that Dr. King went to Memphis to stand up for and the individuals who, because of their work, are susceptible to injuries more often than not.

Individuals who work in construction, who help build our houses and hospitals and tall skyscrapers, what excuse can we give for not maintaining the standards of keeping and reporting those injuries for a period of 5 years and the retention of such? Or those who work, for example, in the area of railroads, railroad beds and railroad sites—hard labor. Or those who work at our ports—hard labor.

So I rise to oppose disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of Labor regarding OSHA, and I do so for the men and women who do the heavy lifting.

I include in the RECORD a letter from AFSCME, which represents municipal and county workers across America, establishing why we should vote ''no'' on this.

> AMERICAN FEDERATION OF STATE, COUNTY AND MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES, AFL–CIO,
>
> *Washington, DC, February 28, 2017.*
>
> HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
> *Washington, DC.*
>
> DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the 1.6 million members of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), I'm writing to urge you to oppose H.J. Res. 83, which would abolish an Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) rule that clarifies an employer's responsibility to maintain accurate records of serious work-related injuries and illnesses.
>
> The new OSHA rule creates NO new compliance or reporting obligations and imposes no new costs on employers.
>
> The 1970 law creating OSHA explicitly directed the agency to ''prescribe regulations requiring employers to maintain accurate records of and to make periodic reports on, work-related deaths, injuries and illnesses other than minor injuries . . . .'' Since the first recordkeeping regulations issued in 1972, OSHA has required employers to record workplace injuries on an ''OSHA log'' within seven days of the injury and to maintain the records of the log and annual summary of the log for five years. Every Republican and Democratic administration since 1972 has interpreted this employer obligation to make and maintain accurate records to be ongoing from the date of the injury or illness until the five-year retention period expires. OSHA issued this clarifying regulation in December 2016 in response to a court decision that dramatically limited OSHA's enforcement of injury recordkeeping regulation to a six-month period. OSHA's clarifying rule simply restores the standard to one employers have known and complied with for 45 years.
>
> H.J. Res. 83 would strip OSHA of its enforcement authority and harm workplace safety.
>
> Passage of this Congressional Review Act Resolution of Disapproval would enable employers who deliberately and recklessly break the law to avoid any penalties for systemically failing to report or underreporting

injuries over many years. They would be able to cover up or mask longstanding workplace hazards that need correcting. OSHA has limited resources and, on average, can inspect a workplace once every 140 years. OSHA relies upon reliable injury and illness data to prioritize its resources to those workplaces that present the greatest hazards to workers. H.J. Res. 83 would remove OSHA's enforcement ability to protect workers from the most dangerous and significant hazards.

Workplace injuries are real. Last year, a GAO report found workplace violence is a serious concern for the approximately 15 million health care workers in the United States, but the full extent of injuries that are the result of workplace violence is unknown because of underreporting. Accurate reporting would help OSHA, employers, workers and their representatives respond more effectively to this prevalent workplace hazard. H.J. Res. 83 would jeopardize the progress that could be made on workplace violence and other workplace injuries by blocking this basic reporting and recordkeeping rule or a similar rule in the future.

We oppose H.R. Res. 83 and urge you to stand with workers by rejecting this resolution.

Sincerely,

SCOTT FREY,
Director of Federal Government Affairs.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. H.J. Res. 83 is wrong. It is wrong because it goes against the hardworking people.

I also include in the RECORD, Mr. Speaker, a letter from the International Brotherhood of Teamsters disapproving of H.J. Res. 83.

INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF TEAMSTERS,
Washington, DC, February 27, 2017.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the 1.4 million members of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, I urge you to oppose H.J. Res. 83, disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of Labor relating to ''Clarification of Employer's Continuing Obligation to Make and Maintain an Accurate Record of Each Recordable Injury and Illness.'' Disapproving this rule would undermine safety in some of the nation's most dangerous industries, many of which employ Teamsters.

The rule does not impose new costs on employers and simply reaffirms OSHA's ability to enforce injury and illness recordkeeping. This rule became necessary when a 2012 court decision overturned policy that had been in place for 40 years by limiting enforcement of OSHA's injury recordkeeping regulations to a six month period. OSHA publishes the data that it collects from employers on worksite injury and illness which is then utilized by employers, unions, and workers to identify and fix workplace hazards. With limited resources, OSHA also utilizes the data to target its enforcement and compliance activities to the most dangerous workplaces thus making it essential that OSHA have accurate information. With under-reporting of injury and illness data already a major issue, it makes no sense to effectively strip OSHA of its ability to enforce reporting requirements as this ultimately impacts workplace safety. Congress should be working to improve work place safety not undermine it, and voting for H.J. Res 83 will ultimately harm working men and women.

I urge you to oppose H.J. Res. 83 to protect OSHA's ability to enforce accurate injury and illness reporting and to ensure workers have a safe and healthy workplace.

Sincerely,

JAMES P. HOFFA,
General President.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I stand with the workers.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to H.J. Res. 83, a resolution "Disapproving Department of Labor Rule Relating to Clarification of Employer's Continuing Obligation to Make And Maintain an Accurate Record of Each Recordable Injury And Illness."

I oppose this bill because it will harm workers who depend on the Occupation Health and Safety Administration to ensure that their workplaces are safe. H.J. Res. 83 will undermine workplace health and safety and make it impossible for OSHA to ensure that injury and illness records are complete and accurate.

Accurate records are needed to ensure OSHA focuses its limited resources on the nation's most dangerous workplaces, instead of wasting time in workplaces with low risk.

The Department of Labor rule at issue here does not create any new obligations.

OSHA has enforced injury recordkeeping requirements by reviewing the last five years of an employer's records throughout its entire history, under every administration.

In 2012, a court decision limited enforcement of OSHA's injury recordkeeping regulations to a six month period—a dramatic departure from the last OSHA's 40 year policy and practice.

The 2016 rule simply allows OSHA to continue this practice.

Mr. Speaker, complete and accurate information on work-related injuries and illnesses is important.

The Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 directs the Secretary of Labor to "prescribe regulations requiring employers to maintain accurate records of, and make periodic reports on, work-related deaths, injuries and illnesses other than minor injuries."

Since the early 1970's, OSHA has required construction employers to keep these records.

The records are used by employers, workers, and unions at the workplace to identify hazardous conditions, and take corrective action to prevent future injuries and exposures.

Both positive and negative injury trends are tracked on a national scale, allowing limited prevention resources to be targeted effectively.

Most importantly, OSHA relies on the records to target its enforcement and compliance assistance activities to dangerous workplaces.

No employer, union, or individual could possibly want OSHA inspecting safe workplaces rather than hazardous ones, but without accurate information, this will happen.

Disapproval of the new rule puts construction workers lives in danger.

Without the new rule, it will be impossible for OSHA to effectively enforce recordkeeping requirements and assure that injury and illness records are complete and accurate.

Underreporting of injuries and illnesses is already a huge problem, and without enforcement, this will get much worse.

It will undermine safety and health and put workers in danger.

I strongly oppose H.J. Res. 83 and urge all Members to vote against this ill-conceived and unwise legislation.

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

Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Virginia referred to continuing violations. There is no provision in this law for continuing violations.

Looking again at the court's decision. They said this: the statute of limitation provides that ''no citation may be issued . . . after the expiration of six months following the occurrence of any violation.''

They go on to say this: ''Like the Supreme Court, we think the word 'occurrence' clearly refers to a discrete antecedent event—something that 'happened' or 'came to pass' 'in the past.' ''

By any common definition, there was no occurrence; i.e., no discrete action, event, or incident, no coming about, and no process of happening within the requisite 6 months. You can't take that wording and slip into it a continuing violation requirement unless you change the statute. The agency can't change the statute.

The court, in its decision on the Volks rule, also looked at something very important, and that is: Why do we require this agency to do its work in a good period of time?

It says: ''Nothing in this statute suggests Congress sought to endow this bureaucracy with the power to hold a discrete record-making violation over employers for years, and then cite the employer long after the opportunity to actually improve the workplace has passed.''

In other words, we gave the agency 6 months to do its job, and it should do its job.

Now, other people have looked at this, people who are experts in workplace safety. I refer you, Mr. Speaker, to a letter that was written on October 27, 2015, by the American Society of Safety Engineers, which I include in the RECORD.

AMERICAN SOCIETY OF SAFETY ENGINEERS,
Park Ridge, IL, October 27, 2015.

Re ASSE Comments on OSHA Notice of Proposed Rule Clarification of Employer's Continuing Obligation to Make and Maintain an Accurate Record of Each Recordable Injury and Illness [Docket No: OSHA–2015–0006].

Hon. DAVID MICHAELS,
Assistant Secretary, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, OSHA Docket Office, U.S. Department of Labor, Washington, DC.

DEAR ASSISTANT SECRETARY MICHAELS: As you well know, the more than 37,000 member safety, health and environmental (SH&E) professionals of the American Society of Safety Engineers (ASSE) intimately know the details of collecting workplace injury and illness data, recording that data for employers, and the careful work needed to report that data to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). Perhaps more than any stakeholders, our members understand the value of this data in managing workplace safety and health risks as well as its appropriate use by OSHA in developing better means to focus the agency's resources on the most difficult risks facing American workers. Our members use injury and illness data to help them protect workers. They expect no less of an effective OSHA.

That being said, ASSE cannot support the requirement that employers have a duty to record an injury or illness continues for the full duration of the rccord-retention-and-access period—five years after the end of the

calendar year in which the injury or illness became recordable—that OSHA proposes in its July 29, 2015 Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPR) Clarification of Employer's Continuing Obligation to Make and Maintain an Accurate Record of Each Recordable Injury and Illness [Docket No: OSHA–2015–0006]. ASSE respectfully opposes the adoption of a Final Rule as proposed in this rulemaking for the reasons that follow.

NATURE OF VIOLATIONS

ASSE members do not look at the issues raised in this rulemaking with the same viewpoint of the occupational safety and health bar that, no doubt, will provide substantive legal arguments against the case OSHA makes for addressing the Volks II decision through this rulemaking. Rather, our members' view is a practical one that comes from years of experience on the job as the professionals charged with meeting OSHA's recordkeeping requirements.

Our members know the inadvertent mistakes they themselves can make in recordkeeping and reporting. They also know what they typically find when they are hired by a company to help improve workplace safety and health. As they assess the workplace's risks and past safety performance to help them develop safety and health management plans, the reporting mistakes our members typically find are not very often the worst cases that, unfortunately, seem to be creating this rulemaking. The errors in reporting they see are, by far, minor, isolated, and, if continuing, it is only in the sense that a typo can be repeated day after day.

They also see mistakes that come from a widespread lack of understanding of OSHA's detailed reporting requirements. When seasoned safety and health professionals consistently use ASSE's educational conferences, our social media, and opportunities to meet with OSHA staff through the ASSE-OSHA Alliance to get the best and latest information about OSHA recordkeeping requirements, we know that, even for them, the task of meeting those requirements can be too often confusing. Given that the vast majority of employers report to OSHA without the help of a safety and health professional, it is not difficult to see that the significant increase in records retention that OSHA is attempting to require of employers here will not succeed in a significant impact on safety and health among American workers.

UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES

No reporting error is excusable. But a company's errors to which OSHA is determined to have access to for a period that can be up to six years through this rulemaking will not very often correlate to the risks facing workers, especially the risks a safety and health professional is trying to address for the company in the present. The statements OSHA makes about the value of data collected through current injury and illness recordkeeping are merely conclusory and are counter to our members' experience.

Measured against our members' belief that the additional data will provide little help to them or OSHA, they are particularly concerned that this rulemaking can only succeed in driving more employers towards greater expectations that safety and health professionals will focus energy and resources on collecting and reporting the lagging indicators that OSHA requires, taking them away from risk assessment and management tasks and their efforts to move their employers towards performance measurements based on leading indicators that we know can better measure a company's safety and health performance.

Many of our members, especially those who work in or for mid-sized and small companies, face a difficult uphill climb in selling their employers risk management and moving from lagging to leading indicates. We know OSHA values these approaches also. But when OSHA uses its limited resources to focus on measures that do not reflect cutting-edge safety principles and push our members' efforts backwards, OSHA is making their job more difficult. Our members value OSHA but want an OSHA that works with them to advance the best ideas for advancing workplace safety and health. Requiring this data to be available for OSHA's use for nearly six years does not meet our members' hope for an effective OSHA.

DIRECT BURDEN

ASSE is also concerned that the OSHA's estimates of the direct burden this rulemaking will place on employers are inadequate. The economic analysis states that there will not be a new cost burden. This was based on a 2001 analysis that it takes 0.38 hour to record an injury or illness, with a total cost per case of $17.75. From an informal survey of involved ASSE members, a more realistic estimate is that an hour is needed for each case over the five-year period, taking into account the variety of tasks involved, including determining if there was medical treatment beyond first aid, verifying lost and restricted day counts, and adjusting for changes in the status of a case. An updated economic analysis is needed, which we urge OSHA to conduct before a Final Rule is proposed.

A MEASURE OF THE PROBLEM

Related to our members' concern over the rulemaking's direct burdens on employers is OSHA's failure to discuss in the NPR why OSHA faces such difficulty in obtaining adequate data from employers. No doubt, employers are responsible for meeting OSHA's reporting requirements. Our members suspect that OSHA's reporting rules and. deadlines are not effective and cost employers unnecessarily.

Before requiring more extensive reporting, it would be helpful both to OSHA and the safety and health community to know more about why employers do not report. How many employers blatantly disregard the requirements and how many are simply making errors? What do employers and their workers not understand about the requirements? What training or level of expertise would help fill the gaps in reporting that OSHA believes exist? We urge OSHA to examine these issues as an. extension of its economic analysis. With more knowledge, there may be better ways to address recordkeeping that can support better employer reporting.

CONCLUSION

As we say above, our members want a strong and effective OSHA, But their view of an effective OSHA is an OSHA that can embrace the best our members already understand about how to achieve safe and healthy workplaces. An OSHA injury and illness prevention plan standard that is truly risk-based would help make OSHA more effective. Greater reliance on control banding to achieve better protection limits, as we have recently suggested to OSHA, would. Establishing professional competencies to define ''competent person'' in OSHA standards would. Finding a better way to update consensus standards in OSHA's standards would. Rethinking OSHA's reporting requirements to help move employers towards leading indicators and more advanced ways to measure safety performance certainly would. The areas where OSHA and our members agree on making OSHA more effective are many. Adding lengthier reporting burdens that will do little to help OSHA, employers or occupational safety and health professionals better manage workplace safety and hcalth will not.

As always, ASSE is more than willing to discuss these concerns further. Thank you for listening to our members' views.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL BELCHER, CSP,
President.

Mr. BYRNE. What it says is that this regulation does nothing to enhance workplace safety. That is from the American Society of Safety Engineers.

Also opposing this regulation is the Coalition for Workplace Safety. I include in the RECORD a letter from them dated February 17 of this year.

COALITION FOR WORKPLACE SAFETY,
February 17, 2017.

Hon. PAUL RYAN
Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.
Hon. KEVIN MCCARTHY,
Majority Leader, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.
Hon. STEVE SCALISE,
Majority Whip, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.
Hon. VIRGINIA FOXX,
Chairwoman, Committee on Education & the Workforce, Washington, DC.
Hon. BRADLEY BYRNE,
Chairman, Subcommittee on Workforce Protections, Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER RYAN, MAJORITY LEADER MCCARTHY, MAJORITY WHIP SCALISE, CHAIRWOMAN FOXX, AND CHAIRMAN BYRNE: The undersigned groups strongly urge you to introduce and move a Congressional Review Act (CRA) joint resolution of disapproval to invalidate the Obama Administration's OSHA regulation overturning the decision in Volks regarding the statute of limitations for recordkeeping violations.

At its core, the Volks Rule is an extreme abuse of authority by a federal agency that will subject millions of American businesses to citations for paperwork violations, while doing nothing to improve worker health and safety. Finalized on December 19, 2016, the rule attempts to extend to five years the explicit six month statute of limitations on recordkeeping violations in the Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Act of 1970. This regulation simultaneously represents one of the most egregious end runs around Congress' power to write the laws and a clear challenge to the judicial branch's authority to prevent an agency from exceeding its authority to interpret the law.

In 2012, citing the unambiguous language in the OSH Act, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia held that OSHA could not sustain citations against an employer for alleged recordkeeping violations that occurred more than six months before the issuance of the citation because, as the employer asserted, they were outside the six month statute of limitations set forth in the OSH Act. The court was unequivocal in its rebuke of OSHA. Judge Janice Rogers Brown expressed particular concern on the issue of the agency's overstepping its authority: ''we were rightly troubled by the notion of being asked by an agency to expand that agency's enforcement authority when Congress had evidently not seen fit to do so.'' Judge Merrick Garland, in his concurrence, plainly rejected OSHA's rationale for issuing the fines, ''the Secretary's contention—that the regulations that Volks was cited for violating support a 'continuing violation' theory—is not reasonable.'' The Volks decision has since been endorsed by the Fifth Circuit in the Delek decision, issued in December 2016, where the court found ''its reasoning persuasive.''

In response to the Court of Appeals ruling, OSHA promulgated this regulation specifically to negate the Volks case ruling and extend liability for paperwork violations beyond the six month window permitted under the Act. OSHA issued the final rule in the waning days of President Obama's Administration with an effective date of January 19, 2017. Although the regulation was issued in December, it was not submitted to Congress until January 4, meaning that the window for CRA consideration is for a regulation that has just been issued, and is therefore shorter than if it was being considered under the ''reset'' provisions of the CRA.

We urge you to help put a stop to OSHA's abuse of its authority and support swift passage of a joint resolution of disapproval for this burdensome, unlawful rule. Because the final rule directly contradicts both clear statutory language and two U.S. Courts of Appeals rulings, it must not be allowed to stand.

Thank you for your consideration of this request and for your continued efforts to rein in agency overreach and reduce the regulatory burden on America's job creators.

Sincerely,

Air Conditioning Contractors of America; American Bakers Association; American Coke and Coal Chemicals Institute; American Composites Manufacturers Association; American Farm Bureau Federation; American Feed Industry Association; American Foundry Society; American Fuel and Petrochemical Manufacturers; American Health Care Association; American Iron and Steel Institute; American Road and Transportation Builders Association; American Society of Concrete Contractors; American Subcontractors Association, Inc.; American Supply Association; American Trucking Associations.

Asphalt Roofing Manufacturers Association; Associated Builders and Contractors; Associated General Contractors; Associated Wire Rope Fabricators; Copper & Brass Fabricators Council, Inc.; Corn Refiners Association; Distribution Contractors Association; Flexible Packaging Association; Global Cold Chain Alliance; Independent Electrical Contractors; Industrial Minerals Association—North America; Institute of Makers of Explosives; International Dairy Foods Association; International Foodservice Distributors Association; International Franchise Association.

International Warehouse Logistics Association; IPC-Association Connecting Electronics Industries; Leading Builders of America; Mason Contractors Association of America; Mechanical Contractors Association of America; Mike Ray; Motor & Equipment Manufacturers Association; National Association for Surface Finishing; National Association of Home Builders; National Association of Manufacturers; National Association of Professional Employer Organizations; National Association of the Remodeling Industry; National Association of Wholesaler-Distributors; National Automobile Dealers Association; National Center for Assisted Living; National Chicken Council.

National Cotton Ginners' Association; National Demolition Association; National Electrical Contractors Association; National Federation of Independent Business; National Grain and Feed Association; National Lumber and Building Material Dealers Association; National Oilseed Processors Association; National Restaurant Association; National Retail Federation; National Roofing Contractors Association; National School Transportation Association; National Tooling and Machining Association; National Turkey Federation; National Utility Contractors Association; Non-Ferrous Founders' Society; North American Die Casting Association; North American Meat Institute.

Plastics Industry Association (PLASTICS); Power and Communication Contractors Association; Precision Machined Products Association; Precision Metalforming Association; Printing Industries of America; Retail Industry Leaders Association; Sheet Metal and Air Conditioning Contractors National Association; Shipbuilders Council of America; Southeastern Cotton Ginners Association, Inc.; Texas Cotton Ginners' Association; The Association of Union Constructors (TAUC); Thomas W. Lawrence, Jr.—Safety and Compliance Management; Tile Roofing Institute; Tree Care Industry Association; TRSA—The Linen, Uniform and Facility Services Association; U.S. Chamber of Commerce; U.S. Poultry & Egg Association.

Mr. BYRNE. To the point, there is nothing in this statute that allows for continuing violations, and there is nothing in this regulation that provides for workplace safety. This is a power grab by an agency in violation of its authorizing statute and by a clear decision of this circuit court of appeals.

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

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume before I yield to the gentleman from Florida.

The law requires the keeping the records for 5 years. If there are bogus records, you ought to have an obligation to keep them correct. That has been the interpretation for 40 years, up until this decision.

We need the money to do their job. If they do their job, if we provide them with some funding, they can show up more than once every 140-some years.

We keep talking about a court decision that affected another resolution, not this one.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SOTO).

Mr. SOTO. Mr. Speaker, this is a simple issue: Do we want to make workplaces safer? Do we want to keep workers from getting hurt on the job? Of course, we do.

In order to protect workers, we need good data on where injuries are happening so we can work with employers to stop them.

Sometimes the other side says commonsense protections like this are too expensive or they kill jobs or they stifle innovation. None of those is even remotely true here.

The protections this resolution would take away cost nothing. Responsible employers are already keeping these records. That is why the coalition opposing this resolution includes workers rights advocates and a whole lot of other folks like public health practitioners. These are not political people. These are just people who work every day to help Americans lead safe, healthy lives.

This is not about President Obama or power grabs. It is about protecting the American worker.

The 6-month period is a setup which will lead to less enforcement. Rather than eliminating the rule, let's codify it and use the information we collect to continue to evolve our laws to protect workers.

I urge my colleagues to vote ''no.''

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

Mr. Speaker, I would remind the gentleman that the experts on this, the American Society of Safety Engineers, have said that this regulation does not enhance workplace safety. So if we are about workplace safety, this regulation isn't it. Let's talk about something that will help with workplace safety, not something that is a lawless power grab by a Federal agency.

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

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO), a hardworking member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to rolling back workplace safety protections for American workers. This use of the Congressional Review Act would endanger employees and throw away four decades of precedent for the sole purpose of protecting companies that repeatedly violate safety standards.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration, commonly known as OSHA, is among the best tools we have to ensure that companies adhere to basic safety standards. Because the agency's budget is so small compared to its critical task, OSHA relies on accurate data to focus on the companies that pose the greatest danger to employees.

The previous administration sought to clarify and codify the responsibility companies have to maintain an honest record of their employees' injuries and illnesses. This resolution would undermine OSHA's ability to target serial offenders by removing companies' obligation to keep reliable data about safety issues in the workplace. If passed into law, the resolution would essentially grant amnesty to companies with years of workplace safety violations, while sending a clear message to employers that the Federal Government is no longer committed to worker safety.

Mr. Speaker, I have asked the question many times since the President took office, and I will ask it again today: How does this give power back to the people? How does undermining workplace safety regulations support middle class Americans? How does protecting companies that repeatedly violate safety standards improve the life of workers? The answer is that it doesn't.

I call on my colleagues to stand with working Americans who deserve a safe workplace and vote ''no'' on this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a letter from the UAW opposing the repeal of this rule and also a letter from National Nurses United in opposition to H.J. Res. 83.

UAW,
February 28, 2017.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVES: On behalf of the more than one million active and retired members of the International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of America, UAW, we strongly urge you to oppose H.J. Res 83. This misguided resolution undermines workplace health and safety standards in the most dangerous industries. The proposed legislation will make it much harder for the Occupation Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to ensure the safety and health of America's workers.

Since the early 1970s, OSHA has required employers to maintain a safety record for five years and make reports to the Department of Labor (DOL). These records are used by workers and employers to identify hazards, fix them, and most importantly, keep accidents from happening in the future. DOL utilizes these records to publish statistics on workplace injury and illness rates and OSHA relies on them to allocate scarce resources.

OSHA issued the recordkeeping rule to clarify an employer's responsibility to maintain a safe workplace. The rule does not impose any new costs or obligations on employers and only covers larger businesses with the most high risk occupations.

Accurate injury and illness records are critically important for workers and their families. Having the necessary tools to collect complete and accurate data on work-related injuries and illnesses is a key component in reducing, mitigating, and eliminating hazards and deaths in the workplace.

Historically, OSHA has assessed and enforced injury recordkeeping requirements under every administration. In turn, workers in America have enjoyed a much safer work environment. We must not take away or reduce OSHA's role in improving health and safety conditions for workers and we must ensure the accuracy of the reporting requirements. Tremendous gains have been made in workplace hazard reporting. We cannot go backwards.

The UAW members have a long and storied history of securing workplace protections for all of America's workers. This bill undermines those gains and more than 40 years of solid science and practice.

We urge you to resoundingly reject H.J. Res 83 and vote No when it comes to the floor.

Sincerely,

JOSH NASSAR,
Legislative Director.

NATIONAL NURSES UNITED,
February 27, 2017.

Re Letter in Opposition to H.J. Res. 83, Congressional Review Act Resolution to Block OSHA Injury and Illness Recordkeeping Clarification Rule.

Hon. VIRGINIA FOXX,
Chair, Committee on Education and the Workforce, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.
Hon. ROBERT SCOTT,
Ranking Member, Committee on Education and the Workforce, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRWOMAN FOXX AND RANKING MEMBER SCOTT: On behalf of over 150,000 members across the country and as the largest organization representing registered nurses in the United States, National Nurses United (NNU) urges you to oppose H.J. Res. 83, which would block the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) final rule clarifying employers' continuing obligations to record workplace injuries and illnesses. By revoking OSHA's authority to enforce recordkeeping requirements, this Congressional Review Act (CRA) resolution denudes the agency of the tools necessary to identify and target patterns of workplace hazards. These recordkeeping requirements are fundamental to OSHA's ability to protect workers from job-related health and safety hazards. But H.J. Res. 83 would leave OSHA with no functional mechanism to protect workers from longstanding workplace hazards—health and safety dangers on the job would go undisclosed and uncorrected. Congress must oppose this GRA resolution lest it place the health and safety of workers in serious jeopardy.

The published final rule, known as the ''Volks Rule,'' is a common-sense measure meant to align OSHA regulations with its 40-year-long practice of enforcing employer injury and illness recordkeeping requirements as continuing violations under of the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (OSH Act). Under the OSH Act, Congress authorized OSHA to promulgate rules requiring employers to maintain accurate records of workplace injuries and illnesses. Since 1972, under multiple Republican and Democratic Administrations, OSHA has required most employers to make and maintain records of workplace injuries and illnesses for five years from the date of the injury or illness. Each OSHA Administration has determined that the five-year record maintenance requirements were continuing obligations of employers and that OSHA citations could be issued if a violation were identified any time within that five-year period. But a 2012 decision by the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals in Volks Constructors v. Secretary of Labor held that OSHA could not issue a recordkeeping citation beyond a six-month period despite the long-standing five-year recordkeeping requirements. There was a gap in OSHA regulations, and the Volks Rule would fix it, making agency recordkeeping rules consistent with its decades-long enforcement practices.

To fulfill its statutory duties to protect America's workforce from workplace safety and health hazards, OSHA depends on its ability to enforce injury and illness recordkeeping requirements. For OSHA to identify workplace hazards and to develop effective means to correct those hazards, complete and accurate information about what, where, when, and how injuries and illnesses occur in the workplace is vital. OSHA uses this information to develop injury prevention plans and to efficiently direct OSHA's scarce resources to worksites that pose the most serious hazards for workers. Reliable workplace injury data is also fundamental to the development and maintenance of effective occupational health and safety standards. Moreover, federal, state, and local officials also need reliable injury and illness data during procurement processes, ensuring that taxpayer dollars to contractors and subcontractors are going to fair and safe workplaces.

The elimination of OSHA's ability to enforce rules on workplace safety records allows—and even incentivizes—employers to obscure ongoing workplace hazards. It would be nearly impossible for OSHA to identify a recordkeeping violation and conduct a comprehensive investigation within six months of the injury or illness, instead of the full five-year recordkeeping period. Chronic underreporting—left unchecked if the Volks Rule was halted—erodes OSHA inspectors' ability to enforce the country's occupational health and safety laws and allows patterns of serious health and safety violations to persist. The CRA resolution would gravely weaken workplace health and safety protections, exposing workers to serious harm while on the job.

Because workers deserve the full and effective enforcement of the panoply of our worker protection laws, NNU urges you to oppose H.J. Res. 83.

Sincerely,

BONNIE CASTILLO, RN,
Director of Health and Safety.

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

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the comments of the gentleman from California. He said that, if we pass this resolution, we will be granting amnesty to bad actors. We are not granting amnesty to bad actors. They will have no amnesty if OSHA does its job in a timely fashion. Five years is not timely under anybody's commonsense definition. They need to do their job within the 6 months that we have allowed for them to do it, and they have the tools to do their job within 6 months.

So there is no amnesty being granted here. We are expecting a Federal agency that has a lot of money and has a lot of power to simply do its job within 6 months, and they come forward and try to make a new statute of limitations because they don't do their job within 6 months.

I say to this body, I would say to people outside this body, it is time for OSHA to get its job done in the time allotted by the United States Congress and not come running out with some unilateral change in the statute which they have no power to do because, for some reason, they don't think they can do it.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, there are 2,000 inspectors at OSHA. There are 8 million work sites. We can't expect them to visit every 6 months when the funding only allows them to visit each workplace once every 140-some years. You would have to show up at each place every 6 months to catch these violations within that timeframe.

Mr. Speaker, for 40 years, the obligation to record these injuries has been considered a continuing obligation. If the purpose is to overrule the regulation because it is inconsistent with the statute, then we should fix the statute. But this resolution just gives relief to those who fail to record injuries and illnesses in violation of their legal obligation to do so.

As Americans discover the plan to repeal this OSHA rule through a resolution of disapproval, there are a lot of professional organizations, in addition to the ones that have already been introduced, that have been alarmed by this resolution.

The American Public Health Association has written:

> Injury and illness records are invaluable for employers, workers and OSHA to monitor the cause and trends of illnesses and injuries. Such data is essential for determining appropriate interventions to prevent other workers from experiencing the same harm. . . . For decades, the public health community and government agencies have identified a widespread undercount of work-related injuries and illnesses. This includes investigations by the GAO, the Bureau of Labor Statistics and academic researchers. H.J. Res. 83

will have dire consequences for injury prevention and undermine 40 years of occupational injury surveillance in the United States.

The AFL–CIO has written:

In the absence of enforcement, there is no question that the underreporting of injuries, already a widespread problem, will get much worse, undermining safety and health and putting workers in danger.

□ 1600

A group of 66 professional workplace safety groups wrote:

The OSHA clarifying rule on maintaining accurate records imposes no new costs to business, but is critical to assuring that workplace fatalities and injuries are prevented.

Mr. Speaker, I include these letters in the RECORD.

AFL–CIO
LEGISLATIVE ALERT,
February 27, 2017.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: The AFL–CIO urges you to oppose H.J. Res 83, a Congressional Review Act Resolution of Disapproval that would repeal an Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) rule that clarifies an employer's responsibility to maintain accurate records of serious work-related injuries and illnesses. This resolution will make it impossible for OSHA to ensure that injury and illness records are complete and accurate and undermine workplace health and safety.

The rule, issued in December 2016, is in response to a court decision that limited enforcement of OSHA's injury recordkeeping regulations to a six month period—a dramatic departure from OSHA's 40 year policy and practice. The six month restriction makes it impossible for OSHA to enforce the Act's injury recordkeeping requirements, since OSHA does not have the resources to conduct regular inspections of even the most hazardous workplaces. Indeed, currently federal OSHA is only able to inspect workplaces on average, only once every 140 years. The new rule creates no new obligations on employers. It simply makes clear that employers have a responsibility to maintain accurate injury and illness records for 5 years and during this time can be held accountable for violations if records are not complete and accurate.

The collection of complete and accurate information on work-related injuries and illnesses is a cornerstone of the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970. The Act directs the Secretary of Labor to ''prescribe regulations requiring employers to maintain accurate records of, and make periodic reports on, work-related deaths, injuries and illnesses other than minor injuries.'' Since the early 1970's, OSHA has required employers in the more hazardous industries to keep these records and make reports to the Department of Labor. These records form the basis of the Bureau of Labor Statistics' (BLS) work-related injury and illness statistics which are used to identify high-risk industries and occupations and emerging problems and to track progress. OSHA relies on the records to target its enforcement and compliance assistance activities to dangerous workplaces. And the records are used by employers, workers and unions at the workplace to identify hazardous conditions and take corrective action to prevent future injuries and exposures.

To ensure the accuracy of this critical information, throughout its entire history, under every administration, OSHA enforced injury recordkeeping requirements by reviewing the last five years of an employer's records. This comprehensive assessment allowed the agency to identify widespread underreporting by some employers, which was masking serious injuries and hazards. OSHA was able to take strong enforcement action which brought about changes in injury recordkeeping practices, but also led to significant safety and health improvements to address hazards and prevent future injuries.

Without the new rule, it will be impossible for OSHA to effectively enforce recordkeeping requirements and assure that injury and illness records are complete and accurate. In the absence of enforcement, there is no question that the underreporting of injuries, already a widespread problem, will get much worse, undermining safety and health and putting workers in danger.

The AFL–CIO asks you to stand up for the safety and health of American workers and to reject H.J. Res. 83.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM SAMUEL,
Director, Government Affairs Department.

AMERICAN PUBLIC
HEALTH ASSOCIATION,
Washington, DC, February 27, 2017.

Hon. VIRGINIA FOXX,
Chair, Committee on Education and the Workforce, Washington, DC.
Hon. ROBERT C. SCOTT,
Ranking Member, Committee on Education and the Workforce, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRWOMAN FOXX AND RANKING MEMBER SCOTT: On behalf of the American Public Health Association, a diverse community of public health professionals who champion the health of all people and communities, I write to oppose H.J. Res. 83, a resolution that would use the Congressional Review Act to void an important Department of Labor policy which clarifies an employer's obligation to make and maintain accurate records of work-related injuries and illnesses. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration issued this regulation in December 2016 in response to an opinion issued by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit.

Public health professionals understand the critical importance of accurate information to help identify hazards in order to develop and implement better health and safety protections. One important source of that information is the records some employers are required to keep on work-related injuries and illnesses. These records are invaluable for employers, workers and OSHA to monitor the cause and trends of injuries and illnesses. Such data is essential for determining appropriate interventions to prevent other workers from experiencing the same harm.

The regulation clarified for employers their ongoing obligation to maintain an accurate and complete record of workplace injuries and illnesses. It reiterated a longstanding policy that an employer's duty to record an injury on an OSHA log does not expire. It explained to employers that keeping a record of an injury is an ongoing requirement even if an employer failed to record the injury or illness at the time it occurred. OSHA requires employers to keep and maintain accurate records of injuries until the five-year records retention period expires.

For decades, the public health community and government agencies have identified a widespread undercount of work-related injuries and illnesses. This includes investigations by the Government Accountability Office, the Bureau of Labor Statistics and academic researchers. H.J. Res. 83 will have dire consequences for injury prevention and undermine 40 years of occupational injury surveillance in the U.S.

We urge you to stand up for workers and workplace safety and oppose this resolution.

Sincerely,

GEORGES C. BENJAMIN, MD.,
Executive Director.

FEBRUARY 28, 2017.

Hon. PAUL RYAN,
Speaker of the House, Washington, DC.
Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Minority Leader, Washington, DC.
Hon. VIRGINIA FOXX,
Chair, Committee on Education and the Workforce, Washington, DC.
Hon. ROBERT SCOTT,
Ranking Member, Committee on Education and the Workforce, Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER RYAN, MINORITY LEADER PELOSI, CHAIRMAN FOXX, AND RANKING MEMBER SCOTT: We the undersigned organizations write in strong opposition to H.J. Res 83, a Congressional Review Act Resolution of Disapproval that would repeal an Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) rule that clarifies an employer's responsibility to maintain accurate records of serious work related injuries and illnesses. This resolution will undermine workplace health and safety in the most dangerous industries.

This OSHA clarifying rule does not impose any new costs nor any new obligations to covered employers, nor does it affect small businesses. It simply clarifies OSHA's authority to hold employers accountable for their longstanding obligation to maintain accurate injury records, a requirement that has been in effect since the Nixon Administration. Further, the rule only covers larger employers in the most dangerous industries.

For over 40 years, only larger employers in high hazard industries have been required to maintain records of serious work related injuries and illnesses. OSHA regulations, issued in the 1970's, require employers to maintain records for five years. Since then, the Department's longstanding position has been that an employer had an ongoing duty to assure that those records were accurate. The Department of Labor uses these records as the basis for published statistics on workplace injury and illness rates and OSHA uses them to allocate scarce agency resources for compliance assistance and enforcement. Employers use these records as a guide to identify and fix job dangers that injure and maim workers.

This rule is needed because in 2012, a court decision overturned 40 years of recordkeeping precedent and made it impossible for OSHA to enforce against recordkeeping violations in dangerous industries that are more than six months old. One of the three judges indicated that OSHA could enforce for continuing violations of its recordkeeping rule if the agency clarified its regulation. The rule that is the subject of H.J. Res 83 remedies the problem and clarifies that OSHA may enforce for continuing violations for the failure to record serious work related injuries and illnesses.

Accurate injury and illness records are vitally important to the protection of workers. They are the most important tool that employers and government use to identify and eliminate job hazards that kill over 4,800 workers a year and seriously injure almost 3 million more. OSHA can only inspect every workplace under its jurisdiction once every 140 years. If employers have no obligation to maintain accurate records during the five year retention period, worker health and safety will be seriously jeopardized.

We are organizations that strongly support ensuring safer workplaces and protecting workers from serious workplace hazards. We ask you to stand with American workers and

oppose H.J. Res 83. The OSHA clarifying rule on maintaining accurate records imposes no new costs to business, but is critical to assuring that workplace fatalities and injuries are prevented.

Sincerely,

9to5, National Association of Working Women; American Federation of Government Employees; American Federation of Labor—Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL–CIO); American Federation of Teachers (AFT); Asbestos Disease Awareness Organization; Blue Green Alliance; Connecticut Council on Occupational Safety and Health; Communication Workers of America; Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists; District 1199C Training & Upgrading Fund; Earthjustice; Economic Policy Institute Policy Center; Fair World Project; Family Values @ Work; Farmworker Justice.

Fe y Justicia Worker Center; Food & Water Watch; Futures Without Violence; Health Professional and Allied Employees AFT/AFL–CIO; Institute for Science and Human Values, Inc.; Interfaith Worker Justice; International Brotherhood of Teamsters; International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace & Agricultural Implement Workers of America, UAW; Jobs with Justice; Kentucky Equal Justice Center; Knox Area Workers' Memorial Day Committee of Knoxville, Tennessee; Labor & Employment Committee of the National Lawyers Guild; Labor Project for Working Families.

Legal Aid at Work; Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy (LAANE); Massachusetts Law Reform Institute; NAACP; National Center for Law and Economic Justice; National Employment Lawyers Association; National Employment Law Project; National Guestworker Alliance; National LGBTQ Task Force Action Fund; National Organization for Women; National Partnership for Women and Families; Natural Resources Defense Council.

Nebraska Appleseed Center for Law in the Public Interest; New Labor; New Rules for Global Finance; Occupational Health Clinical Centers; Oxfam; Policy Matters Ohio; Progressive Congress Action Fund; Public Citizen; Resisting Injustice and Standing for Equality (RISE); Restaurant Opportunities Centers United; Rhode Island Center for Justice; Santa Clara County Wage Theft Coalition; Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law.

SafeWork Washington; Service Employees International Union (SEIU); Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC); Union of Concerned Scientists; United Food and Commercial Workers International Union (UFCW); UNITE HERE International Union; United Support and Memorial for Workplace Fatalities (USMWF); Washington State Labor Council, AFL–CIO; Western North Carolina Workers' Center; Workers' Center of Central New York; Workplace Fairness; Worksafe; WNYCOSH—Western New York Council on Occupational Safety and Health.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I ask for a ''no'' vote.

I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a letter dated February 28, 2017, from the Associated General Contractors of America; a letter dated February 28, 2017, from Associated Builders and Contractors; a letter dated February 27, 2017, from the National Association of Home Builders; and a letter dated February 28, 2017, from the United States Chamber of Commerce.

THE ASSOCIATED GENERAL CONTRACTORS OF AMERICA,
Arlington, VA, February 28, 2017.

Re AGC Key Vote—Support Joint Resolution Disapproving of ''Volks Rule.''

Hon. PAUL RYAN,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER RYAN: On behalf of the Associated General Contractors of America (AGC) and its 26,000 commercial construction company members, I strongly urge you to support the Congressional Review Act (CRA) joint resolution of disapproval to stop the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) expansion of the statute of limitations for recordkeeping violations in the ''Volks Rule.'' AGC will score this vote as a key vote for the education of its members on its congressional candidate scorecards.

This resolution repeals a rule that was issued by OSHA as a challenge to the judicial branch and congressional authority. Section 9 of the Occupational Safety and Health Act subsection (c) says ''No citation may be issued under this section after the expiration of six months following the occurrence of any violation.'' That seems pretty clear and the courts agreed. In 2012, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit held in AKM LLC dba Volks Constructors v. Secretary of Labor that section 8(c) of the OSH Act (the section that requires accurate recordkeeping) does not supersede 9(c) and therefore does not permit a continuing violation for paperwork errors and that the agency is overstepping its authority. Additionally, in 2016 the Fifth Circuit endorsed the Volks decision in Delek Ref. Ltd. v. Occupational Safety & Health Review Commission. When OSHA issued its rule, it deliberately and specifically designed the rule to counter the ruling in the Volks case. Because the final rule directly contradicts both clear statutory language and two U.S. Courts of Appeals rulings, it must not be allowed to stand.

The rule is designed to be punitive. It is a regulatory attempt to expand opportunities to cite companies for paperwork violations. It was issued in the waning days of the Obama Administration as an attempt to get around the existing statute of limitations for recordkeeping violations and expand that limitation to sixty-six months. It creates no new recordkeeping requirements. It does not change the data required under recordkeeping requirements. It does not exempt smaller companies from this regulation or these investigations. It does not create any new, safer work practices. The rule tells OSHA inspectors and company employees to fix typos from years ago rather than walking the jobsite, providing safety training or otherwise preventing tomorrow's accidents. We take worker safety very seriously and, unfortunately, OSHA's rule would require a colossal misallocation of resources. That is why we urge you to support the Congressional Review Act resolution.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

JEFFREY D. SHOAF,
Senior Executive Director,
Government Affairs.

ASSOCIATED BUILDERS AND CONTRACTORS, INC.,
Washington, DC, February 28, 2017.

House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC), a national construction industry trade association with 70 chapters representing nearly 21,000 chapter members, I am writing to express our strong support for H.J. Res. 83, introduced by Rep. Bradley Byrne (R–Ala.), which would block implementation of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) ''Volks'' final rule. Also known as Clarification of an Employer's Continuing Obligation to Make and Maintain an Accurate Record of Each Recordable Injury and Illness, the final rule extends the time period in which an employer may be cited by OSHA for recordkeeping violations from six months to up to five years. ABC urges you to vote ''yes'' on H.J. Res. 83 and will consider this a KEY VOTE for our 115th Congressional Scorecard.

Currently, the Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Act clearly states the statute of limitations for recordkeeping violations is six months. The D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals also unanimously issued a decision holding OSHA could not issue a citation for a recordkeeping violation beyond the six-month statute of limitations, and it was later endorsed by the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals in the Delek case. The Obama administration's final rule not only contradicts the clear statutory language of the OSH Act, but also two federal appeals courts.

Nullifying the ''Volks'' rule does not remove an employer's obligation to record injuries or illnesses. OSHA still has the right to cite employers for a recordkeeping violation under the OSH Act. ABC members understand that safety and health practices are inherently good for business; however, this rulemaking does nothing to improve workplace safety and is simply a paperwork burden. OSHA's promulgation of this rulemaking is a clear overstepping of its authority and a contradiction of the OSH Act and U.S. Court of Appeals decisions.

We urge you to SUPPORT H.J. Res. 83 and we thank Rep. Byrne for introducing this important resolution and look forward to working with Congress to restore the rule of law.

Sincerely,

KRISTEN SWEARINGEN,
Vice President of Legislative & Political Affairs.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF HOME BUILDERS,
Washington, DC, February 27, 2017.

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

DEAR SPEAKER RYAN: On behalf of the more than 140,000 members of the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB), I write in strong support of H.J. Res 83. This important legislation will disapprove OSHA's Volks Rule, which is nothing more than a regulatory end run around Congress and the courts. If this rule is not disapproved, small businesses will be subject to recordkeeping paperwork violations that do nothing to improve worker safety. NAHB is designating support for passage of H.J. Res 83 as a KEY VOTE.

Finalized on December 19, 2016, the rule attempts to extend to five years the explicit six-month statute of limitations on recordkeeping paperwork violations in the Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Act of 1970. Subsequent court rulings have affirmed applicability of the six-month statute of limitations; nonetheless, the Agency proceeded with its rulemaking. This regulation is an egregious end run around Congress' power to write the laws and a clear challenge to the judicial branch's authority to prevent an agency from exceeding its authority to interpret the law.

Given the vast overstep the Volks Rule represents, one might expect significant gains in worker health and safety as the result. Unfortunately, that is simply not the

case. The Volks regulation only changes the window during which OSHA can issue a citation for recordkeeping paperwork violations. Employers will have the exact same obligation to record injuries as they always had, and OSHA will have the exact same opportunity to issue a citation as the statute has always permitted. The regulation is about paperwork violations and does nothing to improve worker health and safety.

NAHB urges you to support H.J. Res 83, and designates a vote in support of H.J. Res 83 as a KEY VOTE.

Sincerely,

JAMES W. TOBIN III.

U.S. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
Washington, DC, February 28, 2017.

Re Key Vote Alert!

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS: The U.S. Chamber of Commerce supports H.J. Res. 83, which would invalidate the regulation issued by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) entitled ''Clarification of an Employer's Continuing Obligation to Make and Maintain an Accurate Record of Each Recordable Injury and Illness,'' and will consider including votes related to it in our 2017 How They Voted scorecard.

The rule would have the effect of extending to five years the statute of limitations on recordkeeping violations that the Occupational Safety and Health Act sets at six months. It was OSHA's attempt to negate a 2012 decision from the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals involving a construction company known as Volks Constructors. The decision blocked OSHA from sustaining citations for recordkeeping violations that occurred beyond the six month statute of limitations specified in the Occupational Safety and Health Act. The court's unanimous 3–0 ruling included Judge Merrick Garland.

The court unequivocally rebuked OSHA, expressing particular concern on the agency's overstepping its authority: ''We do not believe Congress expressly established a statute of limitations only to implicitly encourage the Secretary to ignore it . . . The Act clearly renders the citations untimely, and the Secretary's argument to the contrary relies on an interpretation that is neither natural nor consistent with our precedents.'' The Volks decision has since been endorsed by the Fifth Circuit in the Delek decision, issued in December 2016, where the court found ''its reasoning persuasive.''

OSHA's Volks Rule will improperly subject millions of American businesses to citations for paperwork violations, while doing nothing to improve worker health and safety. It simultaneously represents a usurpation of Congress' power to write the laws and a direct rejection of the judicial branch's authority to rein in an agency when it exceeds its authority.

The Chamber urges you to vote in favor of H.J. Res. 83, to invalidate OSHA's Volks regulation and restore the statute of limitations for citations enacted by Congress.

Sincerely,

JACK HOWARD.

Mr. BYRNE. All of those groups I just mentioned support the repeal of this regulation that would come about by virtue of the bill that is before us. Why? Because we have a right to expect in this country that these regulatory agencies that Congress sets up will do their job with the significant sums of taxpayer money that they are provided by this Congress, the money that comes from the people of America to do their job in a timely fashion. And this agency comes forth and tries to act like it doesn't have the money or the authority to investigate violations and enforce the law within 6 months of a violation. That is balderdash. The American people have a right to expect more from these agencies than that.

But more to the point, the reason we are here today is really simple. We are here today to overturn a rule that is blatantly unlawful. We are here to put a stop to a rule that does nothing—I repeat nothing—to improve workplace safety. We are here to put a check on the very top of executive overreach the Congressional Review Act sought to address.

By blocking this punitive and overreaching rule, we will affirm Congress' commitment to proactive health and safety policies that help prevent injuries and illnesses before they occur. If we wait until the illness or injury has occurred, we have waited too late. OSHA has waited too late. It is time for OSHA to work with these employers, work with these people in the workplace to make the workplace safe, not show up 5 years after the fact when they don't have the authority and say: now we are going to issue a violation.

Mr. Speaker, the approach that we have demanded of OSHA for years is to proactively work in the workplace to ensure that it is safe, and we will continue to do that under this new administration. I urge my colleagues to overturn OSHA's unlawful power grab.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to the rule, the previous question is ordered on the joint resolution.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the joint resolution.

The joint resolution was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the joint resolution.

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

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

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

OIRA INSIGHT, REFORM, AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on H.R. 1009.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MITCHELL). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Utah?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 156 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 1009.

The Chair appoints the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. JOYCE) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 1605

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 1009) to amend title 44, United States Code, to require the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs to review regulations, and for other purposes, with Mr. JOYCE in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

The gentleman from Utah (Mr. CHAFFETZ) and the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Ms. PLASKETT) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Utah.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

We are here to consider H.R. 1009. This is a bill sponsored by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. MITCHELL). It is cosponsored on the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform by the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MEADOWS) and the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. PALMER). We are also pleased to have the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS), chairman of the Committee on Rules, as well as the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. WALBERG) as cosponsors.

Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of H.R. 1009, the OIRA Insight, Reform, and Accountability Act. OIRA stands for the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs. It has many responsibilities. It is a little known agency, but very powerful and very important. Some of its most well-known responsibilities are governed by an executive order. Executive Order 12866 was issued by President Clinton in 1993. The order was maintained under President Bush and reaffirmed by President Obama in 2009.

The OIRA Insight, Reform, and Accountability Act puts into statute the basic structure that has existed for more than two decades. The legislation also includes some minor adjustments for increased transparency and accountability. For example, agencies are required to provide OIRA with a redline of any changes the agency chooses to make during the review process. This allows the public to better understand how centralized review can improve the quality of rulemaking.

The bill clarifies the process for extending the time for OIRA to review regulations. Currently, OIRA has 90 days to review a regulation, but at the

request of the issuing agency, OIRA can extend the review indefinitely without notice to the public. Under the Obama administration, many rules were under review for more than a year with no explanation whatsoever. H.R. 1009 requires OIRA and the regulating agency to agree upon the extension and provide a written explanation to the public, including an estimated date of completion.

The government works for the people. You would think if they are going to miss deadlines and be late and go beyond the current rules, the people who are involved in the rulemaking would at least offer a little bit of a written explanation. The bill also requires OIRA to update the explanation and estimated completion date every 30 days after that moving forward.

Another significant difference from the executive order is H.R. 1009 includes independent agencies in OIRA's review of significant regulations. Independent regulatory agencies already submit their regulations to OIRA for the unified agenda and the annual regulatory plans. Under the Paperwork Reduction Act, independent agencies submit information collection requests, which is another way to say government forms, to OIRA for approval. For decades, experts across the political spectrum, including the Administrative Conference of the United States and the American Bar Association, have called for the inclusion of independent agencies in the significant regulation review process. Again, a good group there, the Administrative Conference of the United States, as well as the American Bar Association also asking for these independent agencies.

There is significant bipartisan agreement on including the independent agencies. In fact, President Obama's Jobs Council recommended including independent agencies in OIRA's regulatory review. Sally Katzen, OIRA administrator under President Clinton, said: ''For all practical purposes, the way executive branch agencies and independent agencies conduct rulemaking is the same, so they both should be expected to gather and use information on the costs and benefits of new regulatory proposals.'' She went on to suggest: ''Congress could adapt that approach for OIRA review of the analysis underlying independent agency rulemakings.'' And she goes on.

That is exactly what the bill does, which brings me to the last major difference between this bill and the executive order. This bill requires OIRA to report on what it reviewed and the results of that review. The Oversight Committee conducted an extensive investigation into the Waters of the United States rulemaking, also known as WOTUS. During the course of the investigation, it was clear OIRA was not conducting the analysis I think we should all expect. OIRA even shortchanged the interagency review process in order to meet the self-imposed arbitrary deadline.

H.R. 1009 requires OIRA to issue a report on each significant regulation it reviews so the public can see exactly what legal requirements OIRA focused on and what OIRA found. H.R. 1009 asks OIRA to consider: Did the agency technically comply with the requirement? Did it make solid effort to improve the regulation through the process? Or was the agency just going through the motions? These are very legitimate, easy, simple questions that we think can be answered.

Agencies are supposed to consider the public's comments, but what if the final rule is drafted before the comments are even reviewed? Perhaps the law does not explicitly prohibit that, but is it really an effective regulatory practice? The question is more than just whether agencies have simply complied. It is whether the agency is doing everything it can to limit the burden and make its regulations effective and easy to understand.

By requiring OIRA to make the results of its review of rulemakings available to the public, this bill will encourage agency accountability and improve the public's understanding of the rulemaking process. The Committee on Oversight and Government Reform approved this bill, without amendment, on February 14 of this year.

I again want to thank the leadership of Congressman MITCHELL for doing all that he has done to bring us to this point where we are debating this on the floor of the House. I also want to thank Katy Rother for her tireless work on this bill. She has done an awful lot of work, working with both sides of the aisle. Hats off to her as well. Again, I urge the passage of this bill.

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

U.S. CONGRESS,
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
Washington, DC, February 27, 2017.

Hon. JASON CHAFFETZ,
Chairman, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The Congressional Budget Office has prepared the enclosed cost estimate for H.R. 1009, the OIRA Insight, Reform, and Accountability Act.

If you wish further details on this estimate, we will be pleased to provide them. The CBO staff contact is Matthew Pickford.

Sincerely,

KEITH HALL.

Enclosure.

H.R. 1009—OIRA INSIGHT, REFORM, AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

As ordered reported by the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform on February 14, 2017

SUMMARY

H.R. 1009 would codify many executive orders and practices of the federal government related to the process of issuing federal regulations. The legislation also would expand the role of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA) in the regulatory process and authorize OIRA to review rules proposed by certain independent federal agencies.

CBO estimates that implementing the bill would increase administrative costs to OIRA and federal agencies by a total of $20 million over the 2018–2022 period; such spending would be subject to the availability of appropriated funds. CBO estimates that enacting the bill would increase direct spending by $3 million over the 2018–2027 period and would reduce revenues by $2 million over the same period. Because the bill would affect revenues and direct spending, pay-as-you-go procedures apply.

CBO also expects that enacting H.R. 1009 could delay the issuance of some rules. However, because of the large number and variety of federal rules issued each year, CBO cannot determine whether a delay in the effective date of some rules would have a cost or savings to the federal government.

CBO estimates that enacting H.R. 1009 would not increase net direct spending or on-budget deficits by more than $5 billion in one or more of the four consecutive 10–year periods beginning in 2028.

H.R. 1009 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA) and would not affect the budgets of state, local, or tribal governments.

ESTIMATED COST TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

The estimated budgetary effect of H.R. 1009 is shown in the following table. The costs of this legislation fall within all budget functions that include agencies that issue or review regulations.

	By fiscal year, in millions of dollars—											
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2018–2022	2018–2027
INCREASES IN SPENDING SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATION												
Estimated Authorization Level	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	20	40
Estimated Outlays	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	20	40
INCREASES IN DIRECT SPENDING												
Estimated Budget Authority	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	2	3
Estimated Outlays	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	2	3
DECREASES IN REVENUES												
Estimated Revenues	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	−1	−2
NET INCREASE IN THE DEFICIT FROM CHANGES IN DIRECT SPENDING AND REVENUES												
Impact on Deficit	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	3	5

Note: *= between −$500,000 and $500,000.

BASIS OF ESTIMATE

For this estimate, CBO assumes that H.R. 1009 will be enacted near the end of fiscal year 2017 and that spending will follow historical patterns for these and similar activities.

CBO is not aware of any comprehensive information on current spending for regulatory activities governmentwide. However, according to the Congressional Research Service, federal agencies issue 3,000 to 4,000 final rules each year. Most are promulgated by the Departments of Transportation, Homeland Security, and Commerce, and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Agencies that issue the most major rules (those with an estimated economic impact on the economy of more than $100 million per year) include the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Agriculture, and the EPA.

H.R. 1009 would codify certain regulatory policies and practices that are currently being implemented pursuant to several executive orders. Those instructions require agencies in the executive branch to analyze the impacts of regulations (including costs and benefits), to coordinate with OIRA during the rulemaking process, and to perform other activities and analyses related to considering the effects of proposed rules.

Spending Subject to Appropriation

On the basis of information from OIRA and several federal agencies on the cost of the rulemaking process, CBO estimates that more personnel would be needed to produce additional analyses and to perform other administrative tasks under H.R. 1009. CBO estimates that spending would increase by about $4 million annually and $20 million over the 2018–2022 period to hire and train sufficient staff. Such spending would be subject to the availability of appropriated funds.

Direct Spending

CBO estimates that some independent regulatory agencies would face an increased administrative workload under H.R. 1009 because, under current law, most independent regulatory agencies are not required to submit regulatory analyses to OIRA. Some of those agencies, primarily the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) and Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB), can spend funds for such activities without further appropriation. CBO estimates that enacting H.R. 1009 would cost about $3 million over the 2018–2027 period for the FDIC and CFPB to prepare additional reports and analyses of proposed regulations for OIRA.

Revenues

H.R. 1009 would affect revenues by changing the cost of the operations of the Federal Reserve System, which remits its net earnings to the Treasury; those remittances are classified as revenues in the federal budget. The legislation would impose additional administrative expenses on the Federal Reserve to prepare reports and analyses for OIRA. Based on the cost of similar administrative work of the Federal Reserve, CBO estimates those additional administrative costs would reduce remittances by the Federal Reserve to the Treasury by $2 million over the 2018–2027 period.

PAY-AS-YOU-GO CONSIDERATIONS

The Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010 establishes budget-reporting and enforcement procedures for legislation affecting direct spending or revenues. The net changes in outlays and revenues that are subject to these pay-as-you-go procedures are shown in the following table.

CBO ESTIMATE OF PAY-AS-YOU-GO EFFECTS FOR H.R. 1009, AS ORDERED REPORTED BY THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM ON FEBRUARY 14, 2017

	By fiscal year, in millions of dollars—												
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2017–2022	2017–2027
NET INCREASE IN THE DEFICIT													
Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Impact	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	5
Memorandum:													
Changes in Outlays	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	3
Changes in Revenues	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	−1	−2

INCREASE IN LONG-TERM NET DIRECT SPENDING AND DEFICITS

CBO estimates that enacting H.R. 1009 would not increase net direct spending or on-budget deficits by more than $5 billion in one or more of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2028.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND PRIVATE-SECTOR IMPACT

H.R. 1009 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in UMRA.

Estimate prepared by: Federal Costs: Nathaniel Frentz, Matthew Pickford, and Stephen Rabent; Impact on State, Local, and Tribal Governments: Zachary Byrum; Impact on the Private Sector: Paige Piper/Bach.

Estimate approved by: H. Samuel Papenfuss, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM,
Washington, DC, February 16, 2017.

Hon. BOB GOODLATTE,
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: On February 14, 2017, the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform ordered reported without amendment H.R. 1009, the ''OIRA Insight, Reform, and Accountability Act'' by a vote of 23 to 16. The bill was referred primarily to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, with an additional referral to the Committee on the Judiciary.

I ask that you allow the Committee on the Judiciary to be discharged from further consideration of the bill so that it may be scheduled by the Majority Leader. This discharge in no way affects your jurisdiction over the subject matter of the bill, and it will not serve as precedent for future referrals. In addition, should a conference on the bill be necessary, I would support your request to have the Committee on the Judiciary represented on the conference committee. Finally, I would be pleased to include this letter and any response in the bill report filed by the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, as well as in the Congressional Record during floor consideration, to memorialize our understanding.

Thank you for your consideration of my request.

Sincerely,

JASON CHAFFETZ,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY,
Washington, DC, February 23, 2017.

Hon. JASON CHAFFETZ,
Chairman, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN CHAFFETZ: I write with respect to H.R. 1009, the ''OIRA Insight, Reform, and Accountability Act.'' As a result of your having consulted with us on provisions within H.R. 1009 that fall within the Rule X jurisdiction of the Committee on the Judiciary, I forego any further consideration of this bill so that it may proceed expeditiously to the House floor for consideration.

The Judiciary Committee takes this action with our mutual understanding that by foregoing consideration of H.R. 1009 at this time, we do not waive any jurisdiction over subject matter contained in this or similar legislation and that our committee will be appropriately consulted and involved as this bill or similar legislation moves forward so that we may address any remaining issues in our jurisdiction. Our committee also reserves the right to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving this or similar legislation and asks that you support any such request.

I would appreciate a response to this letter confirming this understanding with respect to H.R. 998 and would ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included in the Congressional Record during floor consideration of H.R. 1009.

Sincerely,

BOB GOODLATTE,
Chairman.

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I oppose this bill. My colleagues on the other side have portrayed this bill as simply a codification of an executive order President Clinton issued. That simply is not the case. This bill makes significant changes to the regulatory process. The bill would require independent agencies to submit rules to the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, OIRA, for review. Independent agencies do not currently have to get the approval of the White House for regulations they issue. Congress designed independent agencies to be just that, independent. This bill would change that.

In February of 2015, the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform Chairman JASON CHAFFETZ sent four letters to the chairman of the Federal Communications Commission alleging that the White House had ''an improper influence'' on the FCC's net neutrality plan and that the FCC ''failed to establish the appearance that this rulemaking is independent, fair, and transparent.''

The bill we are considering would enshrine in law that very allegation my esteemed colleague Chairman

CHAFFETZ had concerns about, political interference by the White House with the FCC and other independent agencies. The Congressional Budget Office estimates that this bill would increase direct spending by $3 million and reduce revenues by $2 million. These direct spending and revenue effects are caused by the fact that the bill covers independent agencies. CBO has also estimated that the bill would cost Federal agencies an additional $20 million in administrative costs. Imagine. I am fighting to keep the budget down in this matter.

The bill does not include offsets for any additional spending. The bill also omits critical phrases from Executive Order 12866 that ensures that OIRA reviews do not contradict existing law. For example, the executive order requires agencies to provide the cost and benefits of alternatives to a proposed rule ''unless prohibited by law.'' The bill does not include this exception, and my colleagues on the other side have still not explained why it does not include this language.

□ 1615

It is unclear how the bill would impact laws that prohibit agencies from considering costs when setting public health standards.

The Coalition for Sensible Safeguards—an alliance over 150 labor, scientific, good government, health, and environmental groups—sent a letter to the House Members yesterday opposing this bill. That letter said in part:

''Particularly concerning, H.R. 1009 would in effect rewrite dozens of public interest laws containing congressional mandates that require agencies to prioritize public health and safety and the preservation of the environment, clean air, and clean water over concerns for industry profits. This consequence flows from another key difference between H.R. 1009 and the Executive Orders it purports codify: Whereas the Orders impose their requirements only to the extent consistent with applicable laws, H.R. 1009 recognizes no such limitations.''

Mr. Chairman, this bill would also give OIRA the ability to hold up rulemaking indefinitely.

Under Executive Order 12866, the administrator over OIRA has 90 days to review a rule, and that period can be extended one time for 30 days. This bill would allow OIRA to extend its review ''for any number of additional 30-day periods upon written request by the administrator or the head of the agency.''

The bill also gives the rulemaking agencies the ability to object to an extension of OIRA review period, but it is not realistic to think that an agency would refuse a request for an extension from the White House.

The Union of Concerned Scientists also sent a letter to House Members opposing this bill. That letter said:

Of particular concern is the fact that H.R. 1009 aims to codify some of the most burdensome requirements of previous executive orders while gutting the much-needed flexibility that the orders provide to Federal agencies in charge of ensuring science-based protections for the public. Congress should increase protections for our constituents rather than preventing agencies from issuing science-based protections.

I urge my colleagues to oppose this bill.

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

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Chairman, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. MITCHELL), the sponsor of the bill.

Mr. MITCHELL. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from Utah for yielding.

Last night, President Trump stood feet from here and spoke about the need and his commitment to regulatory reform.

I would like to echo those comments. One of the chief reasons the voters sent most of us here is because they know that Federal regulation is killing our economy and placing a heavy burden on families. I am proud to deliver on a promise I made during the campaign, and to have done so in the first 100 days. The OIRA Insight, Reform, and Accountability Act codifies the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, known as OIRA. OIRA serves as the regulatory gatekeeper, a safety valve, providing a process and review to hold back the floodgates of unnecessary burdensome and duplicative regulations.

OIRA is a bipartisan office within the executive branch that was originally created during the Reagan administration and further outlined by President Clinton in an executive order. President Clinton put it well when he said:

''The American people deserve a regulatory system that works for them, not against them: a regulatory system that protects and improves their health, safety, environment, and well-being and improves the performance of the economy without imposing unacceptable or unreasonable costs on society; regulatory policies that recognize that the private sector and private markets are the best engine for economic growth; regulatory approaches that respect the role of State, local, and tribal governments; and regulations that are effective, consistent, sensible, and understandable.''

I agree with President Clinton's words in 1993. This is about making sure government solves problems, rather than creates them. And create them, it has.

In recent years, the regulatory state has grown to impressive levels. Between 2006 and 2015, agencies published over 36,000 final rules, of which 555 were considered economically significant. That is, they anticipated an economic effect of $100 million or more.

Many of these regulations have been imposed without thorough cost-benefit analysis, placing huge burdens on families and businesses. What is worse, Americans have had little, if any, influence on regulations that impact their lives as unelected bureaucrats regularly have exceeded their authority while imposing regulations that negatively impact them. It is our responsibility as the people's representatives to protect them from this ever-expanding regulatory state.

This bill is simple and plain. The bill locks into place existing transparency requirements like the unified agenda and the annual regulatory plan.

The bill also requires OIRA to tell us more about what they are currently doing.

After OIRA conducts a review of significant regulations, H.R. 1009 requires OIRA to give us a readout. Imagine that, we want them to tell us what they are doing. How did the agency do? Is the regulation well drafted? Did the agency meet the requirements of the law? That is a novel approach. Did the agency pick the best way to regulate? OIRA is already required to conduct this review under Executive Order 12886.

The bill asks OIRA to tell us the results. I am surprised and disappointed that even on this bill we have seen significant opposition.

My minority counterparts have made complaints based on strained legal arguments, but they haven't offered an amendment to fix the alleged problem. Why? Because they don't like the basic concepts of the bill. These are not partisan concepts. We have heard their concerns in committee. We obviously disagree at this point. And as the chairman said, this is passed by committee without amendment. We look forward to support, and I ask my colleagues to support the bill.

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

We are opposed to the bill because we have received letters and concerns from a cross section of Americans, a cross section of organizations, who recognize that this is not really a codification of an executive order, but this is overreach on the part of the majority of Congress at this time. They feel that they are able to do it, and so they are going to ram this through.

H.R. 1009 would add another layer of bureaucracy to an already slow rulemaking process. The Consumer Federation of America says:

The bill creates a regulatory working group to provide input to agencies about how to improve their regulatory process, including an evaluation of risk assessment techniques.

It appears like this is what we are going to be doing throughout Oversight and Government Reform, is creating new task forces and new groups to review rulemaking and review regulations at the cost of the taxpayer.

H.R. 1009 would jeopardize the independence of agencies like the Consumer Product Safety Commission, the Securities and Exchange Commission, the Commodities Futures Trading Commission, the Federal Communications Commission, as well as other independent agencies because it will give the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, OIRA, the ability to

review significant rules which are outside of their scope now. That is why these agencies are called independent, because Congress wanted them to be independent. We are now giving OIRA overreach into independent agencies.

The Consumer Federation of America goes on to say:

> Authorizing OIRA to conduct its own analysis would not only add pressure from the executive branch and add time and expense to the already slow regulatory process, but would also give the special interests seeking to quash a safety measure yet another avenue to prevent a rule from being promulgated.

Significantly, independent agencies were created by Congress to prioritize public health and safety, ensure a fair financial marketplace, and consumer privacy. This bill would undermine the authorizing statutes and the missions of these independent agencies by allowing those agencies to be in some way touched by the White House.

Again, we have the Natural Resources Defense Council. Their letter to all of the Members said:

> The bill would also revive legislative language that Congress repealed elsewhere because it made it impossible to protect the public.

Specifically, in H.R. 1009, OIRA was charged with ensuring that the regulation imposes the least burden on society. Congress removed such language when it updated TSCA because the phrase had made it impossible for chemical safety regulations to pass judicial muster, even when the chemical was asbestos, well known to be a potential carcinogen.

No one wants to impose unnecessary burdens on society, but the phrase ''least burdensome'' has been interpreted to put an agency in an impossible position of providing that there is no other conceivable way to accomplish its goal of having to cost out every theoretical option.

The reason we are opposed to this bill is because it makes it more difficult for independent agencies to remain independent and not be moved by the White House by political machinations that this Congress is now trying to impose on them.

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

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Let me mention that the bill does not require any of these agencies to provide new analysis. And I haven't really heard an example or a reason why something would be prohibited in an agency from sharing existing cost-benefit analysis.

What could the agencies have that they should not share with OIRA?

It just seems reasonable that if they have this information, they should share it. Ultimately, we do work for the American people, and the American people should be able to see this information as it goes to OIRA.

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

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MAXINE WATERS).

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Chairman, I thank Ms. PLASKETT for yielding to me.

H.R. 1009 would empower Trump's White House to block all of the independent financial agencies' proposed actions to protect our economy. And, worse, the bill empowers President Trump's advisers to influence monetary policy, including interest rates that affect America's mortgages, credit cards and IRAs.

Independent agencies, like the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, would have to first receive the okay from Trump's administration, packed with Wall Street insiders, before they could protect the American public. For example, the administration could block the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau's recent proposal to stop payday lender debt traps. These agencies would be directed to write rules favorable to industry, subjecting individuals once again to predatory practices.

I am so deeply troubled that H.R. 1009 gives the Trump administration a say in the Federal Reserve's monetary policy decisions. The importance of Fed independence is well established and results in objective, nonpolitical policymaking, and a high degree of credibility with financial markets.

However, today's bill threatens the integrity of these decisions. Given that the Fed's actions can move stock markets by hundreds of points, we should absolutely reject the Trump White House and Republicans' desire to use the Fed for partisan gain.

An administration that believes bad polls are ''fake news,'' goes to great lengths to inflate the number of attendees at the inauguration, and misrepresents the Nation's debt level should not be allowed to meddle with the interest rate decisions or marketplace guardrails critical to our economy's health.

I urge Members to oppose this bill.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON).

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Chairman, I thank my good friend from the Virgin Islands (Ms. PLASKETT) for yielding to me.

I had to come down as I saw this attempt to use our jurisdiction to undermine our independent agencies. And I want to put an emphasis on independent agencies because they have always been treated differently.

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Executive Order 12866 has long subjected agency rulemakings to some review by the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, but independent agencies have been treated differently. Congress deliberately created them as independent to exempt them from political review for their regulatory actions by the White House.

The agencies we are talking about are very often agencies that deal with our economy. They are almost always agencies whose subject matter is controversial, like the National Labor Relations Board, which deals with labor management matters, or the FTC, whose role is to prevent anticompetitive business practices, not to mention the Fed.

Now, the executive order provides OIRA with the ability to do cost-benefit analysis ''unless prohibited by law.'' Those words are our congressional words, ''unless prohibited by law.''

Now, that language is not in this executive order. Does it mean that it is erased so that, with respect to environment and public safety rules for example, ''prohibited by law'' no longer obtains and cost benefit can be done so that you can weigh the cost or the benefit of rules? The benefit would be clear, but the cost of rules that are so protective of the public that we have exempted them in the past—the silence is deafening.

Agencies also have always been able to indicate, because they have the only real knowledge, whether or not their rulemakings are significant. How could we give this exclusive authority now to OIRA? The politicization of independent agencies, making them subject to White House oversight, is very dangerous. It robs them of what is perhaps the most important part of their independence. This bill goes many steps too far.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Chair, I would just point out that these independent agencies need oversight as much as any other agency; and, ultimately, what we are trying to do is provide more transparency, more information to the public. Whether or not they think they are independent or not, they still work for the American people, and the people that are footing the bills and that have to live under these regulations should have the right to see this information and have this information provided to them through the process.

We are never going to apologize for trying to increase the transparency and the process. That is what this bill does.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Chair, we would say that this bill is not necessarily about transparency so much as it is about the executive branch, and specifically the White House, being able to reach into these independent agencies. There are already mechanisms in place for the transparency that my colleague is speaking about. What we are doing now is creating another level of oversight over the committees, over these independent agencies, so that this Congress can then have reach into them as well.

At this time, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. CICILLINE).

Mr. CICILLINE. I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to H.R. 1009, the OIRA Insight, Reform, and Accountability Act, yet another radical bill, part of a corporate agenda designed to eviscerate public protections under the Clean Water Act and other laws designed to ensure the safety of American families.

As the ranking member of the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Regulatory Reform, I have several serious concerns with this measure.

First, H.R. 1009 would eviscerate the independence of agencies that are critical to holding corporations accountable and protecting consumers, such as the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, the Federal Trade Commission, and the Securities and Exchange Commission. Congress established these expert agencies with the express purpose of exercising independence from the policy whims of the White House.

Section 3423 of H.R. 1009, however, would task the White House Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, OIRA, with a governmentwide review of significant regulatory actions, effectively placing this obscure entity as the gatekeeper of the rulemaking system.

Currently, OIRA only reviews a small portion of significant regulatory actions, allowing it to effectively allocate its finite resources to review the most pressing rules. But by substantially expanding OIRA's mandate to include every significant regulatory action, this legislation would simultaneously water down agency oversight while also subjecting independent agencies to the influence of the Trump administration, facilitating political interference in the rulemaking process.

One of the overriding goals of OIRA review is to ensure that the President's policies are reflected in agency rules. Greater Presidential control over rulemaking, particularly in this administration's hands, could have devastating consequences in terms of public health and safety. It would not only provide special interests with an additional tool for regulatory capture, but it would also allow the White House to substitute its own policy preferences for those of Congress.

As Senator RON JOHNSON, the Republican chair of the Senate committee with jurisdiction over administrative law, observed in a report last year: ''Limits on the President's power over independent agencies—like the Federal Communications Commission—demonstrate the importance of maintaining the agency's independence.''

Furthermore, because President Trump has made the outrageous and unprecedented choice not to divest his business holdings, I am also very concerned that H.R. 1009 would only serve to convert the regulatory system into his own personal investment account.

Robert Weissman, the president of Public Citizen, recently noted: ''The Nation's golfer-in-chief'' owns or brands businesses across the country that would be affected by protections promulgated under the Clean Water Act. Increasing the White House's role in the rulemaking system will only serve to undermine what little transparency exists into the President's regulatory conflicts of interest.

The Government Accountability Office has reported in multiple studies that OIRA has not addressed transparency concerns that GAO has raised, and for this reason I offered an amendment.

I was pleased to hear my friend from Utah talk about the transparency benefits, but I offered an amendment to H.R. 1009 that was designed to ferret out crony capitalism by requiring that OIRA reports whether a significant regulatory action would financially benefit the President or his senior advisers. That seems like a really sensible idea if you really want to get at the issue of transparency.

Very disappointingly, my Republican colleagues refused to make my amendment in order, really tacitly acknowledging their concerns with what this type of transparency might mean for the Trump administration.

Finally, while supporters of this proposal argue that it merely codifies executive orders that were issued under Democratic administrations, the reality is that H.R. 1009 was drafted without Democratic input, contains several poison pill provisions designed to ensure its partisan and unworkable nature, and would only have been vetoed by the Obama administration.

As the Obama administration noted in the context of a veto threat of another antiregulatory bill, agencies already adhere to the robust and well-understood procedural and analytical requirements of the Administrative Procedure Act, the Regulatory Flexibility Act, the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act, the Paperwork Reduction Act, and the Congressional Review Act.

Passage of antiregulatory legislation to ''replace this established framework with layers of additional procedural requirements,'' the Obama administration cautioned, ''would undermine the ability of agencies to execute their statutory mandates.'' Because H.R. 1009 does this very thing, I urge my colleagues to oppose this legislation.

I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Chair, I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

There are many organizations that oppose this bill, including consumer protection groups such as The Center for Popular Democracy's Fed Up Coalition. The Fed Up Coalition sent a letter to House Members today that said:

> The Fed Up Coalition exists to ensure that policymaking at the Federal Reserve reflects the concerns of working families and communities of color. By encroaching on the Fed's ability to pursue sound regulation and extending the hand of the executive branch in the Federal Reserve decisionmaking, H.R. 1009 undermines the Feds's ability to keep our financial system safe and protect working families and taxpayers that our coalition represents.

I strongly urge Members to vote ''no'' on H.R. 1009, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself the balance of my time.

I just want to simply point out that the bill does extend OIRA to review independent agencies. I also would point out, as I did earlier, the Administrative Conference of the United States recommended OIRA review be extended to independent agencies back in 1988.

In fact, the American Bar Association recommended OIRA review be extended to independent agencies in 1990 and reaffirmed the need again in 2016. They said: ''We strongly urge you to bring the independent regulatory commissions within the requirements for cost-benefit analysis''—I am going to just inject my own words here in the middle.

Cost-benefit analysis, isn't that something reasonable that we should all look at? That is not asking an agency too much, especially if they already have the information.

They went on to say: ''OMB review, and retrospective review of rules currently reflected in Executive Order 12866. . . . ''

Those are not overly burdensome requests. In fact, in 2011, Sally Katzen, the OIRA Administrator under President Clinton, urged Congress to support extending OIRA review to independent agencies, when she wrote: ''Our concern is that independent agencies are not typically engaging in the analysis that has come to be expected as a form of governmental best practice for regulatory agencies.''

It seems like a reasonable expectation to employ best practices. And all that bill does is—again, it does not interfere with independent agencies' rulemaking process or their policy decision. It simply requires OIRA to review the regulations to ensure these agencies are complying with legal requirements just the same as any other agency.

That is a reasonable request. That is why we urge its passage.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. TIPTON). All time for general debate has expired.

Pursuant to the rule, the bill shall be considered for amendment under the 5-minute rule.

It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of an amendment under the 5-minute rule an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 115–4. That amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read.

The text of the amendment in the nature of a substitute is as follows:

H.R. 1009

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 ''OIRA Insight, Reform, and Accountability Act''.

SEC. 2. OFFICE OF INFORMATION AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS.

(a) AMENDMENT.—Subchapter I of chapter 35 of title 44, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new sections:

"§ 3522. Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs Regulatory Working Group; regulatory plan; Unified Agenda

''(a) REGULATORY WORKING GROUP.—

''(1) ESTABLISHMENT; MEMBERS.—The Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs shall convene a working group to be known as the Regulatory Working Group, whose members shall consist of the following:

''(A) The Administrator.

''(B) Representatives selected by the head of each agency that the Administrator determines to have significant domestic regulatory responsibility.

''(C) Other executive branch officials as designated by the Administrator.

''(2) CHAIR.—The Chair of the Regulatory Working Group shall be the Administrator, who shall periodically advise Congress on the activities of the Regulatory Working Group.

''(3) PURPOSE.—The Regulatory Working Group shall serve as a forum to assist agencies in identifying and analyzing important regulatory issues, including, at a minimum—

''(A) the development of innovative regulatory techniques;

''(B) the methods, efficacy, and utility of comparative risk assessment in regulatory decision-making; and

''(C) the development of streamlined regulatory approaches for small businesses and other entities.

''(4) MEETINGS.—The Regulatory Working Group shall meet not less than quarterly and may meet as a whole or in subgroups of members with an interest in particular issues or subject areas.

''(5) ANALYTICAL STUDIES.—To inform the discussion of the Regulatory Working Group, the Regulatory Working Group may request analytical studies and reports by the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, the Administrative Conference of the United States, or any other agency.

''(b) REGULATORY PLAN.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—

''(A) DEADLINE FOR AND DESCRIPTION OF REGULATORY PLAN.—Not later than June 1 of each year, the head of each agency shall approve and submit to the Administrator a regulatory plan that includes each significant regulatory action that the agency reasonably expects to issue in proposed or final form in the following fiscal year or thereafter and the retrospective review described in paragraph (2). The regulatory plan shall also contain, at a minimum, the following:

''(i) A statement of the regulatory objectives and priorities of the agency.

''(ii) A summary of each planned significant regulatory action including, to the extent possible, alternatives to be considered and preliminary estimates of the anticipated costs and benefits of such action.

''(iii) A summary of the legal basis for each such action, including whether any aspect of the action is required by statute or court order.

''(iv) A statement of the need for each such action and, if applicable, how the action will reduce risk to public health, safety, or the environment, as well as how the magnitude of the risk addressed by the action relates to any other risk within the jurisdiction of the agency.

''(v) The schedule for each such action, including a statement of any applicable statutory or judicial deadline.

''(vi) The name, email address, and telephone number of a knowledgeable agency employee the public may contact for additional information about each such action.

''(B) CIRCULATION OF REGULATORY PLAN.—Not later than 10 days after receiving the regulatory plan under subparagraph (A), the Administrator shall circulate the regulatory plan to any other agency the Administrator determines may be affected by the plan.

''(C) AGENCY NOTIFICATION TO OIRA OF CONFLICTING SIGNIFICANT REGULATORY ACTIONS.—The head of an agency shall promptly notify the Administrator in writing if any planned significant regulatory action in the regulatory plan of another agency may conflict with the policy or action taken or planned by that agency. The Administrator shall forward any notification received under this subparagraph to the other agency involved.

''(D) NOTIFICATION OF CONFLICTING SIGNIFICANT REGULATORY ACTIONS.—The Administrator shall notify the head of an agency in writing if any planned significant regulatory action conflicts with any policy or action taken or planned by another agency.

''(E) REQUIREMENT TO PUBLISH IN UNIFIED AGENDA.—Each regulatory plan submitted by the head of an agency under subparagraph (A) shall be included in the October publication of the Unified Agenda described under subsection (c).

''(2) RETROSPECTIVE REVIEW.—

''(A) LIST OF OUTDATED REGULATIONS.—The head of each agency shall include in the regulatory plan submitted under paragraph (1)(A) a list of regulations that have been identified by the agency (including any comments submitted to the agency) as unjustified, unnecessary, duplicative of other regulations or laws, inappropriately burdensome, or otherwise recommended for removal.

''(B) DESCRIPTION OF RETROSPECTIVE REVIEW.—The head of each agency shall include in the regulatory plan submitted under paragraph (1)(A) a description of any program or other effort to review existing regulations to determine whether any such regulations should be modified or eliminated in order to increase the effectiveness in achieving the regulatory objectives of the agency or to reduce the burden of regulations. The agency shall include any statutory requirements that require the agency to promulgate or continue to impose regulations that the agency believes are unnecessary or outdated by reason of changed circumstances.

''(C) OIRA COORDINATED REVIEW.—The Administrator shall work with interested entities and agencies, including through the processes established under subsection (d), to review the list of regulations identified under subparagraph (A) and such entities may assist OIRA and the agencies with identifying regulations or groups of regulations that—

''(i) impose significant or unique burdens on governmental entities and that are no longer justified; or

''(ii) affect a particular group, industry, or sector of the economy.

''(c) UNIFIED AGENDA.—

''(1) SUBMISSION OF REGULATIONS UNDER DEVELOPMENT OR REVIEW.—Not later than April 1 and October 1 of each year, the head of each agency shall submit to the Administrator an agenda of each regulation under development or review in accordance with any guidance issued under this section. Each agenda shall include, to the extent practicable, the following:

''(A) For each regulation—

''(i) a regulation identifier number;

''(ii) a brief summary of the regulation;

''(iii) a citation to the legal authority to issue the regulation;

''(iv) any legal deadline for the issuance of the regulation;

''(v) the name and phone number for a knowledgeable agency employee; and

''(vi) the stage of review for issuing the regulation.

''(B) For each regulation expected to be promulgated within the following 18 months—

''(i) a determination of whether the regulation is expected to be a significant regulatory action or an economically significant regulatory action; and

''(ii) any available analysis or quantification of the expected costs or benefits.

''(C) For any regulation included in the immediately previous agenda, an explanation of why the regulation is no longer included.

''(2) PUBLICATION OF UNIFIED AGENDA REQUIRED.—Not later than April 15 and October 15 of each year, the Administrator shall compile and publish online each agenda received under paragraph (1) (to be known as the Unified Agenda).

''(3) GUIDANCE.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall issue guidance for agencies on the manner of submission under this subsection and on meeting the requirements of this subsection, including a standard definition for each stage of review and any other definition that would assist the public in understanding the different terms used by agencies to submit the agenda required under paragraph (1).

''(B) UPDATES.—The Administrator shall periodically review compliance with this section and issue guidance or recommendations to assist agencies in complying with this section.

''(d) COORDINATION WITH STATE, LOCAL, AND TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS AND THE PUBLIC.—

''(1) STATE, LOCAL, AND TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS.—The Administrator shall meet not less than quarterly with representatives of State, local, and tribal governments to identify both existing and proposed regulations that may uniquely or significantly affect those government entities.

''(2) PUBLIC.—The Administrator shall periodically convene conferences with representatives of businesses, nongovernmental organizations, and the public to discuss regulatory issues of common concern.

''(e) BEST PRACTICES.—The Administrator shall, in consultation with the Regulatory Working Group and the entities described in subsection (d), periodically develop advice and guidance for agencies on best practices of the development of regulations.

"§ 3523. OIRA coordinated review of significant regulatory actions

''(a) OIRA REVIEW.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall conduct a Governmentwide coordinated review of significant regulatory actions to ensure that such regulations are consistent with applicable law and that a regulatory action by one agency does not conflict with a policy or action taken or planned by another agency.

''(2) PERIODIC AGENCY SUBMISSION OF PLANNED REGULATORY ACTIONS.—The head of each agency shall provide to the Administrator, at such time and in such a manner as determined by the Administrator, a list of each planned regulatory action with an identification of whether each such regulatory action is a significant regulatory action.

''(3) REVIEW OF SIGNIFICANT REGULATORY ACTION REQUIRED.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall make a determination of whether any planned regulatory action submitted under this section is a significant regulatory action and shall review each such significant regulatory action in accordance with this section.

''(B) NOT SUBJECT TO REVIEW.—Any planned regulatory action determined by the Administrator not to be a significant regulatory action is not subject to review under this section.

''(C) NOTIFICATION REQUIRED.—Not later than 10 days after a planned regulatory action has been determined to be a significant regulatory action, the Administrator shall notify the head of the relevant agency of such determination.

''(4) WAIVER OF REVIEW FOR SIGNIFICANT REGULATORY ACTION.—The Administrator—

''(A) may waive review of any planned regulatory action designated as a significant regulatory action; and

''(B) shall publish online a detailed written explanation of any such waiver.

''(b) AGENCY CONSULTATION WITH OIRA.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—An agency may consult with OIRA at any time on any regulatory action.

''(2) REGULATION IDENTIFIER NUMBER.—The head of an agency shall make every effort to obtain a regulation identifier number for the regulatory action that is the subject of the consultation before consulting with OIRA.

''(3) CONSULTATION INFORMATION REQUIRED.—If the head of an agency is unable to obtain the regulation identifier number as described in paragraph (2), the head of the agency shall provide the regulation identifier number to OIRA as soon as the number is obtained with a list of any previous interactions with OIRA relating to the regulatory action that is the subject of the consultation.

''(c) AGENCY SUBMISSION OF SIGNIFICANT REGULATORY ACTION FOR REVIEW.—Before issuing a significant regulatory action, the head of an agency shall submit the significant regulatory action to the Administrator for review and shall include the following:

''(1) The text of the significant regulatory action.

''(2) A detailed description of the need for the significant regulatory action.

''(3) An explanation of how the significant regulatory action will meet the identified need.

''(4) An assessment of potential costs and benefits of the significant regulatory action.

''(5) An explanation of the manner in which the significant regulatory action is consistent with a statutory mandate and avoids undue interference with State, local, and tribal government functions.

''(6) For an economically significant regulatory action, if any of the following was developed during the decisionmaking process of the agency:

''(A) An assessment of and quantification of costs and benefits of the significant regulatory action.

''(B) An assessment of and quantification of costs and benefits of potentially effective and feasible alternatives, including any underlying analysis.

''(C) An explanation of why the planned significant regulatory action is preferable to any identified potential alternatives.

''(d) DEADLINES FOR REVIEW.—

''(1) REVIEW COORDINATION.—To the extent practicable, the head of each agency shall work with the Administrator to establish a mutually agreeable date on which to submit a significant regulatory action for review.

''(2) EXPEDITED REVIEW.—When an agency is obligated by law to issue a significant regulatory action before complying with the provisions of this section, the head of the agency shall notify the Administrator as soon as possible. To the extent practicable, OIRA and the agency shall comply with the provisions of this section.

''(3) 10-DAY REVIEW.—In the case of a significant regulatory action that is a notice of inquiry, advance notice of proposed rulemaking, or other preliminary regulatory action prior to a notice of proposed rulemaking, within 10 business days after the date of submission of the such action to the Administrator, OIRA shall complete the review.

''(4) 90-DAY REVIEW.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), for any other significant regulatory action not described in paragraph (3), within 90 days after the date of submission of the action, OIRA shall complete the review.

''(B) EXCEPTION 45-DAY REVIEW.—If OIRA has previously reviewed the significant regulatory action described in subparagraph (A) and, since that review, there has been no material change in the facts and circumstances upon which the significant regulatory action is based, OIRA shall complete the review within 45 days after submission of the action.

''(5) EXTENSION.—Any review described under this subsection may be extended for any number of additional 30-day periods upon written request by the Administrator or the head of the agency. Such request shall be granted unless the nonrequesting party denies the request in writing within 5 days after receipt of the request for extension.

''(6) RETURN.—If the Administrator determines OIRA is unable to complete a review within the time period described under this subsection, the Administrator may return the draft of the significant regulatory action to the agency with a written explanation of why OIRA was unable to complete the review and what additional information, resources, or time OIRA would need to complete the review.

''(7) WITHDRAWAL.—An agency may withdraw the regulatory action from OIRA review at any time prior to the completion of the review.

''(e) COMPLIANCE REVIEW.—The Administrator shall review any significant regulatory action submitted under subsection (c) to determine the extent to which the agency—

''(1) identified the problem that the significant regulatory action is designed to address (including, where applicable, the failures of private markets or public institutions that warrant new agency action);

''(2) assessed the significance of the problem the regulatory action is designed to address;

''(3) examined whether existing regulations or laws have created or contributed to the problem that the regulatory action is designed to correct and whether those regulations or laws should be modified to achieve the intended goal more effectively;

''(4) identified and assessed available alternatives to direct regulation, including providing economic incentives to encourage desired behaviors, such as user fees or marketable permits, or providing information upon which choices can be made by the public;

''(5) considered, to the extent reasonable, the degree and nature of the risks posed by various substances or activities within the jurisdiction of the agency;

''(6) designed the regulatory action to be the most cost-effective manner to achieve the regulatory objective;

''(7) considered incentives for innovation, consistency, predictability, flexibility, distributive impacts, equity, and the costs of enforcement and compliance by the Government, regulated entities, and the public;

''(8) assessed costs and benefits of the regulatory action and made a reasoned determination that the benefits justify the costs;

''(9) used the best reasonably obtainable scientific, technical, economic, and other information concerning the need for and consequences of the regulatory action;

''(10) identified and assessed alternative forms of regulation and, to the extent feasible, specified performance objectives rather than behavior or manner of compliance;

''(11) sought comments and suggestions from appropriate State, local, and tribal officials on any aspect of the regulatory action that might significantly or uniquely affect those governmental entities;

''(12) assessed the effects of the regulatory action on State, local, and tribal governments, including specifically the availability of resources to carry out the regulatory action, and minimized the burdens that uniquely or significantly affect such governmental entities, consistent with achieving regulatory objectives;

''(13) harmonized the regulatory action with the regulatory and other functions of State, local, and tribal governments;

''(14) avoided conflicts with or duplication of other existing regulations;

''(15) tailored the regulatory action to impose the least burden on society, including individuals, businesses of differing sizes, and other entities (including small communities and governmental entities), consistent with obtaining the regulatory objectives, and taking into account, among other things and to the extent practicable, the costs of cumulative regulations;

''(16) drafted the regulatory action to be simple and easy to understand, and minimized the potential for uncertainty and litigation arising from such uncertainty;

''(17) met all applicable Executive order requirements;

''(18) met all applicable statutory requirements; and

''(19) complied with all applicable guidance.

''(f) QUALITY REVIEW.—For any significant regulatory action submitted under subsection (c), OIRA shall assess the extent to which the agency conducted a meaningful and complete analysis of each of the factors described in subsection (e), considering best practices, methods observed through reviewing other agencies, comments from stakeholders, and other resources that may improve the quality of the process.

''(g) INTERAGENCY CONSULTATION.—The Administrator shall identify each agency potentially affected, interested, or otherwise likely to provide valuable feedback on a significant regulatory action submitted under subsection (c) and facilitate a meaningful interagency consultation process. The Administrator shall—

''(1) provide each identified agency with a copy of the draft regulatory action;

''(2) allow each identified agency to review the draft regulatory action for a sufficient period of time, not less than 10 business days;

''(3) solicit written comments from such agency and provide those written comments to the submitting agency; and

''(4) as appropriate, facilitate conversations between agencies.

''(h) STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION.—For all substantive communications between OIRA and individuals not employed by the executive branch regarding a regulatory action submitted to the Administrator for review under this section, the Administrator shall—

''(1) invite the issuing agency to any meeting between OIRA personnel and individuals not employed by the executive branch;

''(2) not later than 10 business days after receipt of any written communication submitted by any individual not employed by the executive branch, make such communications available to the public online; and

''(3) make available to the public online a log, which shall be updated daily, of the following information:

''(A) The status of each regulatory action.

''(B) A copy of any written communication submitted by any person not employed by the executive branch.

''(C) The dates and names of persons involved in any substantive oral communication and the subject matter discussed during such communication.

''(i) CONCLUSION OF REVIEW.—

''(1) PROVISION TO AGENCY.—Upon completion of the review, the Administrator shall provide the head of an agency with the results of the OIRA review in writing, including a list of every standard, Executive order, guidance document, and law reviewed for compliance and the results for each.

''(2) CHANGES DURING REVIEW PERIOD.—Within 24 hours after the conclusion of the OIRA review under this section, the head of the submitting agency shall provide the Administrator with a redline of any changes the agency made to the regulatory action during the review period. To the extent practicable, the agency shall identify any change made at the suggestion or recommendation of any other agency, member of the public, or other source. To the extent practicable, the agency should identify the source of any such change.

''§ 3524. Public disclosure of regulatory review

''(a) IN GENERAL.—On the earlier of 3 days after OIRA completes the review of any agency significant regulatory action under section 3523, the date on which such agency publishes the regulatory action in the Federal Register, or the date on which the agency announces a decision

not to publish the regulatory action, the Administrator shall make available to the public online—

''(1) all information submitted by an agency under section 3523;

''(2) the results of the review provided to the agency under section 3523;

''(3) the redline of any changes made by the agency during the course of the review provided under section 3523(i)(2); and

''(4) all documents exchanged between OIRA and the agency during the review.

''(b) PLAIN LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT.—All information provided to the public shall, to the extent practicable, be in plain, understandable language.''.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 35 of title 44, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 3521 the following new items:

''3522. Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs Regulatory Working Group; regulatory plan; Unified Agenda.

''3523. OIRA coordinated review of significant regulatory actions.

''3524. Public disclosure of regulatory review.''.

(c) DEFINITIONS.—Section 3502 of title 44, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (13)(D), by striking ''; and'' and inserting a semicolon;

(2) in paragraph (14), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new paragraphs:

''(15) the term 'Administrator' means, unless otherwise indicated, the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs;

''(16) the term 'economically significant regulatory action' means any regulatory action described under subparagraph (A) or (B) of paragraph (21);

''(17) the term 'OIRA' means the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs;

''(18) the term 'regulation'—

''(A) means an agency statement of general applicability and future effect, which the agency intends to have the force and effect of law, that is designed to implement, interpret, or prescribe law or policy or to describe the procedure or practice requirements of an agency; and

''(B) does not include such a statement if—

''(i) issued in accordance with the formal rulemaking provisions of sections 556 and 557 of title 5;

''(ii) the statement pertains to a military or foreign affairs function of the United States, other than procurement regulations and regulations involving the import or export of nondefense articles and services;

''(iii) the statement is limited to an agency organization, management, or personnel matters; or

''(iv) the statement is exempted as a regulation by the Administrator;

''(19) the term 'regulation identifier number' means a unique identification code for regulations, which is designed to assist tracking regulations through the course of development;

''(20) the term 'regulatory action' means any substantive action by an agency normally published in the Federal Register that promulgates or is expected to lead to the promulgation of a final regulation, including notices of inquiry, advance notices of proposed rulemaking, and notices of proposed rulemaking;

''(21) the term 'significant regulatory action' means any regulatory action that is likely to result in a regulation that may—

''(A) have an annual effect on the economy of $100,000,000 or more;

''(B) adversely affect in a material way the economy, a sector of the economy, productivity, competition, jobs, the environment, public health or safety, or State, local, or tribal governments or communities;

''(C) create a serious inconsistency or otherwise interfere with an action taken or planned by another agency;

''(D) materially alter the budgetary impact of entitlements, grants, user fees, or loan programs or the rights and obligations of recipients therein; or

''(E) raise novel legal or policy issues arising out of legal mandates;

''(22) the term 'small business' has the meaning given the term 'small-business concern' in section 3 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 632); and

''(23) the term 'State' means each of the several States, the District of Columbia, each territory or possession of the United States, and each federally recognized Indian tribe.''.

(d) DEADLINE FOR ISSUANCE OF GUIDANCE.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs shall issue any guidance required by section 3522 of title 44, United States Code, as added by subsection (a).

The Acting CHAIR. No amendment to that amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in part B of House Report 115–21. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report, equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to an amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR. MITCHELL

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 1 printed in part B of House Report 115–21.

Mr. MITCHELL. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 7, line 2, strike ''Administrator shall work with interested'' and insert the following: ''head of each agency shall submit the program descriptions required in subparagraph (B) to the Administrator. The Administrator shall work with other interested''.

Page 7, beginning on line 16, strike ''April 1 and October 1'' and insert ''March 15 and September 15''.

Page 8, beginning on line 17, strike ''analysis or quantification'' and insert ''clear summary''.

Page 15, beginning on line 16, strike ''written request by the Administrator or the head of the agency. Such request shall be granted unless the nonrequesting party denies the request in writing within 5 days after receipt of the request for extension.'' and insert the following: ''mutual agreement of the Administrator and the head of the agency. For each 30 day extension, the Administrator shall make publicly available online a written explanation, including the reasons for the extension and an estimate of the expected conclusion date.''.

Page 15, line 22, strike ''complete'' and insert ''conclude''.

Page 19, line 14, strike ''assess'' and insert ''review''.

Page 20, line 7, strike ''and provide those written comments to the submitting agency''.

Page 21, beginning on line 20, strike ''Within 24 hours after the conclusion of the OIRA review under this section, the head of the submitting agency shall provide the Administrator with'' and insert the following: ''As soon as practicable and before publication in the Federal Register of a significant regulatory action for which OIRA concluded review under this section, the head of the submitting agency shall make available to the Administrator''.

Page 22, beginning on line 6, strike ''On the earlier of 3 days after OIRA completes the review of any agency significant regulatory action under section 3523, the date on which such agency publishes the regulatory action in the Federal Register, or the date on which the agency announces'' and insert the following: ''On the earlier of the date on which an agency publishes a significant regulatory action reviewed under section 3523 in the Federal Register, the agency otherwise makes the significant regulatory action publicly available, or the agency announces''.

Page 22, line 20, insert ''senior level officials at'' after ''between''.

Page 24, line 20, insert after ''Administrator'' the following: ''and a written explanation of the exemption, including the date of the decision and the reasons for exempting the specific statement, is made publically available online''.

Page 25, strike lines 1 through 7 and insert the following:

''(20) the term 'regulatory action' means—

''(A) any substantive action by an agency normally published in the Federal Register that promulgates or is expected to lead to the promulgation of a final regulation, including notices of inquiry, advance notices of proposed rulemaking, and notices of proposed rulemaking; or

''(B) any agency statement of general applicability and future effect, other than a substantive action described in subparagraph (A), which sets forth a policy on a statutory, regulatory, or technical issue or an interpretation of a statutory or regulatory issue;''.

Page 26, insert after line 16 the following:

(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Section 3524 of title 44, as added by subsection (a), shall take effect 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 3. 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 Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 156, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. MITCHELL) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. MITCHELL. Mr. Chair, this amendment makes technical changes to H.R. 1009 to ensure consistency in dates and terms, require OIRA to review significant guidance, and prohibit authorization of additional funds. It allows OIRA 4 weeks to review the Unified Agenda submissions, requires a mutual agreement to extend the regulatory review beyond 90 days, and requires a written explanation of each 30 days of the extension.

That is critical. They must explain to us, to the people, any extension.

It clarifies the timing of the post-review disclosure to occur as soon as the agency makes the proposed final rule public, clarifies that disclosure of interagency communication is limited to exchanges with senior-level OIRA staff, requires a written explanation

for any exempt regulations, and expands OIRA to review the guidance document per a Bush-era executive order.

□ 1645

This amendment primarily makes technical changes to the bill that were developed in consultation with OIRA staff. We took their concerns and suggestions into account, and we incorporated most of those in this amendment. For example, this amendment clarifies the review extension process that has been the subject of some conversation here.

Our minority counterparts have claimed that OIRA has 90 days, plus a 30-day extension to review under current executive order. That is clearly not true under the executive order or in practice. Under the Obama administration, OIRA review, at times, exceeded 2 years without explanation. This limitless extension is permissible under the governing executive order, which allows an automatic 30-day extension at the request of OIRA and a limitless extension at the request of the agency.

We have heard that when OIRA needs that additional time, they simply call up an agency and ask for an extension. So this bill requires transparency in the review process, puts limits on that, and requires the disclosure of that.

OIRA has suggested the term is a mutual agreement between the agencies so that, in fact, we could put limits on the review and extension process.

Another important addition to this amendment is that we are extending OIRA's review to guidance documents. This is not a new practice. In 2007, President Bush issued Executive Order 13422, which extended OIRA's review to guidance documents.

While President Obama rescinded that executive order, OIRA Administrator Shelanski affirmed to the Oversight and Government Reform Committee in the past Congress that OIRA should continue the practice of reviewing significant guidance documents.

These guidance documents will only rise to the level of OIRA review if they meet the significant standard.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

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

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Chair, I claim the time in opposition to this amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Chair, this manager's amendment does not fix the flaws in the bill we are considering.

One of the major flaws in the bill is the authority it gives to the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs to hold up rules indefinitely. This amendment attempts to address that concern by requiring that any extension be agreed to by both the White House and the agency issuing the rule.

It is just not realistic to believe that an agency whose top official is appointed by the President would tell the White House it cannot have an extension if the White House asks. This amendment also does nothing to address the concern that the bill could interfere with other laws.

The Natural Resources Defense Council sent a letter to House Members opposing H.R. 1009. That letter states:

''The bill would also revive legislative language that Congress repealed elsewhere because it made it impossible to protect the public. Specifically, in H.R. 1009, OIRA is charged with ensuring that a regulation imposes the least burden on society. Congress removed such language when it updated the Toxic Substances Control Act because the phase had made it impossible for chemical safety regulations to pass judicial muster, even when the chemical was asbestos, well known to be a potent carcinogen.''

This amendment also includes language that says that no funds shall be authorized to carry out the bill. This does not change the fact that the CBO estimates that the bill will result in $3 million in direct spending. That is money that Congress has not appropriated that independent agencies like the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation and the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau would have to spend.

CBO also estimates that the bill would change the operations of the Federal Reserve, which would result in $2 million in reduced revenues.

CBO also estimates that agencies would have to spend $4 million in appropriated funds each year to comply with the requirements of this bill. Making agencies comply with additional requirements without giving them more money means that agencies will have to choose between which requirements they comply with and which they ignore.

I oppose this amendment.

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

Mr. MITCHELL. Mr. Chair, one brief comment, which is we are perfectly comfortable with the cost of $20 million, given the billions of dollars that the regulatory system currently costs businesses and taxpayers. We think it is a small investment to, in fact, have regulations make sense, not duplicate, not be overburdensome; and we suggest that it is a small cost given the overall cost to running the Federal Government to actually get regulation dialed back to some controllable level.

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

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Chairman, I am just so grateful that my colleague is interested in making investments, monetary investments, with taxpayers' dollars. I will be looking to him and his other cosponsors and supporters when we are looking for investing in working class Americans and working people and protecting health care and other benefits when we have the budget discussions.

I have no further statements at this time.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. MITCHELL).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR. BUCK

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 2 printed in part B of House Report 115–21.

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 2, line 19, strike ''and''.

Page 2, line 22, strike ''entities.'' and insert ''entities; and''.

Page 2, after line 22, insert the follow new subparagraph:

''(D) the methods used to ensure agencies coordinate with State, local, and Tribal governments.''.

Page 4, after line 14, insert the following new clause (and redesignate subsequent clauses accordingly):

''(v) A summary of the agency's plan to coordinate with State, local, and Tribal governments throughout the regulatory process.''.

Page 8, line 16, strike ''and''.

Page 8, line 18, strike ''benefits.'' and insert ''benefits; and''.

Page 8, after line 18, insert the following new clause:

''(iii) efforts to coordinate with State, local, and Tribal governments.''.

Page 9, line 23, insert ''and policies'' after regulations.

Page 13, after line 14, insert the following new paragraph (and redesignate subsequent paragraphs accordingly):

''(6) An explanation of agency efforts to coordinate with State, local, and Tribal governments throughout the regulatory process.''.

Page 18, line 4, strike ''appropriate'' and insert ''impacted''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 156, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. BUCK) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Colorado.

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Chairman, this amendment empowers State, local, and tribal governments by ensuring they have a say in the regulatory process.

H.R. 1009 already codifies and improves upon the practices of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs. My amendment strengthens the language even further, requiring OIRA to hold Federal agencies accountable for coordinating and consulting with State, local, and tribal governments before issuing new regulations. In other words, we are giving governors, local officials, and tribal leaders a say in the regulations that affect them. These local officials know what their communities need much better than the bureaucrats in Washington.

Unfortunately, our Federal agencies have a habit of issuing regulations and policies without consulting local and State governments. For example, we just need to look at the EPA waters of the United States rule.

Historically, States have had significant authority over water management. Governors have worked with local and tribal leaders to set up their own laws and regulations to ensure that water is properly allocated, that water meets certain quality standards, and that water in their State is protected from misuse.

The EPA's WOTUS rule is excessive and burdensome because they disregarded the role of the States in crafting waterway regulations. The agency held no substantive consultation with State governments prior to issuing the rule, despite States' historical roles in regulating their water supplies, despite the State-level experts who could have helped the EPA craft a better regulation, despite President Clinton's Executive Order 13132 ensuring that Federal agencies consult with State, local, and tribal officials before issuing a rule.

Federal officials never gave State, local, and tribal officials the opportunity to explain how their States were currently handling the situation and how this rule could negatively impact their jurisdictions. Since the EPA bureaucrats barreled ahead without State, local, or tribal input, they proposed an overreaching rule.

This amendment would require the EPA and other Federal agencies to account for how proposed rules will affect impacted States, localities, and tribes.

The amendment under consideration simply requires Washington to listen to and learn from local governments because local governments are closer to the people. And the people of this Nation should have a say in the rules and regulations that are affecting their livelihoods.

In closing, this amendment is simple. It ensures that regulatory agencies talk with State, local, and tribal leaders throughout the regulatory process.

I urge my colleagues in the House to support this.

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

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition, but I do not oppose this amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. Without objection, the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Chair, this amendment would require agencies to report on their efforts to coordinate with State, local, and tribal governments throughout the regulatory process. I agree that it is important that State, local, and tribal governments are properly included in the regulatory process. The amendment, however, simply adds new requirements without addressing the flaws in the underlying bill.

The amendment fails to address the fact that this bill does not exclude independent agencies from its coverage. Congress designed independent agencies to be just that, independent.

The amendment fails to include an offset for the additional $20 million in administrative costs that this bill will likely cost Federal agencies.

The amendment also fails to insert a provision into the bill to ensure that OIRA reviews do not contradict existing laws. The amendment also fails to mandate a specific timeframe within which OIRA must complete its review.

The amendment simply does nothing to improve the numerous deficiencies in this bill.

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

Mr. BUCK. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. BUCK).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 3 OFFERED BY MR. YOUNG OF IOWA

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 3 printed in part B of House Report 115–21.

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 4, after line 14, insert the following new clause (and redesignate the subsequent clauses accordingly):

''(v) A description of any action taken by the agency to ensure that each planned significant regulatory action is not duplicative or conflicting with any other existing or planned regulatory action.''.

Page 22, after line 21, insert the following new subsection (and redesignate the subsequent subsection accordingly):

''(b) AGENCY DISCLOSURE.—Each agency that submits a significant regulatory actions to OIRA under section 3522 or 3523 shall maintain on the website of the agency the following:

''(1) A list of each active regulatory action, including the status of the regulatory action or a link to each entry on the unified agenda.

''(2) The most recent regulatory plan of the agency.

''(3) A link to each record disclosed under subsection (a).''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 156, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. YOUNG) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Iowa.

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Chair, my amendment seeks to strengthen the underlying bill in two ways. First, my amendment requires agencies to proactively consider whether their actions are duplicative or conflicting. As Iowans and all Americans know too well, the maze of the Federal bureaucracy can too often be confusing and contradicting.

This long overdue provision holds the agency proposing the regulation accountable to prevent the growing red tape strangling our economy and jobs engine.

The Federal regulatory environment over the past few decades has allowed agencies to operate unchecked, leading to overlapping and conflicting rules which come at a riveting cost to the economy, the taxpayer, and to jobs.

So by requiring agencies to proactively consider duplication as part of their regulatory plans, credibility rears itself. We don't need duplicity. We don't need to waste resources and time in the Federal Government.

Secondly, my amendment works to increase regulatory transparency by improving the public's access to information. By requiring each agency to maintain a list of every active regulatory action submitted to the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs on its website, we can shine the light on agencies' rules and regulations, which, as we know, have the full effect of law. This would include a list of all active regulatory actions, the agency's most recent regulatory plan, and a link to all records submitted to the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs for review.

In closing, many of our constituents may be unfamiliar with the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs and its role and may not know where to find important information on regulatory actions. So simply creating a link on an agency website or websites to the records of OIRA, the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, making this available online is a simple change and low burden for a considerable benefit. It is all about transparency. It is all about the taxpayers' access to information.

I appreciate the leadership of the chairman and the author of this bill, and I urge my colleagues to support my amendment and the underlying bill.

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

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition to this amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Chairman, I cannot support this amendment because it is duplicative of requirements already in place and will waste limited agency resources through additional burdensome requirements.

On January 18, 2011, President Obama issued Executive Order 13563 requiring each agency to implement plans for reviewing existing rules. Section 6 of that executive order requires each agency to ''periodically review its existing significant regulations to determine whether any such regulations should be modified, streamlined, expanded, or repealed so as to make the agency's regulatory program more effective or less burdensome in achieving the regulatory objectives.''

□ 1700

There can be no real doubt that this executive order covers the review and elimination of duplicative and conflicting regulatory actions. Frankly, the elimination of regulations that are duplicative or conflicting is one of the most efficient actions an agency can take to make its regulatory program more effective and less burdensome.

Forcing agencies to spend time and resources to describe what they are already doing is wasteful and unduly burdensome. Agencies already keep the public apprised of their regulatory activities through the easily-accessible websites reginfo.gov and regulations.gov, both of which are managed by the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs. Through these websites, the public can search for rules, comments, adjudications, and supporting documents. The public can also access each agency's unified agenda, which contains the regulatory agenda for each agency.

The public can also access a list of pending agency rules. Each of these rules has easily accessible links that can allow the public to obtain further information about the rule, including its status and Executive Order 12866 meetings about the rule.

This amendment does nothing to improve the deficiencies in H.R. 1009, and will force agencies to waste their time and limited resources on work that is already being done. I urge Members to oppose this amendment.

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

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the spirit of this debate with my colleague across the aisle. This adds extra bite to what may already be in place, oversight and accountability, and Congress has a role in this.

So while I appreciate the spirit of what my colleague said, and what has been done in the past, we want to give it extra teeth. Also, transparency and access to taxpayer information is so crucial. So I urge the adoption of this amendment.

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. MCCLINTOCK). The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. YOUNG).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Iowa will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 4 OFFERED BY MR. MEADOWS

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 4 printed in part B of House Report 115–21.

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 12, line 8, insert after ''action.'' the following: ''OIRA shall maintain a log of each agency consultation with OIRA before submitting the significant regulatory action for review under this section, including the date of the consultation, the name of each agency official involved with the consultation, and a description of the purpose of the consultation.''.

Page 22, line 19, strike ''and''.

Page 22, line 21, strike the period and insert ''; and''.

Page 22, after line 21, insert the following new paragraph:

''(5) a list of each consultation described under section 3523(b).''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 156, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MEADOWS) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina.

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the leadership of the chairman of the full committee on matters of transparency and accountability. I can tell you that there is no one who has a greater definitive desire to make sure that we hold our government accountable and certainly accountable to the American people.

So, it is with that goal in mind that I rise to ask my colleagues to support an amendment that we are offering that would actually just keep a log of any of the pre-review consultations with agencies that OIRA actually has and conducts, and to publish that list upon completion of review.

Dating back to some 2003, the Government Accountability Office had made the recommendation about increasing this transparency at the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs. GAO actually made one recommendation targeted at what they call informal review, Mr. Chairman, that OIRA conducts before an agency actually formally submits a rule for review.

Indeed, the GAO recommended that the Director of the Office of Management and Budget should define a transparency requirement that would be applicable to agencies and OIRA, in Section 6 of Executive Order 12866, in such a way that would not include not only the formal review, but it would also include the informal review period when OIRA says that it has sometimes, considering some of the most important facts as it relates to new rules.

This recommendation remains unimplemented today, and I can tell you, Mr. Chairman, we have had a number of hearings where we have had this particular group in. I know my colleagues, the gentleman opposite from Virginia, and I believe that OIRA plays a critical role. And yet, at the same time, some of these meetings were going on without the knowledge, and even after the fact, when they went into effect, and we had really no understanding of some of the deliberation that went on.

So this is just a great transparency, commonsense amendment, and I would urge my colleagues to support it.

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

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition to this amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I oppose this amendment, and it is unfortunate because we believe that this amendment, on its own, is something that would draw bipartisan support. Unfortunately, this amendment is attached to H.R. 1009, because the amendment would make the role of OIRA in the rulemaking process more transparent.

The Government Accountability Office has consistently found that OIRA is not transparent about its involvement in shaping rules. The GAO testified to the Oversight and Government Reform Committee, in March of 2016, that it has made 25 recommendations to OMB to improve its process, but OMB has only implemented six of those recommendations.

This amendment would be a step in the right direction. And as usual, my colleague, the esteemed gentleman from North Carolina, always comes up with rational, well-reasoned amendments and ideas that can be supported across the aisle; and for that, you know, we believe and we are hopeful that Mr. MEADOWS will work with the committee on a bipartisan basis to pursue these types of productive transparency reforms.

It, unfortunately, does not fix the problems with the underlying bill and is rather packaged with a partisan bill the House is considering today. For this reason, I am in opposition to the amendment.

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

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I thank the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands, and, as a gifted orator, and certainly a gifted attorney, I appreciate her compliments. And although not all might agree with her assessment of the reasonable fashion of which I craft particular amendments, I do appreciate the fact that she recognizes it in this case.

She also knows that, in doing this, working in a bipartisan way, is something that, on this particular committee, Oversight and Government Reform, Mr. Chairman, we have had just a wonderful history of being able to work in a real way. And so she certainly has my commitment to continue to try to perfect the language in making sure that transparency is held paramount.

That being said, I don't intend to withdraw the amendment because there are two ways things get done here in Washington, D.C., slow and never. And if we just remember that, this particular day, hopefully we will put this in place.

But the esteemed gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands has my commitment to work with her in a bipartisan way to perfect any language in legislation

that may come up after this particular bill.

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

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Chairman, the fact that the esteemed gentleman of North Carolina is willing to work with me means that it has been a wonderful day for me, and I am just so glad because I understand, although I don't always agree with everything that he says, and I know that the gentleman from North Carolina's heart is in the right place; that he is working towards resolutions of issues; that he is principled in his beliefs.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the esteemed gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY).

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Chair, I just want to associate myself with the underlying intent of my friend from North Carolina. He is right. At our hearings, we did discover flaws in OIRA's process. And I think that his amendment is designed to try to address that and to inject some very needed transparency.

Unfortunately, because of the underlying bill, I am not going to oppose my friend's amendment, but I do share the concern of my friend, the Delegate from the Virgin Islands, and will be opposing the underlying bill.

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Chairman, I thank the two colleagues opposite for their gracious remarks and understand their reluctance to support it based on their concerns with the underlying bill. I, again, reaffirm my commitment to work in a bipartisan way to make sure that transparency is the key for the day.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MEADOWS).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 5 OFFERED BY MR. CHAFFETZ

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 5 printed in part B of House Report 115–21.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 22, line 5, strike ''**Public disclosure**'' and insert ''**Disclosure**''.

Page 22, after line 24, insert the following new subsection:

''(c) RECORDKEEPING.—The Administrator shall ensure any record associated with a significant regulatory action submitted to OIRA under section 3522 or 3523 is easily accessible for a period of time consistent with approved records disposition schedules for the agency, in a manner that all records associated with a significant regulatory action can be promptly submitted to Congress upon request.''.

Page 23, after line 4, strike the item relating to section 3524 and insert the following new item:

''3524. Disclosure of regulatory review.''.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 156, the gentleman from Utah (Mr. CHAFFETZ) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Utah.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Chairman, this amendment requires OIRA to maintain records on each significant regulatory action reviewed such that it is easily accessible and transferrable when responding to congressional requests.

Unfortunately, in the last Congress, Mr. Chairman, the committee asked for the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, OIRA—asked Administrator Shelanski for records relating to the review of the Waters of the United States, often known as WOTUS, and that rulemaking process. The administrator repeatedly failed to take the requests seriously, which led me, as the chairman of the Oversight and Government Reform Committee, to issue a subpoena in July of 2015.

Even upon issuance of a subpoena, OIRA resisted responding to the request, blowing past deadlines and being totally nonresponsive. We held multiple hearings. We conducted transcribed interviews. We had lengthy staff-to-staff conversations, but still OIRA did not seem to take the request seriously. I don't know how much money they wasted in time and effort to slow this process down and resist our being able to get the information that they said they had in order to make this decision.

It was not until the committee, myself, as the chairman, getting on the phone with the head of OMB, when I told him that I had every intention to hold Mr. Shelanski in contempt and issue a contempt report, that we actually received a full set of documents. This was well past a year since the initial request. You should not have to go through those gyrations whatsoever.

I will think the resistance was largely a political maneuvering—this is my own opinion—by the administration that did not want us to see how rushed, incomplete, and politically involved this regulatory review was. That is my own personal opinion.

But for those who are here and the future generations, it seems reasonable that they have to have their act in order if they are actually going to issue a rule. And if Congress asks for the underlying information, as Representatives of the people, that should be easily transferrable to Congress upon request.

That is what this amendment does. This is why it should pass, and that is what this amendment is intended to do.

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

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to this amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Chairman, I do not oppose this amendment. However, like the manager's amendment, it does nothing to improve the bill. This amendment, in fact, really does not move the needle at all.

Agencies, including the Office of Management and Budget, are required to preserve records according to the records schedules under the Federal Records Act and regulations issued by the National Archives and Records Administration.

This amendment says that OIRA must do what it is already required to do. This amendment provides a platform to express frustration with OIRA's response to a subpoena issued by the chairman during the Obama administration, as demonstrated by his statements just a few moments ago.

I look forward to him expressing the same outrage if the current administration does not provide documents that the Members on this side of the aisle, the Democratic members of the committee, request.

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

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Utah (Mr. CHAFFETZ).

The amendment was agreed to.

□ 1715

AMENDMENT NO. 6 OFFERED BY MR. CONNOLLY

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 6 printed in part B of House Report 115–21.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 26, after line 16, insert the following new subsection:

(e) EXEMPTION FOR INDEPENDENT REGULATORY AGENCIES.—The provisions of sections 3522, 3523, and 3524 of title 44, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), do not apply to an independent establishment as defined in section 104 of title 5, United States Code.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 156, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Chairman, first, I would like to note I do oppose the underlying bill. This bill would require independent agencies, for the first time, to submit their rules to OIRA for review.

The Congressional Budget Office estimates the bill would increase direct spending by $3 million and reduce revenues by $2 million. CBO also estimates that the bill would cost Federal agencies an additional $20 million in administrative costs for compliance.

The reason the bill costs money is because it does not simply codify an executive order as its proponents suggest. The bill would require independent agencies, for the first time, to submit

their rules to OIRA for review. Independent agencies such as the FCC, SEC, and CFPB do not currently have to get the approval of the White House for regulations they issue.

Congress designed independent agencies to be just that—independent. This bill would enshrine in law the ability for the White House to engage in political interference with those agencies.

The Consumer Federation of America sent a letter to House Members today opposing this bill. The letter said, inter alia:

> H.R. 1009 will jeopardize independence of agencies like the Consumer Product Safety Commission, the Securities and Exchange Commission, the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, the Federal Communications Commission, as well as other independent agencies because it will give the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs the ability to review significant rules. Authorizing OIRA to conduct its own analysis would not only add pressure from the executive branch and add time and expense to that process, but would also give special interests seeking to quash a safety measure, for example, yet another avenue to prevent a rule from ever being promulgated.

Indeed, one suspects that is the intent of the bill.

A 2013 editorial in The New York Times warned of the dangers of subjecting independent agencies to OIRA review. The editorial foresaw what we are now dealing with 4 years later: ''Subjecting independent agencies to executive regulatory review would not improve the rule-making process, but it would ensure that ostensibly regulated industries are as unregulated and deregulated as possible.''

It also said: ''There is no question that making independent agencies less independent is a bad idea.''

My amendment would take care of that by repealing that portion of this bill. I urge all Members to support the amendment.

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

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Utah is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Chairman, I do appreciate working with my colleagues on the Oversight and Government Reform Committee. We disagree on many things, but we have good debates, and I do appreciate the spirit in which Mr. CONNOLLY brings this amendment forward. I enjoy working with the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Ms. PLASKETT), and certainly our ranking member, Mr. CUMMINGS.

I try to accept and work with the minority on all things, but certainly amendments that they would like to see move forward. Unfortunately, I am going to have to oppose this one. I am trying to maximize transparency.

I think what Mr. MITCHELL is bringing forward in this bill is the right policy in opening up this transparency.

I see this going in the wrong direction. It would remove existing requirements for agencies, such as the EPA or the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, to give notice about upcoming regulations. It removes existing requirements, for instance, for the EPA to submit its rules to OIRA for review.

In a March 2015 hearing, in fact, it was Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia who said: ''OIRA boasts an incredibly hardworking, and dedicated corps of career staff that is first-rate when it comes to conducting quantitative analysis that weighs complex economic costs against potential benefits.''

I happen to agree with Mr. CONNOLLY. I think there are good, hardworking, and dedicated people who are committed to this country, and they work hard. That is why I think this hardworking, dedicated corps of people who work as career staff should offer first-rate, as we call it, analysis for all regulations, not just some of them. Let's do it for all of them. I think that is fair.

We want to know that the regulations will be effective in achieving their goals. We have to always keep sight, Mr. Chairman, that all of us in the Federal Government work for the American people. They pay the bills and they have to live under these regulations. We should maximize that transparency, whether they are, quote, unquote, independent or part of the executive agency.

If you are affected by a rule, you are affected by a rule, and people who are affected by those have every right to see what helped create that. So I don't think there should be an exemption that is carved out under this bill, and that is why I stand in opposition to this amendment.

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

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Chairman, may I inquire how much time is remaining?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Virginia has 2 minutes remaining.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Chairman, I thank my friend from Utah.

I also enjoy working with him in finding common ground; however, I find it amusing to have myself quoted on the floor by the distinguished chairman because, just a few minutes ago, he was talking about how difficult it was to get compliance from OIRA to provide documents requested on a bipartisan basis by the committee. Just a little bit before that, my friend from North Carolina and I agreed on some real problems in terms of the process OIRA uses in the process of its mission. So it is hardly like our committee found or I found that OIRA is without problem.

I believe the bottom line here, however, is independent means independent. We created these agencies for a reason and to be independent of White House political interference for a reason. I would submit, respectfully, now, more than ever, we want to preserve the independence of those organizations.

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

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Mr. Chairman, I urge a ''no'' vote on this particular amendment. I think it takes us in the wrong direction. We need to maximize transparency, and this will help us achieve that.

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

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Virginia will be postponed.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, proceedings will now resume on those amendments printed in part B of House Report 115–21 on which further proceedings were postponed, in the following order:

Amendment No. 3 by Mr. YOUNG of Iowa.

Amendment No. 6 by Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia.

The Chair will reduce to 2 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote after the first vote in this series.

AMENDMENT NO. 3 OFFERED BY MR. YOUNG OF IOWA

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. YOUNG) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the ayes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 265, noes 158, not voting 6, as follows:

[Roll No. 117]

AYES—265

Abraham	Brooks (AL)	Cramer
Aderholt	Brooks (IN)	Crawford
Aguilar	Brownley (CA)	Cuellar
Allen	Buchanan	Culberson
Amash	Buck	Curbelo (FL)
Amodei	Bucshon	Davidson
Arrington	Budd	Davis, Rodney
Babin	Burgess	Delaney
Bacon	Bustos	Denham
Banks (IN)	Byrne	Dent
Barletta	Calvert	DeSantis
Barr	Carter (GA)	DesJarlais
Barton	Carter (TX)	Diaz-Balart
Bera	Chabot	Donovan
Bergman	Chaffetz	Duffy
Beyer	Cheney	Duncan (SC)
Biggs	Coffman	Duncan (TN)
Bilirakis	Cohen	Dunn
Bishop (MI)	Cole	Emmer
Bishop (UT)	Collins (GA)	Farenthold
Black	Collins (NY)	Faso
Blackburn	Comer	Ferguson
Blum	Comstock	Fitzpatrick
Bost	Conaway	Fleischmann
Brady (TX)	Cook	Flores
Brat	Cooper	Fortenberry
Bridenstine	Costello (PA)	Foxx

Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gabbard
Gaetz
Gallagher
Gallego
Garrett
Gibbs
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gottheimer
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Green, Gene
Griffith
Grothman
Guthrie
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins (LA)
Hill
Himes
Holding
Hollingsworth
Huizenga
Hultgren
Hunter
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kihuen
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger
Knight
Kuster (NH)
Kustoff (TN)
Labrador
LaHood
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
Lewis (MN)
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Marshall
Massie
Mast
Matsui
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mitchell
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Moulton
Mullin
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Newhouse
Noem
Nunes
O'Halleran
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perlmutter
Perry
Peters
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
Roybal-Allard
Royce (CA)
Ruiz
Russell
Rutherford
Sanford
Scalise
Schneider
Schrader
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smucker
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Suozzi
Taylor
Tenney
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Zeldin

NOES—158

Adams
Barragán
Bass
Beatty
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (MD)
Butterfield
Capuano
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Connolly
Conyers
Correa
Costa
Courtney
Crist
Crowley
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
DeLauro
DelBene
Demings
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Espaillat
Esty
Evans
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Garamendi
Gonzalez (TX)
Green, Al
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hanabusa
Hastings
Heck
Higgins (NY)
Hoyer
Huffman
Jackson Lee
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Khanna
Kildee
Kilmer
Krishnamoorthi
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lieu, Ted
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham, M.
Luján, Ben Ray
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn B.
Maloney, Sean
McCollum
McEachin
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Rourke
Pallone
Panetta
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Raskin
Rice (NY)
Rosen
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Soto
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—6

Hudson
Hurd
LaMalfa
Nadler
Richmond
Walden

□ 1748

Mr. GONZALEZ of Texas and Ms. MOORE changed their vote from ''aye'' to ''no.''

Messrs. GROTHMAN, AMODEI, COHEN, DELANEY, THOMPSON of California, Ms. MATSUI, Messrs. KIND, MOULTON, BEYER, DUNCAN of South Carolina, and MARCHANT changed their vote from ''no'' to ''aye.''

So the amendment was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

AMENDMENT NO. 6 OFFERED BY MR. CONNOLLY

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIR. This will be a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 188, noes 234, not voting 7, as follows:

[Roll No. 118]

AYES—188

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
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Correa
Costa
Courtney
Crist
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Demings
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doyle, Michael F.
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Espaillat
Esty
Evans
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Gottheimer
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hanabusa
Hastings
Heck
Higgins (NY)
Himes
Hoyer
Huffman
Jackson Lee
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Khanna
Kihuen
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster (NH)
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
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)
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Halleran
Pallone
Panetta
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Raskin
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Rosen
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
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)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOES—234

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
Cooper
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
Huizenga
Hultgren
Hunter
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
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
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

NOT VOTING—7

Doggett
Gonzalez (TX)
Hudson
Hurd
Nadler
O'Rourke
Ratcliffe

□ 1753

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California changed her vote from ''no'' to ''aye.''

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended.

The amendment was agreed to.

The Acting CHAIR. Under the rule, the Committee rises.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) having assumed the chair, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1009) to amend title 44, United States Code, to require the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs to review regulations, and for other purposes, and, pursuant to House Resolution 156, he reported the bill back to the House with an amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the rule, the previous question is ordered.

Is a separate vote demanded on any amendment to the amendment reported from the Committee of the Whole?

If not, the question is on the amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended.

The amendment was agreed to.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Madam Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

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

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. I am opposed to it in its current form.

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

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Cartwright moves to recommit the bill H.R. 1009 to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with the following amendment:

At the end of the bill, add the following new subsection:

(e) EXEMPTION FOR THE OFFICE OF GOVERNMENT ETHICS.—The provisions of sections 3522, 3523, and 3524 of title 44, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), do not apply to the Office of Government Ethics.

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

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Madam Speaker, this is the final amendment to the bill which will not kill the bill or send it back to committee. If adopted, the bill will immediately proceed to final passage, as amended. This motion to recommit is to defend ethical conduct throughout our government.

In response to the Watergate scandal, Congress created the Office of Government Ethics to protect against unethical behavior in the executive branch. In 1988, President Ronald Reagan signed into law a bill to strengthen the Office of Government Ethics by removing it from the Office of Personnel Management and giving it greater independence from the White House.

□ 1800

Now Congress is attempting to undo this vision of a strong, independent Office of Government Ethics at a time when we need it more than ever. This bill would put the Office of Government Ethics right back under the control of the White House, and that is why this motion to recommit simply excludes OGE from this bill.

We appreciate the need for strong ethical guidelines most strongly when people act unethically. Every day we witness this White House struggle with honesty and credibility. We heard the promises last night, the ones we have been hearing all along.

When you promise to create family-sustaining jobs by revitalizing American infrastructure and then we find out he means to do it with tax breaks to huge corporations and none of the regular guarantees that the people actually doing the work will be treated right and paid fairly, that is when you have a credibility problem.

When you promote yourself as a man of the people but then we find out you have stuffed your Cabinet with out-of-touch billionaire friends, that is when you have a credibility problem.

When you promise to fix America's education system but then we see you appoint Betsy DeVos to head the Department of Education, someone with no education experience, someone who wants to gut public education, that is when you have a credibility problem.

When you address Congress and promise to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act in a way that guarantees increased access, coverage of preexisting conditions, and that costs will go down but no one in America knows how you plan to pay for that, that is when you have a credibility problem.

We don't need a White House with a credibility problem. We need these promises the President has made to come true. We need a stronger economy full of family-sustaining jobs. We need Social Security, Medicaid, and Medicare to be protected. We need to have an executive branch we can trust. This is our future, and we need to be smart about it. I believe that smart people trust, but they verify.

The problem is we do seem to have a President whose relationship with the truth is, at best, a nodding acquaintance. This is why we need a strong Office of Government Ethics more than ever.

Ronald Reagan was right; it needs to be an office independent of control by the White House.

We need it to keep our leaders from enriching themselves in public office, to keep our leaders honest, to help us trust, but verify that our elected officials do what is best for the American people and not their own pocketbooks.

We need it to ensure that our President is acting in our best interest with nations around the world. We have already seen this President and his staff repeatedly lie and refuse to answer questions about their business and political ties with dealings in Russia. We have seen, at a minimum, improper and potentially far worse collusion over rigging an election, and we have seen the administration attempt to influence investigations into their dealings with Russia.

We need an Office of Government Ethics to be independent of the White House because this President has used diplomatic relations to promote his businesses abroad at the expense of the American taxpayer. He promised to drain the swamp and immediately started appointing his billionaire buddies to Cabinet positions and rush their hearings through before they could even complete the ethics process.

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

The Chair reminds Members to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President.

Mr. MITCHELL. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to the motion to recommit by my colleague.

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

Mr. MITCHELL. Madam Speaker, I thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for the robust process by which we considered this bill.

The bill came to the floor through regular order in the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. We had a full markup which allowed for Members on both sides of the aisle to offer amendments and insight. We had healthy debate on a number of amendments, and we just voted on some of them.

This bill codifies existing policy with changes only to include independent agencies and improve government transparency.

I oppose the motion to recommit. I urge my colleagues to oppose the motion and vote ''yes'' on final passage.

I yield back the balance of my time.

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

There was no objection.

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

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

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Madam Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 and clause 9 of rule XX, this 5-minute vote on the motion to recommit will be followed by 5-minute votes on passage of H.R. 1009, if ordered, and passage of H.J. Res. 83.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 193, noes 234, not voting 2, as follows:

[Roll No. 119]

AYES—193

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
Clark (MA)
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.
Jones
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Khanna
Kihuen
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster (NH)
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
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)
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Halleran
O'Rourke
Pallone
Panetta
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Raskin
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Rosen
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
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)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOES—234

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
Huizenga
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
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

NOT VOTING—2

Hudson
Nadler

□ 1811

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

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

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

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 241, nays 184, not voting 4, as follows:

[Roll No. 120]

YEAS—241

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
Cooper
Costa
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
Gottheimer
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
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 (FL)
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
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smucker
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Suozzi
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—184

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
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Correa
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)
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
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster (NH)
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham, M.
Luján, Ben Ray
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn B.
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McEachin
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Moore
Moulton
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Halleran
O'Rourke
Pallone
Panetta
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Raskin
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Rosen
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Soto
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—4

Carson (IN)
Hudson
Nadler
Rutherford

□ 1818

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

DISAPPROVING THE RULE SUBMITTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR RELATING TO ''CLARIFICATION OF EMPLOYER'S CONTINUING OBLIGATION TO MAKE AND MAINTAIN AN ACCURATE RECORD OF EACH RECORDABLE INJURY AND ILLNESS''

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on passage of the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 83) disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of Labor relating to ''Clarification of Employer's Continuing Obligation to Make and Maintain an Accurate Record of Each Recordable Injury and Illness'', on which a recorded vote was ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the joint resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the joint resolution.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 231, noes 191, not voting 7, as follows:

[Roll No. 121]

AYES—231

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
Cramer
Crawford
Cuellar
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davidson
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
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
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)
Kinzinger
Knight
Kustoff (TN)
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
Lewis (MN)
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
Peters
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Posey
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Rice (SC)
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney, Francis
Rooney, Thomas J.
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce (CA)
Russell
Rutherford
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (TX)
Smucker
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Taylor
Tenney
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Vela
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (IA)
Zeldin

NOES—191

Adams
Aguilar
Barragán
Bass
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
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
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Correa
Costa
Courtney
Crist
Crowley
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
DeLauro
DelBene
Demings
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Donovan
Doyle, Michael F.
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Espaillat
Esty
Evans
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Gonzalez (TX)
Gottheimer
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Hanabusa
Hastings
Heck
Higgins (NY)
Himes
Hoyer
Huffman
Jackson Lee
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Khanna
Kihuen
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
King (NY)
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster (NH)
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren
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)
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Halleran
O'Rourke
Pallone
Panetta
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Raskin
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Ros-Lehtinen
Rosen
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (NJ)
Smith (WA)
Soto
Speier
Suozzi
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Vargas
Veasey
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth
Young (AK)

NOT VOTING—7

Blumenauer
Costello (PA)
Delaney
Gutiérrez
Hudson
Nadler
Pittenger

□ 1825

So the joint resolution was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

HOUR OF MEETING ON TOMORROW

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 9 a.m. tomorrow.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DUNN). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Alabama?

There was no objection.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO CONGRESSIONAL-EXECUTIVE COMMISSION ON THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair announces the Speaker's appointment, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 6913 and the order of the House of January 3, 2017, of the following Members on the part of the House to the Congressional-Executive Commission on the People's Republic of China:

Mr. WALZ, Minnesota
Ms. KAPTUR, Ohio

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO CANADA-UNITED STATES INTERPARLIAMENTARY GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair announces the Speaker's appointment, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 276d and the order of the House of January 3, 2017, of the following Members on the part of the House to the Canada-United States Interparliamentary Group:

Mr. HIGGINS, New York
Ms. SLAUGHTER, New York
Mr. MEEKS, New York
Mr. LARSEN, Washington
Mr. DEFAZIO, Oregon

COMMUNICATION FROM THE DEMOCRATIC LEADER

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

MARCH 1, 2017.

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

DEAR SPEAKER RYAN: Pursuant to 44 U.S.C. 2702, I am pleased to reappoint Mr. John A. Lawrence of Washington, D.C. to the Advisory Committee on the Records of Congress.

Thank you for your attention to this appointment.

Sincerely,

NANCY PELOSI,
Democratic Leader.

SALUTE TO MEALS ON WHEELS

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, today commemorates the 15th anniversary of March for Meals. This month-long grassroots campaign seeks to raise awareness about senior hunger and isolation. It also celebrates the proven private-public partnership of government, local community organizations, businesses, and compassionate individuals coming together to ensure that America's seniors are not forgotten.

As chairman of the Agriculture Subcommittee on Nutrition, I know how important this program is to seniors across America. One in six seniors might not know where their next meal is coming from.

But on March 22, 1972, President Nixon signed into law a measure that establishes a national nutrition program for seniors 60 years and older.

For nearly 45 years, these critical programs—commonly referred to as Meals on Wheels—have delivered more than just nutritious meals to homebound seniors in virtually every community across the country.

Meals on Wheels programs have come together each March, since 2002, to celebrate this proven collaboration of local community organizations, businesses, all levels of government, and compassionate individuals to ensure their seniors are not forgotten.

Thank you to everyone who works to help our seniors live healthy lives.

□ 1830

ATTACK ON WOMEN'S HEALTH

(Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, today begins Women's History Month, and I am proud to use this occasion to lift up our achievements, our perseverance and dedication to a more equal and balanced world. That is why it is so unfortunate that my colleagues on the other side of the aisle and President Trump's White House insist on harming women through their stubborn adherence to antiwomen policies.

One prime example is their assault on the Affordable Care Act. The facts are clear: ACA prohibits charging women more than men for insurance; ACA establishes preventive services to be provided at no extra cost to women, including annual well-women exams, breastfeeding support, supplies for new moms, birth control, and screening and counseling for domestic and intimate partner violence; 9.5 million previously uninsured women now have coverage through ACA; 55 million now have access to vital preventive care at no cost.

These are not alternative facts or fake news. If this is the Trump Republicans' gift to us in celebration of Women's History Month, I hope they keep the receipt.

CONGRATS EDINA GIRLS HOCKEY CHAMPS

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

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, I want to offer a big congratulations to the Edina Girls hockey team for winning its very first Minnesota high school State championship.

The Hornets dominated in the championship game just last weekend, winning 4–0. Senior forward Lolita Fidler led the way with an early goal in the first period, finishing with two goals. On the other end, senior goalie Anna Goldstein stood on her head throughout the tournament, allowing just one goal in three games.

The girls squad finished with an impressive 28–1–1 record under head coach Sami Reber, who is a former Edina hockey player herself, bringing the title to her alma mater.

Edina's run of excellence is a testament to their program's serious dedication on the ice, in the classroom, and in their community. On top of giving their all in their sport, these students also strive academically and contribute in positive ways at home and among their peers.

Mr. Speaker, we are so proud of these student athletes, and it is fun to see Edina bringing their very first State high school hockey championship home.

Go Hornets.

REACTION TO PRESIDENT TRUMP'S ADDRESS

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

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, last night President Trump delivered a speech that was long on campaign themes but short on specifics. It seems the President is more interested in political theater than leadership, and it showed. He was very vague on every topic he discussed, from health care to trade, to tax reform.

The campaign is over, but it is clear President Trump hasn't moved on. Where is his interest in governing and in leading this Nation? I don't see it. Just the day before, in his speech, he discovered that health care is unbelievably complex.

Every day since the inauguration President Trump has shown that he is ill-prepared, ill-tempered, and ill-informed, and he does not understand what governing is about. His speech did not change that.

It is time for President Trump to stop talking about bringing this country together and actually make an effort to do so. He needs to engage Congress, including the Congressional Black Caucus. He needs to move from platitudes to plans, and he also needs to act on the priorities of the American people.

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

REDDING VA LEASE APPROVAL

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

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, my district is home to nearly 60,000 men and women who have served in our Nation's Armed Forces, and many more are still serving today. Yet for too long, veterans have had trouble receiving veterans medical care in our area, instead being forced to travel to Sacramento or farther from places like Redding, Chico, or Yreka.

So I am proud to announce that the Transportation Infrastructure Committee will authorize the VA to lease a new facility in Redding, California. This new lease will consolidate two buildings into one and will expand the regional VA square footage by over 50 percent in that consolidation, which will house an additional 17 mental health providers, a mammography division, and a second X-ray unit, significantly increasing the types of care available in Redding and in the north State.

Taxpayers will put up the money for the facility. Now it is time for the VA to ensure that this facility is properly staffed and these tax dollars are not wasted and instead respected, and, most importantly, that our veterans are respected with timely care.

THE UNSUSTAINABLE FUTURE OF STUDENT DEBT

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

Mr. CARBAJAL. Mr. Speaker, I rise on behalf of millions of students and graduates in this country that are struggling to finance their higher education and pay off student loans.

Yesterday I invited Izeah Garcia to the President's address. Izeah is an advocate for increasing accessibility and lowering the cost of a higher education. Izeah and I share a similar story: sons of hardworking immigrant parents, and the first in our families to attend a university, both at UC Santa Barbara, located in my district.

Like many students today struggling to afford the rising cost of tuition, we relied on student loans to put us through college. In the President's speech last night, we didn't hear one mention of the over $1.3 trillion student loan debt crisis.

I urge this administration and Congress to commit to addressing the unsustainable future of student debt by allowing students to refinance their debt at a lower interest rate and expanding access to Pell grants. We can ensure that every student is afforded the opportunity to pursue a higher education and to better their lives, their communities, and our country.

HONORING ANGELA LARA FLORES

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

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Angela Lara Flores, a dedicated servant to her community and her family.

Angela was born in Palacios, Texas, on August 2, 1926, to her parents Cesario Lara and Lydia Teran.

She was a devoted, longtime member of Casa de Dios Presbyterian Church and served as the treasurer of the church for 32 years.

Not only did Angela give her time and energy to the church, but she was also known for her community service. She volunteered faithfully at a local senior citizens center in Dallas and even worked full time for the senior citizens center in Palacios.

Despite her busy schedule, Angela had time for her favorite pastime, and that was putting puzzles together with her family.

My heartfelt sympathy goes out to her four children—Jesse J. Flores, Lucinda Flores, Diana Flores, and Steve Flores—5 siblings, 19 grandchildren, 43 great-grandchildren, 8 great-great-grandchildren, and numerous nieces and nephews.

I ask my colleagues to join me in remembering Angela's 90 years of life.

OPIOID CRISIS AND PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANIES

(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. Mr. Speaker, we continue to see pharmaceutical companies put profits over people. Even though 33,000 people are dying every year due to the opioid crisis, Kaleo Pharma raised the price of a lifesaving opioid overdose medication from $690 in 2014 to $4,500 this year.

The pharmaceutical industry has not only misled consumers and their providers to create a system where there are more opioid prescriptions than adults in the United States, but they are now jacking up the price of lifesaving drugs and making money on this opioid crisis that they helped, in fact, create.

Meanwhile, the costs of the opioid epidemic fall on States, cities, communities, hospitals, counties, courts, and local communities who, quite frankly, do not have the resources to keep up.

This is why I introduced a bill which would impose a fee on the production of opioids and use the revenue for opioid prevention, treatment, and research programs across the country.

Pharmaceutical companies have to be part of solving the problem that they helped cause and to give back to the communities that opioids have ravaged.

THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY PHARMACIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. COLLINS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, it is good to be back. It is good to be back on the floor, as we have been now, for the last few weeks doing the people's business, and we will continue to move forward.

I appreciate the last speaker discussing pharmaceutical prices. I think it is another issue, but we are going to go straight to really what I believe is the bigger cause of problems in our communities, and that is the pharmacy benefit managers and their monopolistic, terrorist kind of ways that they are dealing with our community pharmacies and independent pharmacies and actually causing problems in health care.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include any extraneous material in the RECORD on this Special Order hour.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, as we get started now, we have a lot of speakers. This is something that has been on my heart for a while, and I know that it is something we have been getting more and more comments and questions about, especially when you are dealing with the pharmaceutical prices and the Pharma industry.

When they begin to look into it, they began to see that there was actually a bigger issue. It was not just big pharmacy and the problems that we do see in drug pricing. It was the end delivery that is going to the pharmacies and how the independent community pharmacists are being beaten down in a way that is really unseemly in our society. They are taking that healthcare line tonight.

I have a lot of speakers, and I have a lot of stuff that I am going to be talking about.

Just as an important reminder: A community pharmacist is an important niche in our healthcare system, serving as the primary healthcare provider for over 62 million people. Especially in our rural and suburban areas, this is a vital lifeline. Roughly 40 percent of the prescriptions nationwide and a higher percentage in rural Georgia—especially in northeast Georgia—are filled by our friends in the independent community pharmacy system.

Look, the problems that we have and we are going to be discussing even further tonight, we are going to delve into some issues that we want to see taken care of. We want to see this industry, especially in dealing with pharmacy benefit managers, put into proper perspective so that we can actually take care of our constituents.

A gentleman who has been a fighter and a leader with me on this from day one since I have been in Congress and dealing with this issue, especially with transparency, is the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. LOEBSACK). This is a fight that we are going to continue to keep fighting. I know he is as well, and we have a lot of friends tonight to help us out.

I yield to the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. LOEBSACK) as he continues to try

to tell the story that we have been trying to tell here for a long time.

Mr. LOEBSACK. Mr. Speaker, I really appreciate Representative COLLINS of Georgia's leadership on this issue. There is really no one in this body—maybe with the exception of Representative CARTER of Georgia—who can tell the story of community pharmacists the way Representative DOUG COLLINS does.

I thank Representative COLLINS of Georgia for putting this Special Order hour together. He has been such a strong leader on pharmacy issues. He has been a great partner on the legislation that we will be discussing this evening.

I am proud to say that this is a bipartisan issue, one of the few in this Congress at this point. It is one of the few in Washington, D.C., at this point. We have been able to find a consensus on this, at least with respect to one bill, and I think we are probably going to be able to do it with respect to others as well.

We know for a fact that pharmacists across the country serve as the first line of healthcare services for so many patients around this country.

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People count on pharmacists' training and expertise to stay healthy and to stay informed and, most importantly, to stay out of urgent care centers and out of hospitals. That is why I am proud to stand here today with my colleagues to recognize the quality and the affordable and the personal care that pharmacists provide every day.

Within that group of pharmacists, we have got a subset of pharmacists, and that is the community pharmacists and their pharmacies. They are also a great source not only of the expertise they provide, but economic growth in rural communities like those in my district and across the State of Iowa.

As Mr. COLLINS mentioned, rural areas are very important in this as well. I am a member of the Small Business Caucus. I recognize how challenging it can be for some of these small pharmacists to compete with the bigger companies. I appreciate their hard work to serve our communities.

Like most small-business owners, community pharmacists, they have to face challenges to compete and negotiate on a day-to-day basis with large entities as far as their business transactions are concerned. I frequently visit community pharmacists and I see the great job they are doing.

One pressing challenge facing many of our community pharmacists in particular that will be discussed tonight is the ambiguity and the uncertainty surrounding the reimbursement of generic drugs. Generic prescription drugs account for the majority of drugs dispensed by pharmacists, making transparency in reimbursement absolutely critical to the financial health of these small pharmacies.

But we know that pharmacists are reimbursed for generic drugs through what is called maximum allowable cost, or MAC. And this is a price list that outlines the upper limit or the maximum amount that an insurance plan will pay for a generic drug. These lists are created by pharmacy benefit managers, as Mr. COLLINS mentions, PBMs. This is the drug middleman.

There are lot of problems, but one of the problems is that the methodology used to create these lists are not disclosed. There is no transparency.

Further, they are not updated on a regular basis either, resulting often in pharmacists being reimbursed below what it costs them to acquire the drugs themselves. It is a major problem, because when PBMs aren't keeping the cost of generic drugs consistent, those price differentials can be a serious financial burden for local pharmacies. And we know when they have a financial burden, that will affect their business, that will affect the economy in the area, and that is going to affect their patients as well. And we can't have that as we are moving forward, especially in this country, doing what we can to reform health care.

When we talk about reimbursement uncertainty for pharmacies, we are talking about uncertainty for those patients, as I just said.

So, look, when we deal with this issue, I think we have to be very transparent about it. We are going to be introducing later this week, on a bipartisan basis, this Prescription Drug Price Transparency Act. Specifically, what this act will do, it will increase transparency of generic drug payments in Medicare part D, in Medicare Advantage, the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program, and TRICARE pharmacy programs, by requiring that PBMs do three things; and Mr. COLLINS will flesh this out, and I think Mr. CARTER will as well.

First, provide pricing updates at least once every 7 days. Second, disclose the sources used to update maximum allowable cost—or MAC—prices. Third, notify pharmacies of any changes in individual drug prices before these prices can be used as a basis of reimbursement.

This is commonsense, bipartisan legislation. We are going to hear more about that in just a couple of minutes, but I am very thankful to be here to talk about these issues.

There is one more I want to talk about, if I might, Mr. COLLINS, and that is the importance of access to local pharmacies and Medicaid beneficiaries in particular. We know that Medicaid beneficiaries depend on their pharmacies as a provider of convenient, trusted care in their communities.

In addition to dispensing vital prescription drugs, pharmacies provide additional services to Medicaid enrollees, including immunizations, medication therapy management—a really big issue—and point-of-care testing like flu or strep tests. These are preventive and maintenance care services that help to fill in the gaps where provider shortages exist.

I know we are looking at reform and maybe replacing the Affordable Care Act, but we have to be very careful, too. We all recognize the importance of Medicaid, I think, going forward, and it is really important, certainly, for these pharmacies and these community pharmacists, and for their patients as well.

I thank the gentleman from Georgia. I really appreciate him including me in this process. This is bipartisan. It is important to so many communities, so many patients around America, and I am just happy to be here to say a few words.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. I appreciate the gentleman being here. I know there are others from across the aisle that are joining us in this fight, and we are looking forward to continuing.

Mr. Speaker, I am just going to highlight a few things as we go through, and we are going to move through some of our speakers.

Mr. Speaker, I want to highlight something that pharmacy benefit managers, PBMs, for those watching, may not know about, and they don't want you to know about it, and it is called spread pricing. Really, what happens there is PBMs have the maximum allowable cost, which is what Mr. LOEBSACK was just talking about, that determine the maximum amount a pharmacy will be reimbursed for certain generic drugs.

However, the PBMs' reimbursement price determinations are hidden. There is no transparency in the process. That is the bill that we are going to be putting out.

PBMs commonly manipulate the pricing by something called spread pricing. PBMs charge employers a higher price for drugs than necessary, and reimburse pharmacies at the MAC, or the maximum allowable cost, which is typically lower.

Spread pricing allows PBMs to skim money from the difference between the high rate they charge for a prescription and the low rate they reimburse pharmacies. Spread pricing is artificially raising the acquisition cost of pharmacy drugs by overcharging at the expense of retail pharmacies, consumers, and health plans. And that is probably one of the better things they do. This gets worse. We are going to continue to talk about it.

Tonight I look forward to hearing some more from my friend. I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BABIN). Welcome to the show.

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman DOUG COLLINS for leading this very Special Order on a topic that is very near and dear to my heart, the invaluable role of community pharmacists in our society.

As a rural dentist who practiced for 35 years, I can relate to the plight of community pharmacists who must overcome all of the challenges involved in running a small business while serving their patients and serving their customers and doing their job as a medical professional.

Just like my small hometown of Woodville, Texas, where I practice, many of the areas in which community pharmacies are located are rural and have underserved, low-income and elderly populations. This can present unique challenges and, oftentimes, results in community pharmacists performing a lot of services, such as face-to-face counseling and planning services for patients' medication regimen at no charge, care that is uncompensated by Medicare and not typically reimbursed by private insurance companies as well.

What is even more challenging is the uphill battle that community pharmacists continually face in just getting adequate payment for the lifesaving medications that they dispense on a daily basis and still be able to earn a small profit.

Community pharmacists rely on pharmacy benefit managers, or PBMs, who negotiate directly with payors, including private insurance companies, as well as Medicare part D and other government plans, for reimbursement levels for medications. The problem is that the payment levels that make it up to the community pharmacists after the PBMs have ''skimmed off the top'' are well below the pharmacists' acquisition costs and fail to be delivered in a timely manner in many circumstances, in many instances.

Simply put, there is a dire need for more transparency throughout this process and for more accountability for PBMs. I proudly cosponsored legislation that would do just this last year. It was called the MAC Transparency Act, and I now proudly support this bill again in this 115th Congress. Now is the time to act on this bill.

As a dentist, it was my goal to treat each patient to the highest standard of care, a goal that I share with all of the community pharmacists that I know. Sadly, if there is no change in the conditions that community pharmacists are facing, many of these providers will have to close their doors. Many already have, and our patients suffer.

For the sake of many rural communities that I serve, I hope to see the MAC Transparency Act and other similar pieces of legislation move forward, as well as a greater spotlight put on the actions of the PBMs so that community pharmacists can get the relief that they so desperately need to continue practicing.

I thank Congressman COLLINS for his leadership on this issue.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. I think the gentleman is hitting on something and, Mr. Speaker, I think this is really something we need to discuss. We are not discussing simply a business model that was designed in a vacuum, that was designed to help.

Early on I stated this, and I state it every time we have this. PBMs, in their first iteration, as they first came about, were a good mechanism to provide pricing and between the pharmacies and the wholesalers.

The problem was when they became vertically integrated, when they started owning distribution chains, when they started owning their actual end-result pharmacies. When they started doing this, it became then that they are negotiating for themselves. And this is where the end-user—at the end of the day, the person who pays is the Federal Government, but also the customer, our constituents. This is what happens here, and we are losing community and independent pharmacists every day. This is just not right.

When three companies control 80 percent of the market and they use tactics like gag orders and other things, where they don't want their pharmacists to talk about it, where they send out letters saying that the pharmacist is not on their plan anymore when clearly the pharmacist is, but then refuse to send a retraction letter, this is just—I have said this, and I have had people call me after we have talked about this, Mr. Speaker, where they basically said it is amazing this is happening. And all I say is it is true, and it has never really been refuted.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN) and welcome him here to the floor to talk more about this important issue for our communities.

Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia for yielding, and I want to say that, in a short time in the Congress, he has become one of our greatest Members, and I appreciate him leading this effort tonight.

It is sad, it is unfortunate that, with any big government program, a small number of individuals or companies find ways to manipulate the system and become wealthy. That is why 6 or 7 of the 10 wealthiest counties in the U.S. are suburban counties to Washington, D.C., and that is wrong.

I have read for years about the revolving door at the Pentagon, about the defense contractors hiring all the retired admirals and generals. The same thing has happened with the Food and Drug Administration, that the big drug giants have hired all the former top people at the FDA, and we have a drug price crisis in this country today. There are many parts of it, but we want to talk tonight about one that most don't know about and you almost have to be a pharmacist to really understand what is going on.

But I rise tonight, Mr. Speaker, to join my colleagues in exposing, as I say, an almost unknown culprit in our Nation's drug price crisis, pharmacy benefits managers, also known as PBMs.

PBMs are essentially middlemen between pharmacies and drug manufacturers, but the legal relationships among PBMs, pharmacies, and drug and insurance companies have become increasingly entangled and complex.

For instance, one of the largest pharmacy chains also operates its own PBM, and one of the largest medical insurance companies also operates its own PBM.

PBMs are supposed to be helping keep down the costs of drugs by negotiating discounts and helping pharmacies with managing drug plans, as they often claim to do. Despite these PBM promises, though, I have heard from several pharmacy owners in my district who say that many PBMs are, in reality, ripping them off by drastically raising drug costs.

PBMs have tricks of the trade that include retroactively charging pharmacies more for drugs that they have already sold and processed. I am also told that PBMs also take too long to update the market value of the drugs on their covered drug lists. But these tricks are just two. PBMs use many more.

According to one expert and pharmacy owner in my district, he has seen three primary causes for recent increases in prescription drugs: one, FDA involvement, including requiring ''modern clinical trials'' of old drugs that have worked for decades; two, drug manufacturers needlessly hiking the price of generic drugs; and three, PBMs charging ridiculous prices for drugs and pocketing the profits.

According to my constituents, PBMs are the main culprit of the three. This pharmacist recently met with me and shared an eye-opening example. One of his senior customers came in with a prescription for a fairly common drug. The prescription had a real or actual cost of $23.40, but the pharmacist found that the PBM was charging a copay of $250, over 10 times the actual cost of the drug. The pharmacist chose to just absorb the PBM's ridiculous copay, and only charged his customer the actual cost of the drug.

Another pharmacist in my district emailed me, describing how PBM practices are accelerating seniors into the Medicare part D coverage gap, or doughnut hole. He said: ''All of these PBMs have these types of unfair compensations . . . This is not fair, and it hurts our seniors.''

Even more pharmacists in my district have also reached out to me, saying that they only get pennies on the dollar for the drugs they sell. PBM actions are forcing pharmacies to deny patients access to critical medications, or to give drugs away for free.

The Daily Times in Blount County, in my district, recently ran a story on PBMs called ''Sworn to Secrecy.''

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The article cites a pharmacist in Pennsylvania, Eric Pusey, who says that his patients' copays for drugs are often higher than out-of-pocket costs. Why? Because of PBM clawbacks. Mr. Pusey says that if he explains clawbacks to his customers, some get fired up and don't even believe what we are telling them is accurate.

Another pharmacist in Houston says: We look at it as theft—another way for the PBMs to steal. Most people don't

understand. If their copay is high, then they care.

Susan Hayes, a pharmacist in Illinois, says that these PBM clawbacks are like crack cocaine, the PBMs just can't get enough.

Some PBMs are facing lawsuits with accusations such as defrauding patients, racketeering, breach of contract, and violating insurance laws. Since 1987, when the first of the three largest PBMs incorporated, drug prices have increased 1,100 percent, Mr. Speaker, and per capita expenditures have jumped by 756 percent.

The three largest PBMs make up about 80 percent of the drug market, which includes about 180 million patients. These PBMs often conduct business through mail order practices. They sometimes will automatically fill prescriptions month after month even if the patient no longer needs the medication, resulting in terrible waste. Patients include veterans and Medicare beneficiaries—endangering them, wasting their benefits and taxpayer dollars, and driving up the cost of drugs.

As we heard President Trump say in his address last night, we need to look into the artificially high drug prices right away. A good place to start is PBMs. Mr. Speaker, PBMs must be more transparent in their operations so that they can be held to their promises and to the law.

I will just close by saying that PBMs must no longer be able to get away with conducting their business with such unethical methods that they are using now. In short, PBMs must be held accountable for their roles in the Nation's drug price crisis. I join in supporting our community pharmacists.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. The gentleman couldn't have laid it out any better. That is exactly what we are talking about. If every Member of our body would go home and just go to their community pharmacy, they would hear this all over the country. This is not new.

I have been on this floor now for almost 2½ years talking about this, and I have not had PBMs come to me and say: Well, no, that's not really true.

Because they do it. So I thank the gentleman for being a part and lending your voice in your community.

We are also very blessed in this body to have someone who doesn't have to come to it like I did in having to deal with it from a family perspective or from my community. We have someone who has actually done this for a living. He is my friend from southeast Georgia. He is a pharmacist. He has made this his life.

I saw he was up at his alma mater the other day, and, President Cathy Cox, I would have to say he is a Young Harris man.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CARTER).

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. First of all, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Representative COLLINS for holding this tonight, for organizing this, also for his advocacy, and for what he has done to bring about attention to this very important subject. This, of course, is something that is very dear to my heart. As the only pharmacist currently serving in Congress, I take this very seriously. I take that responsibility very seriously.

But it is more than that because, you see, in my professional life, for over 30 years, I had the honor of practicing pharmacy. I have built up relationships over that time, relationships with families and with patients. When I see what is happening in pharmacy now, it is an affront. It is an affront to me, and it should be an affront to all Americans. My heart is in this, truly in this.

In over 30 years of practice, I have built up relationships with patients and with families. I have served grandparents, I have served parents, I have served children, and total families. You can only imagine the hurt that it brings whenever I see these people suffering because of what has been mentioned here tonight.

Right now, in our country, prescription drug prices are something that is in the forefront, in the news. There is a problem, a real big problem, and that problem—yes, the pharmaceutical manufacturers have a concern here, and they have responsibility. But there is a bigger problem. It is what I refer to as the man behind the curtain. I wrote an op-ed about this and talked about the man behind the curtain. That is the PBMs, the pharmacy benefit managers. I am going to call them out tonight.

Before I do that, I want to just say something about community pharmacists because they play such an important and vital role in our communities. They directly interface and build relationships with neighbors and friends. I have been there, I have done that, and I understand how important it is. Representative COLLINS has spoken about it, and Representative LOEBSACK, a friend of pharmacy, has spoken so many times. He has spoken about it as well. Representative BABIN and Representative DUNCAN understand how important the community pharmacies are and how important they are to the healthcare system.

But beneficiaries are facing increased costs for prescription drugs without much of a basis or notification on why these costs are skyrocketing. So, very quickly, I want to talk about why these costs are skyrocketing. Yes, as I said earlier, some of the pharmaceutical manufacturers need to be held accountable. They do.

I say that, but I also say that I am a big fan of the pharmaceutical manufacturers. You see, in my over 30 years of practicing pharmacy, I have seen nothing short of miracles. I can remember when I started practicing in 1980. I can remember that people would come in to get an antibiotic and that we would have to dispense 40 capsules and have them take four a day for 10 days. Now I can give them one capsule, and they can take it and be done with it. People were going into the hospital back then to be treated for infections. Now we can treat then. The advances that we have seen are phenomenal.

We talk about the price of some of these drugs, for instance, the drug that is used for hepatitis C. Yes, it is too expensive, and that price has come down significantly. It is only as good as it is affordable. If it is not accessible, if it is not affordable, then it is no good. But stop for just one minute, and think about it. We cured a deadly disease through research and development. The pharmaceutical manufacturers put some of their profits back into research and development, which I applaud.

We cured a deadly disease, hepatitis C, that was killing people. Again, that price needs to come down so that it is more accessible to people. But, again, we cured it. So I am going to cut the pharmaceutical manufacturers a little bit of leeway there.

I think it is interesting that the President, in his first month in office, called the pharmaceutical manufacturers to the White House. He told them: You got to do something about these escalating drug prices.

He also talked about those people who are on the other side of R&D, who are on the other side of research and development. He put a notice out, and he said: You better beware because we're going to be watching you.

The next day, the stocks of two of the major pharmacy benefit managers went down. They went down significantly, almost 2 percent, because they knew what was coming, and they know what is coming now.

First of all, let's talk about the profits of the PBMs. A quick history, PBMs came about kind of in the mid 1960s, and all they were was a processor. Their goal and their charge was just to keep up and to process insurance claims as insurance came about and became more and more popular to pay for medications. That is all they did.

But over time, they have evolved into more than that. If you look at what has happened over the past decade, the profits of the three major PBMs—and Representative COLLINS alluded to this earlier—you have got three companies who control almost 80 percent of the market. That is not good. That is not competition, and that is what we have to have in health care in order to decrease healthcare costs. It is competition. When you have three companies that account for almost 80 percent of the market, that is never good.

But if you look at those three companies and you look at their profits over the last decade, you will see that they have increased some 600 percent—billions of dollars. Now, you can make the argument, well, the pharmaceutical manufacturers, their profits have increased, too. Yes, they have; and, yes, they should be accountable for that. However, at least they are bringing value to the system by investing into research and development.

PBMs bring no value to the healthcare system at all. They put no money into research and development. All they do is skim it off the top. As medications go up in price, they make more. Representative COLLINS alluded to spread pricing. That is exactly what he is talking about, and that is exactly how they are making their money. The more expensive a drug, the more money the PBM is going to make. That's all there is to it.

I served on the Oversight and Government Reform Committee for the past session in the 114th Congress. We had a problem with Mylan Pharmaceuticals and a drug that they had, EpiPen. It went up to $600. Unbelievable. Here was a drug that is a lifesaving drug that people have to have for anaphylactic shock. We in Congress actually passed legislation that required that drug to be on hand in gyms and in schools in case there was a problem. Yet, they went up to $600.

It was really interesting because, during the time that we were asking questions of the CEO, she mentioned, well, when it leaves us, it is this price right here—I am just going to use round figures—it is $150. By the time it gets to the pharmacist and by the time it is dispensed to the patient, it is $600.

I asked her: What is that difference there? Where is that coming from?

I don't know.

I don't know either.

Now, there is the beginning and the end. The beginning is the pharmaceutical manufacturer. She doesn't know. The end is me, the dispensing pharmacist, and I don't know.

That is what I'm referring to when I talk about the man behind the curtain. That is where the PBMs come in.

Now, they will tell you: Well, we are taking that money, and we are giving it back to the companies, to the insurance.

Well, if they are, and they're not keeping any of it, then why are their profits going up so much? Why have their profits gone up over 600 percent? It's because they're keeping it. They're keeping it, and they're adding no value whatsoever to the system.

Now, they will argue the fact, they will say: Well, we are keeping drug prices down.

Oh, yeah? Well, how is that working out for you? It ain't working out very well at all because drug prices are going up.

I mentioned the competition, the fact that we have got three companies that control over 80 percent of the market. That decreases choices.

We are talking about community pharmacies, and I know that is what Representative COLLINS is really wanting to focus on here tonight, and it is so very important because we have to have community pharmacies. They are vital to the healthcare system. In many areas, the most accessible healthcare professional is the pharmacist, particularly in rural areas. As they go, and as they are eliminated, we are losing a vital part of the healthcare system.

But PBMs are shutting out a lot of these community pharmacies. I alluded earlier to the fact that I have served grandparents, parents, and grandchildren. I've built up those relationships. One of the toughest things that I have ever faced is for a family member to come in to me literally in tears and say: I have got to change pharmacies.

I say: Why?

Because my insurance company, because my PBM says that I have to get it from them through mail order.

Well, why would you have to get it through them through mail order?

Because they own the pharmacy.

Representative COLLINS alluded earlier about vertical integration, and that is what we see. The PBM owns the pharmacy that they are requiring the patient to go to. Well, guess what? That means they are padding their pocket even more. That is the kind of thing that we should be protected from.

I will give you a quick story, a true story. Back when I was still practicing pharmacy and owned my pharmacy, my wife had insurance through her employer. She had a different insurance plan than I had. She got her insurance, and she got a prescription filled at my pharmacy—at my pharmacy. Now, this is the pharmacy benefit manager who owns the pharmacy. That night when I got home, I got a phone call from the insurance company saying: Well, your wife got a prescription filled here at this pharmacy, but if she gets it filled at our pharmacy, we can give her a lower copay. We can give her a discount.

Now, supposedly there is a firewall in between the PBM and the pharmacy. Well, guess what? There wasn't that firewall there that night, not when I got that phone call.

□ 1915

Can you imagine? What is that doing? That is taking patients away from the community pharmacist. That is unfair business practices. So, that is what we talk about. Ultimately, who suffers?

I don't want to give the impression I am just here to try to make sure that community pharmacies stay profitable and make sure that they stay in business, although it is important. If they don't stay in business, who is going to suffer? It is going to be the patient. It is going to be the healthcare system.

Folks, the only thing that is going to bring down costs in our healthcare system is more competition and free market principles. That is what we are trying to do now in Congress, through the repeal and the replacement of the Affordable Care Act.

We understand that we have got to get free market principles back into the healthcare system. We have got to get competition in order to drive healthcare costs down. We understand that. This is a big problem, a big problem.

Very quickly, I want to talk about three bills that are being proposed. First of all, I want to talk about Representative COLLINS' MAC Transparency bill.

Transparency, that means give us an opportunity to see exactly what is going on. If you mention transparency to a PBM, they go berserk: My gosh, no, we can't have that. We can't have transparency.

But Representative COLLINS' bill, the MAC Transparency bill, which I am proud to be an original cosponsor of, brings about greater transparency in generic pricing—drug pricing, in general, but particularly generic.

Many of the recipients don't understand the cost structure. They don't understand how that works, where the original fees are originating from, which are often a direct result of the fees that are leveraged by the PBMs, the prescription drug plan sponsors.

Congressman COLLINS' bill addresses this issue, and it addresses more. Under his legislation, a process would be established to help mediate disputes in drug pricing. It would establish new criteria for PBMs to adhere to when managing the costs of prescription drug coverage.

This MAC Transparency bill is a step forward not only for the industry, but for the beneficiary, and that is what is so very, very important. It is no surprise that costs are going up. No surprise at all. With the lack of transparency, that is what is going to happen.

We have got to have greater transparency in the drug pricing system. And, yes, that includes pharmacy. Yes, that includes the pharmacy; yes, it includes the pharmaceutical manufacturer; but mostly, it has got to be with the PBMs.

If we have a CEO of a medication—a pharmaceutical company like Mylan which we had come up and testify before us here in Congress, and I ask her about that gap there and where that money is going, if she doesn't know and I don't know, there is a problem. That means we need more transparency. And that is exactly what happened.

Now I want to talk about another problem that is called DIR fees, direct and indirect remuneration. Let me tell you, this will be the death of community pharmacies.

DIR fees are what they refer to as clawback fees. What happens is, when you go into a pharmacy, you get a prescription filled, the pharmacy's computer calls the insurance company's computer, the PBM's computer, and it tells us how much to charge the patient in a copay and tells us how much we are going to get paid. However, with these DIR fees, months later, after we have already been promised how much we are going to be paid, pharmacists are getting bills from these PBMs that are saying: Well, we didn't make quite as much that quarter as we should have, so we are going to have to claw back this much.

I met with pharmacists from the New York State pharmacy association and they were telling me, literally, horror stories about getting bills for $85,000, $110,000 in clawback fees. Folks, that is not a sustainable business model. When you are trying to run a business, a community pharmacy, and you get a bill months later in the hundreds of thousands of dollars, that is not sustainable. You can't stay in business that way.

We have got to do something about DIR fees. Thankfully, Representative MORGAN GRIFFITH from Virginia has a bill addressing this. I am supporting him on that bill.

In fact, in a recent survey, nearly 70 percent of community pharmacists indicated that they don't receive any information about when those fees will be collected or how large they will be. Again, ultimately, who ends up being penalized? Who ends up being penalized is the patient. The patient ends up being penalized.

Understand, this is not a partisan issue. These PBMs don't care whether you are Republican or Democrat. They care about one thing, and that is profit. That is all.

Now, let's talk about one other. Let's talk about a bill that Representative BRETT GUTHRIE from Kentucky has, H.R. 592, Pharmacies and Medically Underserved Areas Enhancement Act. Under this bill, many of the individuals who seek consultation, especially seniors, can continue to receive that quality input and expertise.

This bill is known as the pharmacy provider status. Simply, what this will do is make sure that the pharmacists who give consultations are being reimbursed for that. That is vitally important.

Pharmacies are the front line in health care. There are so many diseases. The pharmacists who are graduating today are so clinically superior to when I graduated. Their expertise is beyond anything that I ever imagined it would be. We need to make sure that we are utilizing that. That is going to be a key in helping us control healthcare costs: utilizing all these allied health fields and making sure we are using them to their fullest potential. This bill will help us do that.

So there are just three bills that are being introduced right now with community pharmacists that impact pharmacy but, more importantly, that impact health care and that are going to help us have a great healthcare system and to continue to have a great healthcare system.

There are a couple other things that I wanted to mention. I am going to hold off on those because, again, I want to make sure that everybody understands the point that I am trying to make, and that is just how important, how vital the community pharmacies are and just how bad the PBMs are and how they are ripping off the public. They are ripping off the public. Look at their balance sheets. Look at the profits. Again, they want to argue, and they want to say: We are holding down drug prices.

Again, how is that working for you? It is not working. It is not working because they are pocketing the profits. If they were truly doing what they said they set out to do, we wouldn't see escalating drug prices like we are seeing.

Yes, there are some bad actors out there, as there are in every profession. Yes, we had Turing Pharmaceuticals and Martin Shkreli, the ''pharma bro.'' This guy was a crook, no question about it. We had Valeant Pharmaceuticals and what they did with Isuprel and Nitropress.

Just recently, Marathon Pharmaceuticals bought a drug that was available over in Europe. They brought it over here and got it approved in America. It is a very important drug for muscular dystrophy. Now they want to increase the price to an enormous amount that won't be affordable for patients.

Those are bad actors. As my daddy used to say, you are going to have that, and we understand that. We have Valeant and Turing and Marathon. We are calling them out, too. They need to be called out.

But we also need to focus on what one of the biggest problems is in escalating prescription drug prices, and that is the PBMs. They bring no value whatsoever to the system. They put no profit back into research and development.

Communities' pharmacists play an important role in our healthcare system. I am proud to support our community pharmacists. I am proud to have been able to practice in a profession for over 30 years that I know brings a great deal of value to patients and to their families.

Again, I want to thank Representative COLLINS, and I want to commend him for his hard work.

Representative AUSTIN SCOTT is here, also. He has been a champion of this as well. They understand. They get it. I appreciate their efforts on that, and I appreciate everyone who has been here tonight. I thank Representative COLLINS for hosting us here tonight. I appreciate his support.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Before the gentleman goes, you told the story about getting a call from your own pharmacist. You and I were here together, I think, sometime 6 months ago. We were doing this and talking about this issue of mail order. We were talking about this.

I had a Member who was watching us on the floor talk about the pharmacy and the PBM problem and got a call from the PBM because they had gotten a prescription for their child. Yes, the day before they are getting a call in their office from the PBM saying: If you just switch from your local pharmacist, we will do it better. That is why we are sitting here.

An interesting thing you brought up on DIR fees. What we have right here sort of describes what you were talking about. I am putting it here so people can see it.

There is an interesting part of this DIR fee issue. It forces Medicare part D beneficiaries to pay inflated prices at the point of sale that are higher in actual cost than the drugs. The cost of the drug will be recouped in DIR fees, which is retroactively assessed later.

Many beneficiaries are moving past their part D benefit faster and hitting the doughnut hole sooner, forcing them to pay out-of-pocket costs. This is particularly true with lifesaving or specialty drugs. These are things that we are seeing.

Patients forced to pay out of pocket might be forced to cut back or abandon treatment. According to the Community Oncology Alliance, pharmacists lose $58,000 per practice, on average, to DIR fees each year. This makes it difficult for independent community pharmacists to keep up.

When patients pass through the doughnut hole into catastrophic coverage, guess who picks it up? CMS takes on the cost-sharing burden. This is why this matter is in Congress. These costs have increased from $10 billion in 2010 to $33 billion in 2015. This is just dealing with this issue.

We have got to have greater transparency on this. This is why Morgan Griffith's bill is good and we are going to continue to fight about this.

Again, I have yet to have a PBM tell me I am wrong here. I know from your experience you are seeing it as well.

I yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT), our other friend from south Georgia who has been outspoken on this. He comes to the floor to talk about his experiences with this as well.

Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. COLLINS, I had several parents in my office today. I thought I would talk about a couple of the meetings that I had.

I had a father there talking about his son Gabe. He had a T-shirt on with ''H4G,'' which stands for ''Hope for Gabe.'' I listened to him talk about his son and the life-threatening disease that his son has and the threat that his son is under because of a U.S. pharmaceutical manufacturer named Marathon. I would like to read part of an email that I have from him:

> Hope you are well. I just wanted to let you know that my son Gabe takes a drug called Deflazacort. He has since he was 5 years old. He is now 11. We currently pay $116 for a 3-month supply of 15-milligram dose for Deflazacort. We were getting this drug from Europe, as it was not available here in the United States, and have had no problem with access to date.

Now, many of you heard about this story. The FDA approved the same drug for sale in the United States. What did the drug manufacturer do with the price of it? Well, Marathon took the price from $116 a quarter to approximately $87,000 a year.

Now, this is what is happening. For drugs that are available everywhere

else in the world, it is not that they are being developed with extensive research and expensive research in our country. People are simply buying the right to sell the drug in the United States. As soon as approved and available in the U.S. marketplace, it is no longer legal for people to import that drug from Europe. Marathon priced the drug at $89,000 per year.

Reading again from his email, in bold letters:

> It is the same drug we are getting today from Europe for $450 per year, the exact same drug. We need your help here. The Duchenne community needs your help, and specifically Gabe needs your help.

□ 1930

As I sit here and look at the American flag, you know, there is no other country in the world that allows their citizens to be treated like this. None. I am embarrassed that this Congress hasn't done anything about this abuse to the American citizens from the pharmaceutical and the PBM industry.

I know our President, and I am glad that we have a President with the courage and the boldness that our President has, had the executives to the White House. I would suggest that a good meeting also would be to have the parents—have the father of Gabe, have the mother of Gabe come to the White House. Sit down in the same room with the TVs on with the executives from those companies that are cheating these people. Let's let the executives explain on TV in front of the parents, in front of the child who needs that lifesaving drug why it costs $450 in another country but should cost $87,000 in America.

Another group of parents that was in my office today was there representing juvenile diabetes. I had a heart-wrenching discussion with a mother in my office in Warner Robins about her daughter, insulin-dependent. She has got to have it or she dies. This mother had a job, actually, in another country and talked about what she paid in another country to receive that same drug, insulin, for her child. It cost a fraction of what it cost in America.

I think it would be great for our President to have that mother and that daughter or the mother who was in my office today talking about her daughter come and sit down at the White House, and maybe the president of Eli Lilly could come and sit down. Maybe we could put the TV on, the cameras on so everybody in America could see the CEO explain why insulin, which has been around for decades, costs as much in this country as it does when it doesn't cost anywhere near that in any other country.

Something has got to give. Something has got to give. The American families have given enough. I am hopeful that we will move sooner rather than later. American families can't take it anymore. A drug that costs $450, that can be imported from Europe, shouldn't cost $87,000 in America.

On top of the issues with what is happening with the manufacturers, we have got the issue with the PBMs.

Why shouldn't you know what the PBMs are getting in a kickback?

Everywhere else you go, you get a price sticker. You know what the rebates are when you go to your local car dealer. They are readily advertised.

Why shouldn't you know as the American citizen?

My friend Mr. COLLINS and I have been working on it for years. We worked on it back in the State legislature. In fact, we passed a bill back in, I think, 1987, the first transparency act that we passed in the State legislature in Georgia. I hope that governors and members of the State legislatures will go back and address this issue as well. The transparency issues can be done at the State level. That bill came to the Georgia House floor, and it passed 150–0. Not a single Democrat, not a single Republican voted against that bill. Every single member who was there that day voted for the bill.

Mr. Speaker, we know something has got to be done. I just hope that we take action sooner rather than later.

I would just like to make one last request. Mr. President, I hope you will invite these parents and their children to the White House. I hope you will invite the CEOs of these companies to come and sit down at the same table, and I hope you will even invite the press to come and publicize the meeting.

I thank Mr. COLLINS so much for standing up for the American citizens. I am honored to be a friend of his, and I thank him for allowing me to be in the fight.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Representative SCOTT brings out this issue with passion. That is exactly what we need as we go forward in this discussion.

This is exactly what the PBMs don't want to have. They don't want to have transparency. They don't want to talk about it. We have been talking about it now for years on this floor. It just continues to get worse.

In fact, the Prescription Drug Price Transparency Act that we are getting ready to introduce—and Mr. SCOTT and others are part of it—just the other day they were trying to undercut this bill.

I recently saw an interview with Mark Merritt. He is the CEO of PCMA, the trade group for PBMs. The article misrepresented PBMs' role in the marketplace. Now, that is a shocker, really. Distorting the facts to protect PBMs' ability to continue profiting at the expense of beneficiaries and taxpayers.

So tonight let's have a little fact check. Let's look at the claims by Mr. Merritt versus the truth.

First, Mr. Merritt claimed that PBMs play an important role in negotiating price discounts in order to pass those savings along to customers. In fact, what he said was:

> We have an interest in lower price or bigger discounts . . . and we're going to negotiate the most aggressive discounts we can.

Well, it is true that PBMs do effectively negotiate huge discounts. However, the patients never see this discount or rebates reflected in their prices or out-of-pocket costs. These rebates and discounts merely pad PBMs' profit margins. They do not increase patients' well-being. This lack of transparency allows PBMs to receive massive rebates and refuse to pass those savings along to consumers or customers.

In fact, what is interesting, there is proof that transparency in MAC pricing saves more money than the PBMs are willing to admit.

You want an example?

Let's look to Texas. Texas has one of the oldest MAC-style laws. Texas passed MAC transparency legislation similar to the Prescription Drug Price Transparency Act in June of 2013.

Now, here we go, Mark, explain this one.

Since Texas passed their law, their Medicaid fee-for-service prescription drug expenditures for the top 100 drugs fell from $219.54 per prescription to $91.32. Yep, you are doing a good job negotiating for your bottom line.

What else does he say?

Number two, Merritt tries to distort the purposes of the Prescription Drug Transparency Act by drawing concern to transparency in the drug marketplace. Let's see what he says. He says:

> The kind of transparency to be concerned about is where competing drug companies and competing drugstores can see the detailed arrangements that we have with all of their competitors.

Well, seeing as how they own part of the competitors, not really a lot of things going on there.

Our legislation simply would not allow competing drug companies to see detailed arrangements that PBMs have with competitors.

Mark, quit lying.

This statement is a misrepresentation of what the Prescription Drug Transparency Act does. Competing pharmacies would not be able to see the arrangements their opponents have with PBMs because they would not be publicly disclosed. Transparency measures and contractual agreements include confidentiality clauses preventing public disclosure.

May I remind Mark that he has gag orders in some States where the pharmacists can't even talk about these issues.

By the way, they send letters to pharmacists saying: Oh, don't go talk to your elected officials, because if you do, we will cut your contract off.

Wow, that is concern, Mark.

Furthermore, the disclosure of sources of drug pricing determinations remains confidential and is only disclosed to pharmacies and their contracting entities. PBMs distort transparency to mean only public transparency in an attempt to protect the profitability that comes with keeping their corrupt business practices in the dark. I wish he would have stopped there. He didn't.

Let's go on to the third. Mark Merritt says:

We want to make sure that wholesalers who sell to the drugstore aren't trying to sell the most expensive thing and pass the cost onto consumers.

All right. Here we go again. This is getting familiar. It has little to do with wholesalers. PBMs design the formularies—yes, we understand this, Mark—that dictate what drugs are covered by insurers. Because there is no transparency, PBMs are able to receive drugs at discounted prices but refuse to tell employers. PBMs are then able to still charge employers the full amount for the drug, even though they are receiving it cheaper. PBMs often receive large rebates to incentivize them to include expensive brand name drugs in their formularies, even though cheaper generics are available.

Mr. Speaker, listen. They receive large rebates to incentivize them to include the expensive brand name drugs on their formularies. I had an issue just like that with my own mother just recently. She needed medication. She had been on it for 8 months. They had to reauthorize it after the first of the year.

I asked: Well, is there another issue she could have?

They said: Well, this is the only one on the formulary.

PBMs don't control pricing; PBMs don't control what drugs come to market. Another falsehood. PBMs substitute expensive drugs and overcharge Medicare part D, TRICARE, and FEHB programs. This means they are lining their pockets with money from the taxpayers.

Fourth thing:

If drugstores like those terms, they can sign a contract; and if they don't, they can join with some other plan or PBM.

Oh, I love this. This is classic, Mr. Speaker. PBMs hold a disproportionate share of the marketplace. We have already talked about three of the largest PBMs own 80 percent of the market—80 percent. Because PBMs have a stranglehold on the market, community pharmacists cannot stay in business without being forced to contract with them. It forces community pharmacists to sign take-it-or-leave-it contracts with anticompetitive and unfair provisions, and from transmitting it without written consent. These are just crazy.

I had—one of my pharmacists who was on their plan actually had a letter sent to their customers who said: You are no longer on the plan.

He called the PBM. The PBM said: No, you are still on the plan.

He said: Then why did you send a letter out?

PBM said: Oops, must have been a mistake.

He said: Well, why don't you send a letter out telling them that they are wrong?

PBM said: Oh, we don't do that. That is on you.

Yeah, because all you want to do is keep the money, follow the money. Mark, it is easy. I understand running a trade association is tough, but at least be honest about it.

The last thing. Community pharmacists typically get paid more by plans because there is not as much competition. Well, five for five. Community pharmacists in northeast Georgia and across the United States are under constant threat of going out of business because of PBMs. PBMs exploit the market, prey upon community pharmacists, using spread pricing and retroactive DIR fees. PBMs also use a disproportionate share of the market to steer patients to pharmacies they own themselves.

The Prescription Drug Price Transparency Act is vitally important to improving fairness and transparency in the healthcare system. Community pharmacists must be kept in business and patients should have the choice to receive care from their local pharmacists. Community pharmacists might be afraid to stand up to PBMs. Community pharmacists many times are basically scared into submission.

I have stood on the floor of this House many times. My pharmacists can't speak, but I can, and I will remind the PBMs one more time: You can't audit me. You can go audit for profit, which you do every day. You can go hit them, but you can't hit me.

I will continue to be a voice for community pharmacists. These Members are being a voice for community pharmacists. Our numbers are rising every day. The President himself has actually begun to look at those middlemen and those pricing.

Tonight ends another night of telling the truth when the truth needs to be told. Mr. Speaker, we end another time of standing up for the American people and the community pharmacists.

I yield back the balance of my time.

CONGRESSIONAL PROGRESSIVE CAUCUS: REACTIONS TO THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS TO CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. JAYAPAL) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. JAYAPAL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. JAYAPAL. Mr. Speaker, today I stand here for this Special Order on behalf of our Congressional Progressive Caucus, and we have decided that we would like to use this Special Order hour to address our reactions to the President's address to the Union last night.

Before I offer my part of those remarks, Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. RASKIN), my friend and colleague.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congresswoman JAYAPAL. She has been a sensational leader within the Democratic Caucus and within the Congressional Progressive Caucus, especially on the issues of immigration and the rights of refugees. It is such an honor to be able to serve with her. I appreciate being able to spend some moments just reflecting on what took place in our Chamber last night with the President's speech.

We should start by giving credit where credit is due. This speech was not ''American Carnage II.'' It was a vast improvement, I would say, over all of the violent and apocalyptic imagery and rhetoric that we saw in the inaugural address. So hats off to the President's new speech writer, whoever that may be.

However, having said that, I think it is simply old wine in a new bottle. The same basic extremist Steve Bannon infrastructure governed that address despite the fact that the manners had improved considerably.

□ 1945

When I thought about President Trump's speech in this Chamber last night, I thought about George Orwell. Not because of 1984, although I admit that my well-thumbed copy of this great dystopian novel is sitting on my desk right now and the words ''war is peace'' and ''ignorance is strength'' have been running through my mind over the last several weeks. No, I thought of Orwell not because of 1984, but because of a great essay he once wrote called ''Notes on Nationalism.''

In this essay, George Orwell contrasted patriotism and nationalism—two concepts that often get conflated. But at least, in his view, they represented two very different things. Patriotism, he argued, was a positive emotion, a passionate belief in one's own community—its people, its institutions, its values, its history, its culture.

An American patriot today, I would argue, believes in our magnificent constitutional democracy—our Constitution; our Bill of Rights; our judiciary and our judges; our States and our communities; our poets like Emily Dickinson and Walt Whitman and Langston Hughes and Merrill Leffler; our philosophers like John Dewey and Ralph Waldo Emerson; our extraordinary dynamic culture which invites and absorbs new waves of people from all over the world, our artists, our musicians like Bruce Springsteen, the Neville Brothers, and Dar Williams. All of these people and things are what we love about America, and they evoke the positive emotion of patriotism.

Patriotism is all about uplifting people; drawing on what is best in our history; finding what is best in our culture; invoking our Founders, Madison,

Jefferson, Franklin, and Tom Paine; invoking the people who founded the country once again through the Civil War and the reconstruction amendments, Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass; the people who transformed America in the women's suffrage movement, like Susan B. Anthony; the people who remade America once again in the civil rights movement, like Martin Luther King, Bob Moses, and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee; the people who blew the doors off of discrimination and oppression against other groups, like the LGBT community, like Harvey Milk.

All of these people stand for a progressive dynamic and inclusive concept of America, and patriots want to draw on this culture in history in order to continue to make great progress for our people today. A patriot wants to improve the health of our people, the education of our people, the critical thinking skills of our people, the well-being of America.

Now, nationalism is different. If you look at it historically as Orwell did, nationalism has been not about building people up and improving their lives, it has been about militarizing society and getting everyone to sync their individuality, their creative personality into a large corporatist and authoritarian state, one that is destined to exploit people's goodwill by mobilizing them for groupthink and endless hostility in war, the kind that Orwell dramatized so frightfully in 1984 and in ''Animal Farm.''

Well, I am sorry to say that I didn't see a lot of patriotism in Orwell's terms in the speech last night. Ninety percent of our kids go to public schools, but 90 percent of this President's energy and administration's energy seems to go into maligning and defunding public education and diverting public money away from public schools into private education. That is the Betsy DeVos agenda.

Or take health care. The Affordable Care Act represents a magnificent national investment in health care of our own people. More than 22 million of our fellow citizens, previously uninsured, got health care because of the ACA. Thirty million if you include the expansion of Medicaid that took place under the ACA.

If you decide to go to a town hall, yours or someone else's, you will meet people who will tell you that their lives were saved because of the Affordable Care Act—victims of breast cancer and colon cancer and heart attacks and strokes and on and on. These things are just in the nature of life. We are all subject to medical misfortune. If you learn you have cancer or if you have a heart attack, that is a misfortune. It happens to people every day. But if you have cancer or leukemia or you have a heart attack and you can't get health coverage because you lost your job or because you are too poor, that is not just a misfortune, that is an injustice because we can do something about that. Because that has to do with how we have organized our own affairs as a society.

But what did we hear from the President last night about the health care and well-being of our people? Repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act. They voted more than 50 times to repeal the Affordable Care Act and never once to replace it. They have got no plan. The President did not offer a plan.

The President restated the values of the Affordable Care Act itself. And understand, the Affordable Care Act was the compromise because the logical thing to have done, as President Obama said, if we were starting from scratch, would be to adopt a single payor plan. But because we were along a certain path, he felt we couldn't do that.

So he took the plan that was adopted at The Heritage Foundation, the conservative think tank, the one that was put in in Massachusetts by Governor Romney—RomneyCare. That is the Affordable Care Act. But they couldn't tolerate that because they cared more about scoring political points against the President than they did about actually making health care available to as many Americans as possible.

So the President showed up empty-handed again. No plan whatsoever. If there were a plan, we would be debating it. If they had something to offer, we would be talking about it. But they don't have it. They just want to repeal and consign everybody back to medical oblivion. Millions of people going back to not having it. Making everybody else's insurance premiums skyrocket and just turning our backs on the families that now depend on the Affordable Care Act.

Now, I will say the President mentioned in passing something that he made a big deal of during the campaign, and I was happy he did. He went back to saying that we needed to give the government the authority to negotiate with the large drug companies, the prescription drug companies, for lower prices.

And I was happy to hear my colleagues from the other side of the aisle in talking about the pharmacist just now, also talking about the extraordinary power of the pharmaceutical companies and their predatory practices.

Well, what the President has said makes perfect sense on this point, which is there was some special interest legislation that came out several years ago saying that the government could not negotiate for lower prices with the drug companies when it comes to Medicare. We do it with Medicaid, we do it with VA drug benefits, but we can't do it for Medicare drug benefits because some lobbyist was able to get somebody to stick that into the bill, and the GOP majority stands by it now.

And so I appeal to the President, if you are serious about it, I will work day and night to get every Democratic vote I can to side with you in giving the government the authority to negotiate for lower drug prices. That is a common ground agenda. Let's do that.

But as to the general picture of health care in the country, the President gave us nothing last night. We also got no jobs plan. We got no plan to confront the shameful inequality in our society.

When the President and his Cabinet entered the Chamber last night, the net worth of this room went up by $9.6 billion. This is the richest Cabinet in American history. These 17 people in the Cabinet have more wealth than 43 million American households combined. That is one-third of American households. When you look at the Trump Cabinet, you can see the net worth of one-third of American families together.

And the President, who campaigned like a crusading populist, like William Jennings Bryan, for working people, creates a Cabinet of billionaires and CEOs, people who profited like mad from NAFTA and all the trade deals that the President now denounces. He closed his campaign by railing against Goldman Sachs. But Goldman Sachs may as well be the nickname of this Cabinet. From Secretary Tillerson to Steve Bannon and many others, Goldman Sachs is all over this administration.

And last night, we also got more immigrant bashing. And I know my friend and colleague, Congresswoman JAYAPAL, will discuss this.

How patriotic is immigrant bashing? I would say not very. Tom Paine said America would be a haven of refuge for people fleeing political and religious repression all over the world. Madison said it would be a sanctuary for religious and political refugees. America would come to be symbolized by the Statue of Liberty. ''Give us your poor, your tired, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,'' that is the spirit of America.

We are a nation of immigrants. Other than Native Americans, we were here before everybody else got here. And the slaves were brought here against their will. But everybody else, we are immigrants or we are the descendants of immigrants. So if you attack immigrants, you are really attacking the dynamic and inclusive culture of America, a community of communities.

And then there is the big proposal we got to slash $56 billion in domestic spending and put it into a great big, new military buildup. And here we see the fingerprints, of course, of Steve Bannon. We could destroy the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Environmental Protection Agency, the National Institutes of Health, the State Department, the Peace Corps, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Securities and Exchange Commission, the Federal Election Commission, the CFPB, and on

and on, and still not come close to the $56 billion that they want to rip out of the domestic priorities of the American people and simply give to the Pentagon. And for what? Why? No one has told us why. What is all of that money going to buy? Who is going to get rich off of all of that money?

Ladies and gentlemen, when you add it all up, this program seems like it partakes of the ultra-nationalist politics that Orwell perceived in authoritarian regimes, not the kind of patriotism that reflects the best in our own Democratic political culture.

The great thing is that Americans are deep patriots. We love our communities. We love our institutions. We love our values. We love our Constitution. We love our Bill of Rights. And we are not going to fall for a right-wing, ultra-nationalist agenda that takes us away from everything that we love.

□ 2000

Ms. JAYAPAL. Mr. Speaker, I thank my distinguished colleague from Maryland for your tremendous work already in these 7 weeks and schooling us all on the Constitution and making sure that we continue to recognize the tremendous responsibility that we have here in this body to protect that Constitution and everything that it stands for.

Last night's State of the Union Address deserves a response for lots of reasons and, unfortunately, none of them are good.

Last night, we heard from this President a toned-down version of his campaign speeches. The speech was well delivered. He stuck to his script. It may be the first major address that he has conducted where he did stick to the script. He had a lot of diligence in that. And he even started with some very necessary recognition of the anti-Semitic acts that have been taking place across the country, and he denounced those acts.

He denounced the killing of an Indian American in Kansas. I, too, am Indian American, and I know that that killing hit home hard for many of us across the country who wonder if we, too, are going to be the targets of hate. The President did say that he denounces hate, that there is no place in this Nation for hate, and that, in fact, we need to do a lot of work to make sure that we preserve this place, this country as a country that is safe for everybody.

Unfortunately, it took a while to get there, and his words belie the rhetoric that he has put out there in the past. In fact, I think that this President has not spoken out against the kind of hate and, in fact, has sometimes said things that encourage his followers to act in ways that simply do not meet the rhetoric that he had yesterday.

The first place that that was so obvious to me was in the space of immigration. Now, I have been an advocate on immigration for many, many years. I have worked across the aisle with friends and colleagues in the U.S. Senate, in the U.S. House of Representatives. At that time, I was an advocate. But together, we understood the tremendous contributions of immigrants to this country, and we understood that unless you were Native American, that, willing or unwilling, everybody in this country has been an immigrant or a descendant of immigrants.

And so to come into the Chamber and yet again hear the fear-mongering and the characterization of immigrants, undocumented immigrants, as this enormous swath of people who simply all they do is commit crimes is simply a travesty and a disservice to the millions of people across this country who work every day to pick our vegetables, clean our homes, serve us in so many different capacities, as well as to all of those who have come through the legal immigration system, but with many challenges.

You know, it took me 18 years to get my citizenship. I went through visa after visa after visa. I understand the barriers. But for this President to continue to focus on a stereotype of undocumented immigrants as criminals is simply disingenuous, unfair, and, frankly, un-American.

DREAMers and refugees and immigrants and others who have helped build this country were the guests of many of us Democrats in the Chamber. We each brought incredible men and women to join us for the State of the Union; people who we feel demonstrate the resilience and the strength and the courage of immigrants across this country.

I was proud to be joined by an amazing woman, a good friend named Aneelah Afzali, who is the executive director of the American Muslim Empowerment Network, an initiative of the Muslim Association of Puget Sound. Aneelah is a Harvard-trained lawyer. She is an incredible snowboarder. She is a 12th Man Fan. She loves the Seahawks, and she is a strong advocate for a community that has been, frankly, terrorized since the passing of the President's Muslim ban. Now, of course, courts have said that that ban is unconstitutional.

The President seems to be accepting that it is unconstitutional, but we also know that he has reshaped that ban to continue to target people simply for the country from which they come, simply for the region that they come from.

The reason we invited all of those guests to be here in the Chamber with us is because we wanted to send a message to this President and to our country that we are strong as a country because of our diversity, that we are better for the perspectives and the values that people bring, and regardless of what religion you are, we all, as the President said yesterday, do bleed the same blood, and we all believe in the promise of the United States of America.

We wanted the President to understand and our colleagues in this body to understand, when we pass laws, when we approve of executive orders, to target people simply based on religion or place of origin, that we are doing a tremendous disservice to this country and we might be violating constitutional laws in some of these cases, but that America deserves better in terms of how we position what immigrants have done for this country.

Now, the President last night kept talking about these heinous crimes that immigrants commit. In fact, he had some people here in the Chamber, his guests, who were tragically affected by the murder of individuals in their families who were killed because of a single, undocumented immigrant. A heinous crime committed by an undocumented immigrant is simply not representative of the millions of law-abiding immigrants across our country.

This is a continuation of what the President did during the campaign: fear-mongering and otherizing people. The reality is that, just like Dylann Roof's horrific murders in South Carolina cannot be representative of all Caucasian Americans, there is no way that one undocumented immigrant or even a couple of undocumented immigrants can be representative of 11 million who have served this country, helped build our economy, helped drive our industries, and who contribute so much to our country every single day.

The President also seemed to paint this picture of immigrants as driving up crime, that when you have undocumented immigrants, then you have higher crime. In fact, the statistics show that immigrants commit crimes at far lower rates than native-born Americans and that our sanctuary cities, the cities around the country that have policies that are friendly to immigrant communities, including undocumented immigrants, that those actually are safer as cities than comparable cities that are not sanctuary cities.

That was a report that came out, and it is an important one for people to understand. Why? Because, when you have trust and when you understand that the fix that we need is for a system that is broken, an immigration system that has been broken for a very long time, the way to address these issues is not to criminalize and otherize and fearmonger about people who are trying to help our country, but to actually get to work on a real fix for our immigration system.

I was initially pleased that the President talked about fixing a broken immigration system, but then he said we are going to look at a merit-based system. Now, I would not have been able to come to this country under a merit-based system because I came here by myself when I was 16 years old. My parents sent me over here. They had very little money in their bank account. They used their $5,000 to send me by myself because they felt like this was the place I was going to get the best education.

And if you look at a merit-based system, what you do is you exclude the millions of people who have actually come to the United States seeking refuge from famine, from devastation, from drought, from persecution. You exclude all of those people. You also exclude all of the families who are trying to reunite with their loved ones when they come here and they bring their spouse or they bring their parent or their child. That whole system of family-based immigration that the United States has built so much of our country around, that, too, would be excluded.

Unfortunately, this President is still not at a place where he has said and embraced the idea of comprehensive immigration reform, an immigration reform that has been, until this point, traditionally bipartisan—68 bipartisan votes in the U.S. Senate in 2013 for a comprehensive immigration bill that would have brought $1.5 trillion into our economy over the next 10 years by legalizing and providing a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants but, perhaps equally importantly, would have provided the dignity and respect to undocumented immigrants in a very different way than what the President spoke about last night.

My colleague Mr. RASKIN talked a little bit about health care and the Affordable Care Act, and during his speech, the President, unfortunately, again renewed the theme that the Affordable Care Act has been a disaster. He talked about his ideas for health care, and he said some things that maybe all of us could agree with.

He said that we deserve health care that lowers costs for people. Yes, I would like that. He said that we deserve health care that increases quality of care—absolutely.

But unfortunately, neither the President nor Republicans in this Chamber have offered us a replacement plan. So to repeal the Affordable Care Act which has provided so much benefit to people—more than 20 million Americans gained health care through the Affordable Care Act. But if Republicans succeed in repealing it, 30 million people will lose it.

The 150 million Americans with preexisting conditions will see their protections stripped away, leaving them vulnerable to a lack of coverage. You cannot protect the most expensive and the most valuable provisions of the Affordable Care Act if you do not continue to keep the pool large enough, full of healthy people, so that those provisions actually become affordable. And you need to ensure that the pool is large enough through the individual mandate.

So we have not seen a plan that improves health care, and it is important that we recognize we have improvements to make. There are too many Americans across the country that still, today, don't have access to health care in the way that we would like them to. But the solution for that is a Medicare-for-all plan, a public plan that allows us to take profits out of the business of health care. It should not be a business. It should be about making people better. It should be about making people well and not about making corporations rich. That, I think, is a very important piece.

The President said that he would support a plan that would actually provide us with the ability to negotiate for prescription drugs for Medicare. That would bring down the cost for those prescription drugs. I am all in for that plan, and that is why I hope the President supports the bill that was introduced.

Senator CANTWELL introduced a bill yesterday that would allow the United States to import more affordable drugs from Canada while also allowing Medicaid to negotiate drug prices directly, and that would lower the costs for our seniors and for others who rely on those lifelong medications.

I am so proud to have sponsored that same bill in the House. That is the solution that we need to move to is lowering the costs of prescription drugs, lowering the cost of health care, increasing the quality of the care that we provide.

Let's talk about the environment for a minute because the President mentioned yesterday that he cares about clean water and clean air, but at the same time, the President has proposed in reports that have been published in the news that he intends to cut the Environmental Protection Agency by 25 percent, the budget of the Environmental Protection Agency.

Scott Pruitt, our new Secretary of the EPA, has talked about putting in place plans to repeal progress on climate change. The President also signed a rule to essentially roll back progress on the Clean Water Act, and we are talking about cutting agencies and staff of the EPA across the country.

The reality is that we need to be thinking about how we preserve our planet for the next generation. I have got a 20-year-old son and he says to me: Mom, this is one of the most important things you can do is preserve the planet for me and for my kids. That is what we need to do is look at the science of climate change, look at the ways in which we can strengthen our ability to protect the environment, instead of what this President has said he will do, which is to repeal so many of the rules that the Obama administration put in place to make sure that we check the notion that corporations should be able to mine our land, literally and figuratively, for profit while destroying it for the future.

Budget and taxes, this was a really interesting one. One of the most common refrains of President Trump's campaign was that he was going to drain the swamp, and last night he talked about that. He said he promised he would do it, and he is now draining the swamp. He has put a ban on lobbyists.

Unfortunately, what he didn't talk about is that, even with the ban on lobbyists, it is as if he is draining that swamp and then pumping it into another spot, which happens to be his Cabinet, that is filled with people who represent Goldman Sachs ties, the CEO of ExxonMobil, plenty of other elites who—we don't begrudge people to make some money, but these are people who have made profit off of a vast majority of Americans losing their income.

□ 2015

These are people, frankly, who lobbied the United States Government so that those corporations could do better and so that they, as CEOs, could do better while caring not at all for the broad interests of people across this country.

Based on these picks, it is clear that the President's priority is for the wealthiest in our country and not, as he promised over and over again, for the working people in our country.

Now, I would love to be proven wrong on this. But unfortunately, all of the tax plans, all of the proposals that we have seen so far, or, at least, the blueprints that we have seen so far would not do as he said last night. Last night, he said he wants to provide a huge tax cut or tax relief for middle class families. We would love to see that. Unfortunately, the plan looks, in fact, like it is going to provide relief to the top tier of income earners in this country and not to the middle class.

He has talked about a $54 billion cut in domestic spending, and I wanted to have people understand exactly what $54 billion amounts to because most of us don't really know. We can't really imagine that because we don't have $54 billion lying around.

If we added up the entire budget for the Environmental Protection Agency, the entire budget of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the entire budget for the National Park Service—and I should give you these numbers because they are interesting: $8 billion for the EPA, $5.85 billion for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, $3.1 billion for the National Park Service, $2.9 billion for the Department of Energy efficiency and renewable energy program, $1.6 billion for the Fish and Wildlife Service, and $1.2 billion for the U.S. Geological Service—you still don't get to that $54 billion. There are a whole bunch of others that are in that list. You still don't get to $54 billion, even if you remove all of those agencies.

So the work that we have to do is really to have people understand that if we are going to cut nondefense discretionary spending by the amount that he is talking about increasing our defense budget by, our military spending by, then you are going to have to cut into the very programs that help middle class families to continue their lives and have dignity, respect, pull themselves up and know that they are

going to have food on the table and a roof over their head and be able to send their kids to college and be able to retire in security. All of these programs help people to do that, to have opportunity in this country, which is why America is such a great country because we provide that kind of opportunity. But if we decimate our nondefense discretionary spending by cutting it by $54 billion, then we are taking away that opportunity from millions and millions of families. This is not how we build up our communities.

Our budget is a demonstration of our values as a country. We have to understand that this is a time of tremendous insecurity for Americans across our country. Wealth inequality is at the highest level that it has been in a very long time, and people do not see the opportunity for themselves.

They elected this President, in part, because of the promises that he made; and so if he is going to follow through, that would mean protecting those social safety net programs. It would mean investing in the environment for the future. It would mean expanding Social Security and Medicare. It would mean saying that the answer to health care is actually a Medicare-for-all program, a way to make sure that every American does not have to be one healthcare crisis away from bankruptcy.

The President also talked about education last night, and he said it is the civil rights issue of our time. I couldn't agree with him more, but I do not understand how you go from that place to then saying that the answer to that is school choice.

Ninety percent of the kids in this country go through the public education system. That is what my son went through. We need to make sure that we preserve the ability for people in this country to send their kids to good public schools.

We should be investing in our public schools, investing in our teachers, making sure that we provide the tools and the resources to teachers so that in our public schools—the place where our kids are going to spend the most amount of their days—that they are getting the kind of education that allows them to earn a future, contribute back to the country, be trained for all the jobs that we need to fill right here in the United States of America.

We should be investing in preapprenticeship programs. We should be investing in debt-free college for all of our young people because it is ridiculous that a young person has to choose between being $45,000 in debt or not going to college, not seeking a higher education.

Higher education is what gave me everything that I have today. It was my parents' belief in me and my future and the $5,000 that they had in the bank that they used to send me here so that I could get a college degree. I was 16 years old, and now I have the tremendous honor of standing in this Chamber, the U.S. House of Representatives, in the greatest country in the world, going from being an immigrant to being a United States Representative.

I want every American—no matter what color you are, no matter whether you are rural or urban, no matter whether you have money or don't have money—I want you to have a great public education that you can go to. That is choice. That is real choice.

Choice is not privatizing our public education system, and then saying, hey, 10 percent of the people get to go to that, and then everybody else is going to go to schools that don't give them that opportunity.

Real choice is about having an investment in our public education system as the doorway, the gateway to a future of opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, the most important thing I think is that last night's address was a softer tone. It was a disciplined speech, and there were some good statements.

Unfortunately, the rhetoric of last night doesn't match the actions. It doesn't match the executive actions of the last 7 weeks that have thrown this country into chaos on immigration. It doesn't match the fact that we still don't have a replacement plan that will make things better for health care, not increase payments, not give giveaways to insurance companies, not decrease subsidies so that health care can be affordable.

His speech last night did not reflect specifics around how he is going to accomplish some of the good things that he said he was going to do. And it continued to put fear into people's hearts and minds about who our neighbors are, about the immigrants across this country who have done so much to build and contribute.

He is the President of the United States. He has a remarkable microphone. He talked about unity last night. But unity means being a President for everybody, and it means not creating stories that somehow draw pictures of an immigrant community that is full of crime, inner cities that are full of crime. That is not the inner cities that I know. If he is talking about inner cities in Chicago and other places, we should be talking about how to fix crime, but not calling everybody who lives there criminals.

We have got to understand that our country deserves a body in this Chamber, in this United States Congress that really preserves the opportunity, the dreams, and the ability for everybody in our country to know that they have got a fair shot. That is what America has been for so long for so many people across the world.

When he talks about improving the vetting of refugees to this country, let me tell you, I know a lot about this issue. There are 20 steps you have to go through if you want to be vetted into this country as a refugee. All of our multiple intelligence agencies, multiple agencies in other countries, the United Nations and others are involved in that vetting process. Our own intelligence agencies vet people.

Out of the seven countries that he put on the list for the Muslim ban, the 9/11 hijackers didn't come from any of those countries. They came from another country that is not on that list: Saudi Arabia.

So if we are really going to think about how we improve our security in this country, we should be thinking about economic security that gives people the opportunity that they need in this country, the ability to fill our jobs with well-trained folks from this country, and then we continue to allow immigrants to come in as we need them. But don't allow them to come in because we are not training enough people and we are not investing in people right here in this country and then criticize those immigrants for taking these jobs.

Let's raise our wages. Let's invest in apprenticeships. That is good in rural areas, and that is good in urban areas. Let's invest in our community and technical colleges. Let's provide opportunity for people who are ready to take that opportunity.

Let's be compassionate. It is Ash Wednesday today. I am not an observing Catholic, but I think today—because I went to a Jesuit university—and I think today of what we were taught in that university about compassion.

I think it is time for us to recognize that true greatness for our country doesn't come from fear mongering. It doesn't come from otherizing. You can tap into that. You can mobilize people around that. You can enrage people around that.

Ultimately, true greatness and the greatness of this country has always come from our ability to have a vision of opportunity for everybody and to actually work to perfect this Union, to actually work to make democracy real, to actually work to engage people in a vision that says we are all better off when we are all better off. That means that my boat rising lifts your boat rising. It is not about fighting over the spoils that are too small for us anyway. It is not about whose pie we are eating.

It is about having more pie for everybody and ultimately opportunity, education, jobs, higher wages, health care, paid family leave, the ability for people to live with dignity and respect, racial justice, all of the fights that this country has been having for a very long time. Some we have won, and some we have won a little bit on, and some we have won a lot on. We still have a ways to go.

What I hope we do, as we think about the state of the Union of this country, is understand that our state of the Union is strong when our communities are strong. Our state of the Union is strong when we invest in our future.

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

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

HAPPY BIRTHDAY NEBRASKA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. FORTENBERRY) for 30 minutes.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, for 150 years now, Nebraska has held a special place in the history of America. We Nebraskans rightly pride ourselves on the values of hard work, on the values of community life, on the proper value of the good stewardship of our precious resources. The mystique of the Great Plains, the nobility of the family farm, and the vibrancy of our people create the conditions for the good life.

Our story is one of strength, it is one of dignity, and I am proud to celebrate our 150th anniversary.

□ 2030

Mr. Speaker, a number of years ago, a gift of land donation enabled the expansion of the Homestead National Monument, which is near Beatrice, Nebraska. Run by the National Park Service, their personnel were kind enough to invite me to the dedication ceremony; and during that event, a young woman who was from a seventh-generation farm family—in high school at that time, as I recall—got up to speak. She gave a beautiful talk about our Nebraska values, our connectedness to the land, the deeper meaning of living on the plains, and the ideal of maintaining the continuity of family life.

Her remarks, Mr. Speaker, moved me so much that I literally tossed my own speech aside and spoke off the cuff, and I said something like this: Perhaps it was on a day just like this where that settler family came over the hill there, and they looked at the great expansion of the plains before them.

Perhaps that day they felt the warm, spring sun on their cheeks, and they heard the chirp of the western meadowlark in the air, and they watched as the beautiful bluestem prairie grass swayed in the wind. Perhaps it was then that they made their decision: We stay right here. Nebraska will be our home.

Mr. Speaker, when I finished that, I was very proud of myself, so I sat down. And then the next speaker came up, another political figure, and he had this to say: Well, my family came here because they were horse thieves. We all shared a little laugh, but really, Mr. Speaker, Nebraska's colorful history and droll wit were simultaneously captured in that moment.

Nebraska's official motto is ''Equality before the law,'' but our unofficial motto is ''Nebraska nice.'' It is true. Nebraskans are generally nice. But beneath that friendly veneer is an unmistakable, unvarnished realism.

Nebraskans have a unique ability to look at a situation and size it up accurately, if often humorously. ''Git r done'' is an often-used phrase that I think can be safely attributable to us.

Now, sometimes, Mr. Speaker, Nebraska has been pejoratively described in the popular imagination of our country, first as the ''Great American Desert'' because it was thought that nothing would grow there. Today, we have the largest amount of acreage under irrigation in the country, including the fact that we are the largest grower of popcorn in America. We are a leader in livestock production and multiple types of commodity production, as well as specialty crops.

We were sometimes castigated as ''flyover country.'' I hear that around here sometimes, that is, until you come to Nebraska and realize that it is a wonderful place to live and to work and to raise a family relatively free from crime, except even horse thieves, congestion, as well as pollution.

Nebraska has, routinely, the highest graduation rate in the country and the lowest unemployment rate in the country.

And, though, in true Nebraska fashion, self-effacing Cornhuskers would cringe at the term, we have had our fair share of celebrities as well, including Father Ed Flanagan, who founded Boys Town, now known as Boys Town and Girls Town; Civil Rights pioneers, Chief Standing Bear being one of the most prominent; Malcolm X; authors Mari Sandoz and Willa Cather; professional athletes Bob Gibson and Gale Sayers; and entertainers, Henry Fonda, Marlon Brando, Montgomery Clift, Johnny Carson, and Dick Cavett.

Moreover, Mr. Speaker, our singular, unicameral legislature is a model for bipartisanship and frugality. And I would be remiss if I didn't say our run-it-up-the-gut offense with a few option twists, it may not have been flashy, but it helped the University of Nebraska's football team win five national championships.

I am proud to serve in the United States congressional seat once held by Williams Jennings Bryan, who along with Senator George Norris perhaps are the most famous, though controversial in some ways, politicians in our State's history.

As we celebrate the 150th anniversary of Nebraska's admission to the United States of America—by the way, the first State admitted after the Civil War—I recall Representative Bryan's words from over 100 years ago. It is a quote that actually is outside of our football stadium, known as Memorial Stadium, on Tom and Nancy Osborne Field. It says this: ''Destiny is no matter of chance. It is a matter of choice. It is not a thing to be waited for, it is a thing to be achieved.''

And perhaps, Mr. Speaker, we can add to that quote today: And that the choice to be good makes the destiny arrive well.

Happy birthday, Nebraska.

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

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 8 o'clock and 37 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, March 2, 2017, at 9 a.m.

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. DEFAZIO (for himself and Mr. MASSIE):

H.R. 1265. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to make modifications to the passenger facility charge program administered by the Federal Aviation Administration, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. BLUMENAUER (for himself and Mr. BUCHANAN):

H.R. 1266. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Transportation to make grants to assist units of local government in developing and implementing plans, known as Vision Zero plans, to eliminate transportation-related fatalities and serious injuries, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. SMITH of Missouri (for himself, Mr. KIND, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. BISHOP of Michigan, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Mr. SESSIONS, Ms. DELBENE, Mr. FITZPATRICK, and Ms. SINEMA):

H.R. 1267. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to treat certain amounts paid for physical activity, fitness, and exercise as amounts paid for medical care; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. SMITH of Nebraska (for himself, Mr. KIND, Mr. SCHRADER, Mr. YOHO, Mr. ABRAHAM, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Ms. DELBENE, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. HARPER, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, and Mrs. DAVIS of California):

H.R. 1268. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for an exclusion for assistance provided to participants in certain veterinary student loan repayment or forgiveness programs; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. LAMALFA (for himself and Mr. GARAMENDI):

H.R. 1269. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior to take actions to support non-Federal investments in water infrastructure

improvements in the Sacramento Valley, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. NADLER (for himself and Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER):

H.R. 1270. A bill to promote and protect from discrimination living organ donors; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on Oversight and Government Reform, House Administration, Education and the Workforce, and Financial Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio (for himself and Ms. MATSUI):

H.R. 1271. A bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to prevent the abuse of dextromethorphan, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. RUSH:

H.R. 1272. A bill to provide for the expeditious disclosure of records related to civil rights cold cases, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. NEWHOUSE (for himself, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. HARPER, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. CHAFFETZ, and Mr. TIPTON):

H.R. 1273. A bill to amend the Endangered Species Act of 1973 to require publication of the basis for determinations that species are endangered species or threatened species, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. NEWHOUSE (for himself, Mr. TIPTON, Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. HARPER, Mr. YOHO, Mr. JONES, Mr. MARSHALL, and Mr. CRAMER):

H.R. 1274. A bill to amend the Endangered Species Act of 1973 to require making available to States affected by determinations that species are endangered species or threatened species all data that is the basis of such determinations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. SESSIONS:

H.R. 1275. A bill to eliminate the individual and employer health coverage mandates under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, to expand beyond that Act the choices in obtaining and financing affordable health insurance coverage, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on Ways and Means, and Education and the Workforce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. ADAMS (for herself, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. FUDGE, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. EVANS, Ms. PLASKETT, Ms. DELBENE, Ms. NORTON, Ms. KAPTUR, Ms. LEE, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. MOORE, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. NORCROSS, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. RUSH, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. COHEN, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Ms. JAYAPAL, and Mr. LANGEVIN):

H.R. 1276. A bill to amend the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 to require that supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits be calculated with reference to the cost of the low-cost food plan as determined by the Secretary of Agriculture, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Mrs. BLACKBURN:

H.R. 1277. A bill to permit indefinite extensions for certain previously extended Medicaid managed care waivers; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. ESPAILLAT (for himself, Mr. SCHNEIDER, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Ms. NORTON, Mr. COHEN, Mr. RASKIN, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. CÁRDENAS, and Mr. SWALWELL of California):

H.R. 1278. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to require firearm assembly kits to be considered to be firearms; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. ESTY (for herself, Mr. KING of New York, Ms. MCCOLLUM, and Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania):

H.R. 1279. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish within the Department of Veterans Affairs a center of excellence in the prevention, diagnosis, mitigation, treatment, and rehabilitation of health conditions relating to exposure to burn pits; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. FORTENBERRY:

H.R. 1280. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase the maximum contribution limit for health savings accounts, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN:

H.R. 1281. A bill to extend the authorization of the Highlands Conservation Act; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. GARRETT (for himself and Mr. MCCAUL):

H.R. 1282. A bill to amend the Homeland Security of 2002 to establish Acquistion Review Boards in the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. HULTGREN (for himself, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, and Mr. MESSER):

H.R. 1283. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to require the disclosure of the annual percentage rates applicable to Federal student loans; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Ms. JENKINS of Kansas (for herself and Mr. THOMPSON of California):

H.R. 1284. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for the recognition of attending physician assistants as attending physicians to serve hospice patients, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. KILMER:

H.R. 1285. A bill to designate and expand wilderness areas in Olympic National Forest in the State of Washington, and to designate certain rivers in Olympic National Forest and Olympic National Park as wild and scenic rivers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. KIND:

H.R. 1286. A bill to require the Secretary of Education to use the excess revenue generated from the William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan Program to carry out the Federal Pell Grant Program; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHI (for himself, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. ESPAILLAT, Ms. LEE, Mr. RASKIN, Mr. NADLER, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. VARGAS, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Mr. VEASEY, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. DESAULNIER, Mr. QUIGLEY, Ms. JAYAPAL, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. CORREA, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. KEATING, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. HIGGINS of New York, Mr. TONKO, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. PETERSON, Mr. VELA, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. CUMMINGS, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. O'HALLERAN, Ms. PLASKETT, Mr. LAWSON of Florida, Mr. PETERS, Mr. GONZALEZ of Texas, Mr. BROWN of Maryland, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mrs. TORRES, Mr. PANETTA, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. NOLAN, Mr. EVANS, Mr. SUOZZI, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. CLAY, Mr. NEAL, Mr. LYNCH, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. GARAMENDI, Ms. HANABUSA, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. MCEACHIN, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. WELCH, Ms. BARRAGÁN, and Mrs. BUSTOS):

H.R. 1287. A bill to require that any Executive order be published on the White House website not less than 72 hours before the Executive order is signed; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire (for herself, Mr. GARAMENDI, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. GRIJALVA, and Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York):

H.R. 1288. A bill to direct the Secretary of Education to carry out a grant program for early childhood STEM activities; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Ms. LEE (for herself, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Ms. BORDALLO, Miss RICE of New York, Ms. NORTON, Mrs. DINGELL, and Mr. SOTO):

H.R. 1289. A bill to establish the Social Work Reinvestment Commission to provide independent counsel to Congress and the Secretary of Health and Human Services on policy issues related to recruitment, retention, research, and reinvestment in the profession of social work, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Ms. LEE (for herself, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. SERRANO, Ms. MCCOLLUM, and Mr. GRIJALVA):

H.R. 1290. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to improve access to mental health services under the Medicare program; 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 Ms. NORTON (for herself, Ms. ADAMS, Ms. BASS, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. BEYER, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Ms. BONAMICI, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. BROWN of Maryland, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Ms. CLARKE of New

York, Mr. CLAY, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. COHEN, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. DEFAZIO, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. DELANEY, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. DESAULNIER, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. ENGEL, Ms. ESHOO, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. GALLEGO, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Ms. HANABUSA, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. HUFFMAN, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. JEFFRIES, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. KAPTUR, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. KILDEE, Mr. KILMER, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Ms. LEE, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. LIPINSKI, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mrs. LOWEY, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mr. LYNCH, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. MEEKS, Ms. MOORE, Mr. NADLER, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. NOLAN, Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mr. PETERS, Ms. PLASKETT, Mr. POCAN, Mr. POLIS, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. RASKIN, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. RUSH, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. SABLAN, Ms. SÁNCHEZ, Mr. SARBANES, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. SERRANO, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. TONKO, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. VEASEY, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. WALZ, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. WELCH, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. QUIGLEY, and Mr. LARSEN of Washington):

H.R. 1291. A bill to provide for the admission of the State of Washington, D.C. into the Union; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and in addition to the Committee on Rules, 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. POSEY (for himself, Mr. THOMAS J. ROONEY of Florida, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, and Mr. TROTT):

H.R. 1292. A bill to amend the Terrorism Risk Insurance Act of 2002 to allow for the use of certain assets of foreign persons and entities to satisfy certain judgments against terrorist parties, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. ROSS:

H.R. 1293. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to require that the Office of Personnel Management submit an annual report to Congress relating to the use of official time by Federal employees; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. RUTHERFORD (for himself and Mr. MCCAUL):

H.R. 1294. A bill to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to provide for congressional notification regarding major acquisition program breaches, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. SIRES (for himself and Mr. YOUNG of Iowa):

H.R. 1295. A bill to amend the Peace Corps Act to allow former volunteers and officers and employees to use the seal, emblem, or name of Peace Corps on death announcements and grave stones; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. TIBERI (for himself, Mr. NEAL, Mr. RENACCI, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. PAULSEN, Mr. KIND, and Mrs. BEATTY):

H.R. 1296. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide appropriate rules for the application of the deduction for income attributable to domestic production activities with respect to certain contract manufacturing or production arrangements; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN:

H.R. 1297. A bill to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to make technical corrections to the requirement that the Secretary of Homeland Security submit quadrennial homeland security reviews, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. WENSTRUP (for himself and Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois):

H.R. 1298. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to cover screening computed tomography colonography as a colorectal cancer screening test under the Medicare program; 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. LEWIS of Minnesota:

H.J. Res. 84. A joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Department of Transportation relating to ''Metropolitan Planning Organization Coordination and Planning Area Reform''; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. GALLAGHER (for himself and Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana):

H.J. Res. 85. A joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States limiting the number of terms Senators and Representatives may serve; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. FORTENBERRY (for himself, Mr. SMITH of Nebraska, and Mr. BACON):

H. Con. Res. 32. Concurrent resolution congratulating the State of Nebraska on the 150th anniversary of the admission of that State into the United States; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. CICILLINE (for himself, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. POCAN, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. LANGEVIN, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Ms. BONAMICI, Ms. PINGREE, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. COHEN, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. DEUTCH, Ms. TITUS, and Ms. SLAUGHTER):

H. Res. 160. A resolution amending the Rules of the House of Representatives to establish a Permanent Select Committee on Aging; to the Committee on Rules.

By Ms. FUDGE (for herself and Mr. TIBERI):

H. Res. 161. A resolution recognizing the 100th anniversary of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, the world's largest organization of food and nutrition professionals; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. HUFFMAN (for himself, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mrs. BEATTY, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. COHEN, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. DELANEY, Mr. DESAULNIER, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. DONOVAN, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. ESPAILLAT, Mr. EVANS, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. HIMES, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Ms. JAYAPAL, Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Mr. JONES, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. KNIGHT, Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Ms. LEE, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Ms. MENG, Ms. MOORE, Ms. NORTON, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. PANETTA, Mr. PETERS, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. RUSH, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. SMITH of Nebraska, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. TAKANO, Ms. TITUS, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mrs. TORRES, Mr. VARGAS, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. WALZ, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. YARMUTH, and Mr. FARENTHOLD):

H. Res. 162. A resolution expressing support for designation of March 21, 2017, as ''National Rosie the Riveter Day''; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. PAYNE:

H. Res. 163. A resolution supporting the designation of March 2017, as National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

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. DEFAZIO:

H.R. 1265.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1, Clause 3, and Clause 18 of the Constitution.

By Mr. BLUMENAUER:

H.R. 1266.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1

By Mr. SMITH of Missouri:

H.R. 1267.

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

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. SMITH of Nebraska:

H.R. 1268.

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

Article I, Section 8: The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts, and Excises . . .

By Mr. LAMALFA:

H.R. 1269.

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

Article 1, Section 8 of the Constitution grants Congress the authority to regulate commerce between the states and has previously been recognized as authorizing the Bureau of Reclamation, which this bill addresses.

By Mr. NADLER:

H.R. 1270.

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

Clauses 3 and 18 of Article 1 Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution

By Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio:
H.R. 1271.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution
By Mr. RUSH:
H.R. 1272.
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 . . .''; and
Article I, Section 8, Clause 18: ''To make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers . . .''
By Mr. NEWHOUSE:
H.R. 1273.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution
By Mr. NEWHOUSE:
H.R. 1274.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution
By Mr. SESSIONS:
H.R. 1275.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 1:
The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defense and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States;
By Ms. ADAMS:
H.R. 1276.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 3, ''To regulate Commerce with Foreign Nationals, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.''
Article I, Section 8, Clause 1, ''The Congress shall have the 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 Mrs. BLACKBURN:
H.R. 1277.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3
By Mr. ESPAILLAT:
H.R. 1278.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
clause 3 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution
By Ms. ESTY:
H.R. 1279.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
clause 18 of section 8 of article 1 of the Constitution.
By Mr. FORTENBERRY:
H.R. 1280.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution.
By Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN:
H.R. 1281.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution
By Mr. GARRETT:
H.R. 1282.
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 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. HULTGREN:
H.R. 1283.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
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.
Section 8, Clause 3: To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.
By Ms. JENKINS of Kansas:
H.R. 1284.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8:
The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defense and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.
Article I, Section 9:
No Money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law.
By Mr. KILMER:
H.R. 1285.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 (relating to providing for the general welfare of the United States);
Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 (relating to the power to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying out the powers vested in Congress); and
Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2 (relating to the power of Congress to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States).
By Mr. KIND:
H.R. 1286.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I Section 8, Clause 3.
By Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHI:
H.R. 1287.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
The authority to offer this bill derives from Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18, of the US Constitution.
By Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire:
H.R. 1288.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 (relating to the power of Congress to provide for the general welfare of the United States) and Clause 18 (relating to the power to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying out the powers vested in Congress)
By Ms. LEE:
H.R. 1289.
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 Ms. LEE:
H.R. 1290.
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 Ms. NORTON:
H.R. 1291.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
clause 1 of section 3 of article IV of the Constitution.
By Mr. POSEY:
H.R. 1292.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the Constitution of the United States: To regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes;
Article I, Section 8, Clause 9 of the Constitution of the United States: To constitute tribunals inferior to the Supreme Court;
Article I, Section 8, Clause 10 of the Constitution of the United States: To define and punish Piracies and Felonies committed on the high Seas, and Offenses against the Law of Nations;
Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the Constitution of the United States: To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the forgoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States or in any Department or Officer thereof;
Amendment V No person shall be . . . deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law.
By Mr. ROSS:
H.R. 1293.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 18
By Mr. RUTHERFORD:
H.R. 1294.
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 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. SIRES:
H.R. 1295.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Pursuant to clause 3(d) of rules XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee finds the authority for this legislation in article I, section 8 of the Constitution.
By Mr. TIBERI:
H.R. 1296.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Clause 1 of Section 8 of Article I
By Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN:
H.R. 1297.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 1
Article I, Section 8, Clause 18
By Mr. WENSTRUP:
H.R. 1298.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 1
By Mr. LEWIS of Minnesota:
H.J. Res. 84.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3 of the Constitution of the United States—To regulate

commerce with foreign nations, and among the several States, and with Indian Tribes

By Mr. GALLAGHER:

H.J. Res. 85.

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

Article V: ''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 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; provided that no amendment which may be made prior to the year one thousand eight hundred and eight shall in any manner affect the first and fourth clauses in the ninth section of the first article; and that no state, without its consent, shall be deprived of its equal suffrage in the Senate.''

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

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

H.R. 25: Mr. FARENTHOLD.

H.R. 36: Mrs. ROBY.

H.R. 37: Mrs. ROBY.

H.R. 40: Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Ms. MOORE, and Ms. SEWELL of Alabama.

H.R. 82: Mr. BARLETTA.

H.R. 113: Mr. SARBANES.

H.R. 147: Mrs. ROBY.

H.R. 173: Mr. SCHNEIDER, Mr. GIBBS, Ms. ROSEN, Mr. NOLAN, Mr. YARMUTH, and Ms. FUDGE.

H.R. 179: Mr. WITTMAN and Mr. POLIS.

H.R. 233: Mr. KENNEDY and Mr. LOWENTHAL.

H.R. 257: Mr. MAST.

H.R. 303: Mr. WITTMAN, Mr. KIND, Mr. EMMER, Mr. SMITH of Missouri, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. HECK, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. SCHRADER, Mr. HIGGINS of New York, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. LATTA, Mr. RUIZ, and Mr. COMER.

H.R. 305: Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. TONKO, Ms. CLARKE of New York, and Ms. LOFGREN.

H.R. 355: Mr. KING of New York and Mr. MARINO.

H.R. 367: Mr. TIBERI, Mr. GOWDY, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. FLORES, and Mr. RICE of South Carolina.

H.R. 371: Mr. NOLAN, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. COSTA, and Mr. KILDEE.

H.R. 389: Mr. BEYER, Mr. HECK, and Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER.

H.R. 448: Ms. TITUS, Mr. GALLEGO, Ms. MOORE, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, and Mr. TAKANO.

H.R. 453: Mr. LUETKEMEYER.

H.R. 459: Mr. RICHMOND.

H.R. 477: Mr. BRADY of Texas.

H.R. 480: Mr. MARCHANT.

H.R. 490: Mr. DAVIDSON.

H.R. 547: Mr. YARMUTH.

H.R. 559: Mr. HILL.

H.R. 564: Mr. BABIN, Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, Mr. WITTMAN, and Mr. PITTENGER.

H.R. 638: Mr. ROYCE of California and Mr. AGUILAR.

H.R. 660: Mr. VALADAO and Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia.

H.R. 664: Ms. SLAUGHTER, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. DONOVAN, and Mr. FASO.

H.R. 669: Mr. LOWENTHAL.

H.R. 685: Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 696: Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. CRIST, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Mr. MAST, Ms. ROSEN, Mr. SERRANO, and Mr. MEEKS.

H.R. 721: Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. AMODEI, Mr. VELA, Mr. FLORES, Mrs. NOEM, Mr. VALADAO, Mr. DESAULNIER, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. SIRES, and Mr. PETERS.

H.R. 747: Mr. CARBAJAL, Ms. SÁNCHEZ, Mr. HOLDING, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. GIBBS, Mr. HUIZENGA, Mr. WITTMAN, and Mr. ISSA.

H.R. 754: Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico.

H.R. 757: Ms. TITUS, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. HOYER, and Mr. RUSH.

H.R. 785: Mrs. NOEM.

H.R. 787: Ms. SHEA-PORTER.

H.R. 816: Mr. TAKANO.

H.R. 817: Ms. KAPTUR and Ms. DEGETTE.

H.R. 820: Mr. YOUNG of Iowa, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, Mr. KIND, and Mr. QUIGLEY.

H.R. 821: Ms. SPEIER, Mr. LOWENTHAL, and Ms. BARRAGÁN.

H.R. 823: Ms. BARRAGÁN and Mr. RUIZ.

H.R. 825: Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico and Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia.

H.R. 830: Mr. HECK.

H.R. 842: Mr. SWALWELL of California.

H.R. 849: Mrs. BLACKBURN and Mr. HUDSON.

H.R. 867: Mr. YARMUTH.

H.R. 870: Mr. WEBSTER of Florida.

H.R. 886: Ms. SHEA-PORTER.

H.R. 896: Mr. GRAVES of Missouri.

H.R. 898: Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York and Mr. HIMES.

H.R. 902: Mr. AMODEI and Mr. MCGOVERN.

H.R. 914: Ms. NORTON.

H.R. 941: Mrs. HARTZLER.

H.R. 947: Ms. FRANKEL of Florida.

H.R. 948: Mr. BUTTERFIELD.

H.R. 959: Mr. BLUMENAUER and Mr. LOEBSACK.

H.R. 960: Mr. PERLMUTTER.

H.R. 997: Mr. ADERHOLT, Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, and Mr. BISHOP of Utah.

H.R. 1002: Mr. FITZPATRICK.

H.R. 1006: Mr. RUSH.

H.R. 1010: Mr. BROOKS of Alabama.

H.R. 1015: Ms. ESTY.

H.R. 1017: Mr. FORTENBERRY.

H.R. 1026: Mr. COLLINS of New York.

H.R. 1031: Mr. BABIN.

H.R. 1038: Mr. BYRNE.

H.R. 1083: Ms. BROWNLEY of California.

H.R. 1091: Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.

H.R. 1097: Mr. CARSON of Indiana.

H.R. 1098: Mr. BUCHANAN.

H.R. 1102: Mr. KILMER.

H.R. 1104: Ms. SHEA-PORTER.

H.R. 1105: Mr. FARENTHOLD.

H.R. 1148: Mr. HARRIS, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. CLAY, and Ms. MCSALLY.

H.R. 1155: Mr. PRICE of North Carolina and Mr. FORTENBERRY.

H.R. 1158: Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Ms. STEFANIK, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. KELLY of Mississippi, Mr. LOEBSACK, and Mrs. BEATTY.

H.R. 1179: Mr. OLSON, Mr. RENACCI, Mr. BANKS of Indiana, Mrs. WALORSKI, and Mr. CRAMER.

H.R. 1188: Mr. FITZPATRICK and Mr. CALVERT.

H.R. 1200: Mr. WITTMAN.

H.R. 1203: Mr. YOHO.

H.R. 1204: Mr. GOSAR and Mr. FLORES.

H.R. 1223: Mr. LANCE, Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN, and Mr. SOTO.

H.R. 1227: Mr. POLIS.

H.R. 1242: Mr. PRICE of North Carolina and Mr. MCGOVERN.

H.J. Res. 48: Mr. KILMER.

H.J. Res. 71: Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. BABIN, Mr. ROKITA, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana, and Mr. GIBBS.

H.J. Res. 74: Mr. TONKO, Mr. SERRANO, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. LOEBSACK, and Ms. BARRAGÁN.

H.J. Res. 83: Mr. ARRINGTON and Mr. YOHO.

H. Con. Res. 10: Mr. REED.

H. Con. Res. 13: Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana, Mr. COFFMAN, Mr. DENT, Mr. BROOKS of Alabama, Mr. YARMUTH, Ms. GRANGER, and Mr. YOUNG of Iowa.

H. Con. Res. 26: Mr. FLORES.

H. Res. 28: Ms. ADAMS, Ms. HANABUSA, Mr. COURTNEY, Ms. ROSEN, Mr. SCHRADER, Mr. CARBAJAL, Mr. WITTMAN, Mr. KHANNA, Mr. BERA, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. MARINO, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. RUIZ, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. KEATING, and Mr. CUELLAR.

H. Res. 31: Mr. CARBAJAL, Mr. KHANNA, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. COSTA, and Mr. CUELLAR.

H. Res. 111: Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mrs. DINGELL, and Mr. GOTTHEIMER.

H. Res. 132: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. SOTO, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, and Mr. PETERSON.

H. Res. 145: Ms. GRANGER.

H. Res. 154: Mr. RUSH, Mr. MOULTON, and Mr. YARMUTH.

H. Res. 157: Mrs. DINGELL.

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PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 115th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 163 WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1, 2017 No. 36

Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

God of wonder, beyond all majesty, You are worthy of our praise. Today, on this Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent, give us the wisdom to reflect on our mortality and to examine our lives. Use our Senators as ambassadors of peace, reconciliation, and justice. May they work to remove malice, envy, revenge, deception, and bitterness.

Lord, inspire them with Your presence until their faith in You is visible and contagious. May they bear witness to Your love even when their motivations are misunderstood by their detractors. Give them the gifts of integrity and authenticity in their relationships with You and with one another.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). The majority leader is recognized.

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS TO CONGRESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I think we were all really pleased last night to hear the President's unifying message. It was refreshing for everyone after such a difficult election season. It was great to see even my friend the Democratic leader occasionally applauding the President last night. It is a reminder that we are all in this together.

Yesterday, I laid out my hopes for his address to Congress. I said that the middle class is ready for a new direction after 8 years of disappointments. I said that we all knew what needed to get done, too—issues like simplifying taxes to create more jobs, reforming regulations to get the economy moving, and repealing and replacing ObamaCare to bring relief to the middle class. It was great to hear the President touch on each of those issues last night.

It was also great to hear him talk about his outstanding nominee to the Supreme Court, Judge Neil Gorsuch—a judge who has earned widespread acclaim and who will be a worthy successor to Justice Scalia on the High Court.

Last night President Trump talked about a new spirit of optimism in our country. He talked about repositioning us for success, both at home and in a dangerous world. He talked about growing opportunity, better jobs, and a thriving middle class. Then, he actually put forward policies that could get us there. What a change from the last 8 years.

He also outlined some of the actions he has already taken to move these priorities forward. For instance, he took action yesterday to send the so-called waters of the United States rule back to the drawing board. He demonstrated that there are realistic ways to protect our Nation's waterways without excessive and duplicative regulations that infringe on the property rights of individuals.

Let me again commend him for protecting the middle class from yet another regulation based more on ideology than fact. It is just the type of thing Americans are so tired of—left-wing regulations spun as one thing, but that really do another; left-leaning laws that purport to help the middle class, but that actually hurt middle-class families.

A great example of that is ObamaCare. Americans were promised that costs would go down, but, of course, they went up. Americans were promised more choice, but they got less. Americans were promised that they could keep their plans, but that was a broken promise as well.

No wonder Americans were so tired of what they have seen over the last 8 years. They are ready for something entirely new. They are ready to start believing in the future again. The President made clear last night that he is ready to work with Congress on policies that can actually move us forward. He will find many partners in Congress excited to get those things accomplished.

We share his commitment on other issues he outlined too. We agree that our children deserve better than failing schools. We agree that our veterans deserve better than failing bureaucracy. We agree that our brothers and mothers and friends and neighbors deserve better than the scourge of heroin and prescription opioid abuse.

In an era of divided government, Congress took what action we could on those issues. It was often significant action, and we are all proud of it. But we now have a chance to achieve even more. So, of course, we are excited about the opportunity to improve the lives of the men and women who sent us here. That is why we all signed up for this job in the first place.

I am not just talking about Republicans. I know our Democratic friends have different ideas than us on many of these things. I know the far left is pressuring them to burn the place down because it can't accept the results of last year's election. But everyone knows that won't get us anywhere at all.

Let's remember that we have a historic opportunity before us. We can

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

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keep refighting the last election over and over and over, or we can heed the President's message of unity last night. We can come together to accomplish big things. We can pull down the barriers of the past. We can uphold, in the words of the Democratic leader himself, our ''moral obligation'' to ''avoid gridlock and get the country to work again.''

Now, I know he said that just before the election. I know he hoped the election would turn out differently. But we each have a duty to accept the results. We each have a duty to bring the country together and to move it forward. That is now the challenge before our Democratic friends.

I ask them to meet the moment—to meet the moment. I hope they will because the American people are counting on us all. They are ready for a new start. We are determined to work hard on their behalf. As the President himself said last night, so is he.

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS TO CONGRESS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, before I get into the substance of my remarks, I was listening to our Republican leader talking about compromise—not that he ever engaged in very much of it when he was leader last year—but compromise requires something to compromise over. We have nothing from the administration, nothing on infrastructure, nothing on trade, nothing even on ACA.

You want to sit down and talk? Let's see what your plans are. See if you can get your own act together before you are pointing the finger at Democrats.

The President's speech—let me say this: This President's speech was detached from this President's reality. The President, in this speech and in so many others, talks like a populist. He talks to the working people of America and promises them things. When he governs, it is nothing like that at all. He is favoring the very powerful special interests, making their lives easier, and putting more burdens on the backs of the middle class and people trying to get to the middle class.

A metaphor for this was his speech at the inauguration. He gave a speech—also aimed at the working people—and within an hour after that, he signed an Executive order that helped the banks and added about $500 to the mortgage of every new homeowner.

You can't just talk the talk, Mr. President. You have to walk the walk. On issue after issue, we haven't seen anything—or negative things for the working class.

We heard about infrastructure. A month ago, the Democrats put together an infrastructure plan of $1 trillion. It was a strong plan. It has a lot of support throughout the country.

Where is the President's infrastructure plan? We haven't heard a peep about it. Some of his White House folks leaked that we will not get to infrastructure until next year. Mentioning it in a speech—infrastructure—is not going to employ a single new worker.

What about trade? The President talked about trade, putting America first. My views tend to be closer to President Trump's than they were to President Bush's or President Obama's on trade. Again, what we hear in the speech and what the President actually does are contradictory.

Throughout his campaign, the President took an issue near and dear to my heart and to the heart of Senator GRAHAM of South Carolina—China manipulating its currency. He had said over and over again in the campaign: On the first day I am President, I will sign an Executive order that labels China a currency manipulator.

They are. We know they manipulate their currency, and it has cost America hundreds of thousands, if not millions of good-paying jobs and caused a load of wealth to flow from our country to theirs.

This one didn't require congressional approval. This one didn't require a single Democrat to join in. All the President had to do was sign the order. We are now 40 days into this administration. Not only has he still not signed the order, but he is saying he may back off.

Last night, the President talked about research, wiping out rare diseases. Yet with the budget they proposed, given that they want to slash domestic discretionary spending by tens of billions of dollars and exempt veterans and Homeland Security, there is no alternative to the fact that the President in his budget, at the same time he is talking about medical research, is going to slash it.

Education. He talked about the great issue of education. The same thing: His budget is going to slash education to smithereens, hurting our students, hurting our teachers, hurting our schools.

Perhaps the most hypocritical of all was draining the swamp. That was one of the President's main themes when he was President-elect: Drain the swamp. Look who is in his Cabinet. His Secretary of Treasury, his Secretary of Commerce, and his NEC adviser are from Wall Street.

Is this the same man who said that we are going to go after Wall Street if we get elected? Wall Street is running the economic show. The Cabinet is filled with bankers. The Cabinet is filled with billionaires, not people who feel for the average American. In fact, if you add up the net wealth of his Cabinet, it has more wealth than one-third of the American people total—close to 100 million people. That is cleaning the swamp? Give me a break.

The problem with the President's speech is very simple: His actions don't match his words. His words in the campaign are not matched by his actions. His words in his inaugural speech are not matched by his actions, nor are his words in his speech last night.

It was so funny that he spoke to a bunch of cosmopolitan news anchors, and he mentioned that maybe he will change his views on immigration. The media got into a buzz about that. Then, the speech he gave was one of the most virulently anti-immigrant speeches that we have heard any President ever give. He is saying one thing, doing another.

It is not the hypocrisy that bugs us, although it is there. It is the fact that he is not helping middle-class America. It is the fact that he is not making it easier for more people to travel and get into the middle class because he seems to have governed from the hard, hard right. The hard right is very far away from where the average American is.

Mr. Mulvaney's idea of a budget—maybe 10 percent of America, mostly ideologues, would support it. It is even far away from where the average Republican is. Yesterday, when the President proposed his budget, we had one of my colleagues on the Republican side saying it is dead on arrival. We had the majority leader saying that you can't cut the State Department foreign aid in half. He is far over, and that is hurting him and hurting us, hurting the American people.

The first 40 days have been a pretty rough 40 days for President Trump. It hasn't worked out very well. Why? It is not because he hasn't given a few good speeches. It is because he is governing from the hard right. He is governing far away from what the American people want. He is governing way off to the extreme.

A speech isn't going to change that. A speech isn't going to create one job or one infrastructure plan or one trade law that makes our trade laws, which need to be changed, fairer. No, no, it takes action. Unfortunately, when the President takes action, it is quite the opposite of what he says in the speech on the issues that affect the middle-class and working-class people.

If President Trump does not change how he governs—how he governs, not what speeches he gives—in the near future, then these 40 days, which have been of tumult, of contradiction, of turning one's back on the working class, will be 6 months and then will be a year and then will be 2 years.

The problem with the Presidency does not lie in the speeches the President gives, even though I might object

to a lot of the things he puts in them. It lies in how he governs, and he is not governing well. He is not governing down the middle. He is not governing in a way that lends itself to compromise. We Democrats will continue to hold the President accountable. That is our job. That is what the Constitution says we should do, and we will continue until we see the President change his course in governing. No speech is going to change that or affect that.

NOMINATION OF RYAN ZINKE

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, one other issue is our nominee today, Mr. ZINKE. I want to spend a minute on him. He is the nominee for Secretary of Interior. One of the most important issues handled by the Interior Department is the stewardship of our national parks. These are some of the great national resources of our country.

When my children were younger, my wife and I would take them to national parks, and we would go hiking. We loved it. We so looked forward to going out West. I remember the reward at the end of a big hike was a peanut butter and jelly sandwich. I probably wanted it even more than my kids did. I loved peanut butter and jelly.

From Niagara Falls to the Erie Canalway, to places like Seneca Falls, Stonewall, and Ellis Island, my dear State of New York is home to some of our country's most famous national parks and monuments. They are places I have visited and treasured my whole life. I have been concerned in recent years about the reluctance on the other side of the aisle to properly care for these great national beauties, these great national resources. Currently, there is a $12 billion maintenance backlog for our national parks. Our Republican majority has not seen fit to address them.

Now, adding insult to injury, the new administration's hiring freeze across Federal agencies has already affected parks like the Women's Rights National Historic Park in Seneca Falls, which I have visited many times. It has had to cancel tours due to insufficient funding.

Most troubling, our Republican colleagues want to make it easier to sell off or give away public lands and expand the footprint of the oil and gas industries on public lands—as usual, helping those narrow special interests, hurting the average American. That seems to be the trademark of this administration, which our friends on the other side of the aisle are happily going along with.

That is the context in which I approach Congressman ZINKE's nomination. He claims to be a conservationist in the spirit of Teddy Roosevelt, a great New Yorker. He has demonstrated support for rules, however, that would make it easier to sell off public lands. It is the opposite of what Teddy Roosevelt wanted.

Congressman ZINKE claims to be a conservationist, but he said he would revisit actions taken by the last administration to use the Antiquities Act to permanently protect endangered places of cultural, tribal significance. He claims to be a Roosevelt conservationist but pledged his support for the Trump administration's energy agenda—once again, centered on efforts to expand drilling and mining on Federal lands and waters. A few big oil companies would be made happy, but America would lose a great resource that is an economic resource as well as a beautiful natural resource.

I would say to Mr. ZINKE: You can't be a Roosevelt conservationist when you vote to make it easier to sell off public lands. You can't be a Roosevelt conservationist when you support opening up public lands to increased extraction and drilling. You are not much of a conservationist when you downplay the authority of the legislation that allows the President to create national monuments.

In sum, Congressman ZINKE says he is a dyed-in-the-wool conservationist but doesn't have the record to back it up. That should concern every outdoor enthusiast, every lover of our great and grand national parks.

Unfortunately, because of his record, I will vote no on Mr. ZINKE's nomination. I urge my colleagues to do the same.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of RYAN ZINKE, of Montana, to be Secretary of the Interior.

Under the previous order, there will now be 20 minutes of debate, equally divided.

The Senator from Montana.

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, what a historic day for Montana. As a fellow Montanan, as a member of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources and Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, I look forward to working with RYAN ZINKE in his new role as the Secretary of the Interior.

Serving at the helm of the Department of the Interior, I know he will be a strong advocate for our public lands. He will uphold the Federal trust responsibility to Indian tribes, and he will help unleash American energy and will strengthen our water infrastructure.

I have heard all week some friends on the other side of the aisle speak against my good friend from Montana, RYAN ZINKE. I can tell you, I am perplexed. They are concerned that RYAN ZINKE may not uphold the important roles of the Department of Interior—and that is to protect the public interests in land and mineral management—that he will take shortcuts to extract minerals. Let me tell you what RYAN ZINKE will do, and I have known RYAN ZINKE for 38 years. He will finally restore balance to the use and management of Federal land.

Do you know that in Montana we have more recoverable coal than any State in the United States? Yet the Obama administration had planned to block our ability, Montana's ability, to develop these resources. A moratorium is not a responsible policy. It is reckless. It is misguided, leaving the States and the tribes to be reliant on mineral royalties, to lose out on these revenues, and lose out on the good-paying jobs that coal supports. RYAN ZINKE will take a fresh look at our coal programs and see how we can access these untapped resources in an environmentally responsible way.

Let me remind my colleagues that RYAN ZINKE was born and raised in Montana. It is a State where we like to say we get to work where we also like to play. He will restore that balance to the Department so Montanans can gain better access to our public lands.

He will also ensure our public lands work for those who live closest to them, and that means our States and our tribes. RYAN is a Montanan. He grew up in America's public lands. He grew up in the shadows of Glacier National Park. I grew up in the shadows of Yellowstone National Park. He knows we must strike this balance between conservation and responsible energy development, and he understands better than anybody I know that one-size-fits-all policies of Washington, DC, never work for real America.

I look forward to voting for my friend, my colleague, a Navy SEAL for 23 years, and our next Secretary of the Interior, RYAN ZINKE.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I will vote against confirming Representative RYAN ZINKE as Secretary of the Interior, and I would like to take this opportunity to explain why. To put the matter succinctly, Representative ZINKE—if he is confirmed—will be charged with implementing the Trump administration's ''energy independence plan,'' which includes maximizing energy production on Federal lands, including the outer continental shelf,

OCS. I oppose oil and gas drilling off the coast of Maryland and the entrance to the Chesapeake Bay. There is too little to gain and too much to lose.

Last November, the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, BOEM, wisely did not include any parcels in the Atlantic in the 2017 to 2022 plan to lease offshore land the Federal Government controls. In December, then-President Obama used his authority under section 12(a) of the 1953 Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act of 1953 to withdraw unleased OCS lands from future lease sales, too.

This makes sense. According to BOEM, the entire Atlantic OCS, from Maine all the way to Florida, has 1.15 billion barrels of ''undiscovered technically recoverable'' oil and 12.80 trillion cubic feet of ''undiscovered technically recoverable'' natural gas. These sums sound large, but let's put them in context. The Gulf of Mexico OCS has more than 40 times as much oil and 10 times as much natural gas.

Meanwhile, the U.S. Geological Survey, USGS, recently determined that the midland basin of the Wolfcamp Shale area in the Permian Basin has 20 billion barrels of oil and the natural gas equivalent of another 1.6 billion barrels. The oilfield stretches over 118 miles from Lubbock to Midland. It is the largest ''continuous oil'' discovery in the United States, according to the USGS, three times larger than the assessment of the oil in the mammoth Bakken formation in North Dakota.

It doesn't make any sense to jeopardize the marine life and the fishing and tourism industries along the Maryland coast and Chesapeake Bay when there is so much more oil and gas in other parts of the country.

Deepwater Horizon was a state-of-the-art rig, but it failed, causing the largest oil spill in U.S. waters. Eleven crewman were killed. An oil spill entering the Chesapeake Bay would be a disaster.

An even bigger threat to Maryland and other coastal States is climate change and rising sea levels. We need to accelerate our transition from fossil fuels, not our dependence on them. Two years ago, Oceana concluded that modest levels of offshore wind development over the next 20 years could produce about twice the amount of energy along coastal Atlantic States as offshore drillings and create more than 1.5 times the number of jobs.

There is no provision in the 1953 law that permits President Trump to reverse the Obama administration's section 12(a) OCS withdrawals, but he is determined to try. When Representative ZINKE was first asked about lifting the moratoria, he responded, ''If I am confirmed, I will work to implement President-elect Trump's policy.''

That is the problem right there.

I appreciate Representative ZINKE's honorable service to our country, both in uniform as a Navy SEAL and as an elected official in the Montana State Senate and the U.S. House of Representatives. He has called himself a ''Theodore Roosevelt conservationist'' and supports a permanent reauthorization of the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

It is possible Representative ZINKE will try to resist the Republicans' zeal for transferring ownership of precious public lands from the Federal Government, although he supported a House rule change at the beginning of this Congress to make it easier. Representative ZINKE is an avid sportsman who appears to appreciate the unique role the Federal Government has in managing these resources for multiple uses—not just energy production—and preserving them for future generations.

While these are all positive factors, I am troubled that Representative ZINKE has received a 3 percent rating from the League of Conservation Voters. He has vacillated on the issue of climate change: in 2010, he was one of nearly 1,200 State legislators who signed a letter to President Obama and Congress calling for ''comprehensive clean energy jobs and climate change legislation.'' Since then, however, he has repeatedly expressed doubt about anthropogenic climate change. In an October 2014 debate, Representative ZINKE stated: ''it's not a hoax, but it's not proven science either.'' During his confirmation hearing, Representative ZINKE said that humans ''influence'' climate change, but did not acknowledge the scientific consensus that human activity is a dominant cause of climate change. He also supports using the Congressional Review Act to overturn rules agencies have spent months and even years to develop.

For all of these reasons, but particularly out of concern for the Chesapeake Bay and Maryland's beautiful shoreline and coastal communities, I will vote against confirming Representive ZINKE as Secretary of the Interior.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, I oppose the nomination of Representative RYAN ZINKE to be Secretary of the Interior.

The Department of the Interior is charged with judicious management of our Nation's public lands. It is responsible for balancing conservation, recreation, and development to ensure that Americans get the best use and best value from our collective natural resources.

President Teddy Roosevelt, one of the greatest stewards of our public lands, once said: ''I recognize the right and duty of this generation to develop and use the natural resources of our land; but I do not recognize the right to waste them, or to rob, by wasteful use, the generations that come after us.''

The Obama administration took important steps to protect our resources and provide best value to taxpayers. Taking Atlantic Ocean drilling off the table protects our coastal areas and the vital tourism industry up and down the Eastern Shore, including Ocean City. Modernizing the coal leasing process ensures that taxpayers get proper payment for use of common resources. Preventing methane leakage on public lands stops waste of resources and pollution from a potent greenhouse gas.

Representative ZINKE's history in Congress casts doubt on his commitment to these important initiatives. He has a mere 3 percent lifetime score from the League of Conservation Voters and an F grade from the National Parks Action Fund. I appreciate that he has spoken in opposition to the sale or transfer of public lands to States, but I am deeply concerned about his vote in January in the House of Representatives for a rule change that would make sales and transfers much easier.

As the Sierra Club has said: ''Rather than dedicating himself to the preservation of our public lands, Representative Zinke has repeatedly sided with those who would dismantle, degrade, or dispose of them. Mining, drilling, logging, and dirty energy interests have been placed time and again before the public interest''

In an op-ed opposing a Department of the Interior rule to update coal leasing to get better value for American taxpayers, Representative ZINKE said that the Obama administration was ''fighting a more aggressive war against American coal than they are against ISIS.'' This kind of hyperbole does not bode well for Representative ZINKE's ability to represent American taxpayers or promote conservation as Secretary of the Interior, should he be confirmed.

In his nomination hearing, Representative ZINKE pledged to support Federal public lands, permanently reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund, and address the National Parks maintenance backlog. These are important promises from any nominee for the Department of the Interior. Unfortunately, Representative ZINKE's voting record does not give me confidence in his commitment to fulfill them, and therefore I must vote against his nomination today. I am proud to be a member of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, and if he is confirmed, I look forward to working with him to protect our public lands and ensure that American taxpayers get a fair deal for our common resources.

Mr. DAINES. I yield back the time on both sides.

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

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Zinke nomination?

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, 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. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: The Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON).

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SULLIVAN). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 68, nays 31, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 75 Ex.]

YEAS—68

Alexander	Flake	Nelson
Barrasso	Gardner	Paul
Bennet	Graham	Perdue
Blunt	Grassley	Portman
Boozman	Hatch	Risch
Brown	Heinrich	Roberts
Burr	Heitkamp	Rounds
Capito	Heller	Rubio
Cassidy	Hoeven	Sasse
Cochran	Inhofe	Scott
Collins	Johnson	Shelby
Coons	Kaine	Strange
Corker	Kennedy	Sullivan
Cornyn	King	Tester
Cortez Masto	Lankford	Thune
Cotton	Lee	Tillis
Crapo	Manchin	Toomey
Cruz	McCain	Udall
Daines	McCaskill	Warner
Donnelly	McConnell	Wicker
Enzi	Moran	Wyden
Ernst	Murkowski	Young
Fischer	Murphy	

NAYS—31

Baldwin	Gillibrand	Reed
Blumenthal	Harris	Sanders
Booker	Hassan	Schatz
Cantwell	Hirono	Schumer
Cardin	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Carper	Leahy	Stabenow
Casey	Markey	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Menendez	Warren
Durbin	Merkley	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Murray	
Franken	Peters	

NOT VOTING—1

Isakson

The nomination was confirmed.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote on the nomination, and I move to table the motion to reconsider.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion to table.

The motion was agreed to.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be 10 minutes of debate equally divided.

The Senator from Idaho.

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, it is an honor for me to recommend again Dr. Carson as the Secretary of HUD. Dr. Carson brings a fresh set of eyes to every issue and every problem he faces, and he has an incredible record of success and of achieving outstanding results. We look forward to his bringing that same kind of analytical mind and management to the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

I don't think there is a better pick that could have been made. I urge my colleagues to support this motion to invoke cloture.

I yield the remainder of our time to the Senator from Montana.

CONFIRMATION OF RYAN ZINKE

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, back in 1979, there was a junior from Bozeman High School and another junior from Whitefish High School, both headed to Dillon, MT, as Boys State delegates. The keynote speaker that year was a newly elected U.S. Senator named Max Baucus. Who knew that 38 years later the kid from Bozeman would serve as a U.S. Senator and the kid from Whitefish would be our next Secretary of the Interior.

Congratulations to RYAN ZINKE, our new Secretary of the Interior, who was confirmed with very strong bipartisan support. He is the first Montanan to serve in a President's Cabinet since our statehood in 1889.

RYAN, it is truly an honor to be one of the very first to call you Secretary ZINKE. On behalf of the people of Montana and our country, well done, sir.

I yield back my time.

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, it is my understanding that there is no one else who wants to speak on either side. So at this time, I yield back all time on both sides.

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

Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Benjamin S. Carson, Sr., of Florida, to be Secretary of Housing and Urban Development.

Mitch McConnell, Johnny Isakson, Jeff Flake, Steve Daines, James Lankford, Roger F. Wicker, Dan Sullivan, Thom Tillis, Rob Portman, John Thune, John Hoeven, Deb Fischer, James M. Inhofe, Tim Scott, Lindsey Graham, Jerry Moran, Pat Roberts.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Benjamin S. Carson, Sr., of Florida, to be Secretary of Housing and Urban Development shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 62, nays 37, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 76 Ex.]

YEAS—62

Alexander	Cochran	Ernst
Barrasso	Collins	Fischer
Blunt	Corker	Flake
Boozman	Cornyn	Gardner
Brown	Cotton	Graham
Burr	Crapo	Grassley
Capito	Cruz	Hatch
Cardin	Daines	Heitkamp
Carper	Donnelly	Heller
Cassidy	Enzi	Hoeven
Inhofe	Murkowski	Shelby
Johnson	Paul	Strange
Kennedy	Perdue	Sullivan
King	Portman	Tester
Lankford	Reed	Thune
Lee	Risch	Tillis
Manchin	Roberts	Toomey
McCain	Rounds	Warner
McConnell	Rubio	Wicker
Menendez	Sasse	Young
Moran	Scott	

NAYS—37

Baldwin	Harris	Peters
Bennet	Hassan	Sanders
Blumenthal	Heinrich	Schatz
Booker	Hirono	Schumer
Cantwell	Kaine	Shaheen
Casey	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Coons	Leahy	Udall
Cortez Masto	Markey	Van Hollen
Duckworth	McCaskill	Warren
Durbin	Merkley	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Murphy	Wyden
Franken	Murray	
Gillibrand	Nelson	

NOT VOTING—1

Isakson

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 62, the nays are 37.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Benjamin S. Carson, Sr., of Florida, to be Secretary of Housing and Urban Development.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Idaho.

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, I applaud my colleagues for voting in favor of cloture on the nomination of Dr. Benjamin Carson to be the next Secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

On January 12, the Senate Banking Committee held its confirmation hearing, and Dr. Carson responded to questions and concerns thoroughly and thoughtfully. Dr. Benjamin Carson was unanimously reported out of the Senate Banking Committee on January 24.

To many Americans, Dr. Carson needs no introduction; however, his impressive resume bears repeating. Dr. Carson was raised by a single mother in an impoverished part of the city of Detroit. He attended Yale University and the University of Michigan Medical School and later became a highly accomplished and respected neurosurgeon. Dr. Carson was named director of pediatric neurosurgery at Johns Hopkins Hospital in 1984, at the age of 33—the youngest such director in the Nation.

He gained national fame in the 1980s by becoming the first doctor to lead an operation that separated twins who were conjoined at the head—one of many high-profile operations led by Dr. Carson. He also ran for President this past election and spent months traveling the country, listening to the American people about the problems and the issues they face with respect to housing.

During his testimony before our committee, Dr. Carson highlighted his commitment to carrying forth the

mandate of HUD and to learning more from the people who are directly affected by HUD policies. He has also received bipartisan letters of support from four former HUD Secretaries—Henry Cisneros, former Senator Mel Martinez, Alphonso Jackson, and Steven Preston—who served under both Republican and Democratic administrations.

He has said he plans to continue his conversation with the American people and do a listening tour if confirmed. This is an encouraging sign that Dr. Carson wants to hear from stakeholders and, more importantly, from the American people.

There are many HUD issues to be addressed. Once confirmed, we can begin working on several important issues under HUD's jurisdiction. Streamlining requirements for local public housing authorities, revising certain public housing programs, and strengthening financing for small and rural affordable housing developments are areas that should be addressed. Tackling homelessness, especially among our Nation's veterans, is another issue that is important to me and should be addressed.

It is critical that HUD allow local communities to craft solutions that work best for their needs. There has been bipartisan interest in several of these reforms over the years, and I am confident we can make progress once Dr. Carson is confirmed.

Dr. Carson has consistently demonstrated a commitment to improving the lives of his fellow Americans, and his intellect, leadership, and life experiences are unique, valuable assets for leading an agency like HUD.

I urge my colleagues to vote in support of Dr. Carson's nomination so we can continue the great work of improving America's housing system.

Senator CORNYN very graciously gave me his time, which he was lined up to take first. He has asked if he could take his time at this point.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senator CORNYN be next allowed to speak.

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

The majority whip.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, the Chamber is too slowly moving forward on the President's Cabinet nominees. So far, this Chamber has confirmed 16 Cabinet nominees since January 20. I would note that the most recent nominee, Secretary ZINKE, was confirmed by a vote of 68 to 31 and that Wilbur Ross, Secretary of Commerce, was confirmed by a vote of 72 to 27.

Why have we burned 5 weeks of this new administration and denied the President the staff and the help and the team he needs in order to lead the country? It makes no sense whatsoever.

I, once again, implore our friends on the other side of the aisle to stop the foot-dragging and the delay for delay's sake and to let the President have his Cabinet.

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS TO CONGRESS

Mr. President, I want to comment briefly on last night's address by President Trump to a joint session of Congress.

I think it is safe to say that the President had an extraordinary night last night. This is not just a view from a partisan, but, I think, on a bipartisan basis, people were enormously impressed by the vision the President laid out.

I have had some private conversations with colleagues on the floor, who have said to me, in essence, that this is an unusual and unconventional President but one who is clearly interested in making progress for the American people. He laid out a broad, welcoming vision of some of the things he wants to accomplish, but he did so in a way that welcomed Democrats and bipartisan support to help make that progress for the American people. I think they were somewhat surprised but gratified to hear the President make those sorts of remarks, and I congratulate President Trump for doing it.

Basically, he articulated an optimistic vision and a new direction for the country. This election, like the election back in 2008, was a change election. We have those every now and then. After one party is in power for 8 years, frequently, people say: We would like to try something different. We would like a change election.

We had a true change election in 2016.

The American people made clear that they wanted to get back in the game when they elected President Trump in November—by that I mean in terms of our American prosperity, our American strength, our American leadership in the world. President Trump talked about a new national pride and of cultivating a surge of economic security across the country. I think, at bottom, his speech was a message about confidence—confidence in the American people, confidence in our economic system, which has lifted more people out of poverty than has any other system the world has ever known, confidence that, unfortunately, had been lost during the Obama years that focused so much on self-doubt and America's role in the world—retreating from that role—unfortunately, leaving a void that has been filled, all too eagerly, by tyrants, dictators, and thugs, like Vladimir Putin, for example.

It is also true that this President was elected because, for too long, many people in this country had felt left out and felt like they just were not a part of the conversation we were having here about the great issues of the day. Many felt sidelined, even alienated, by irrelevant policy debates that had nothing to say to their quality of life in America. Many believed they truly didn't have a seat at the table.

President Trump's message throughout the campaign and now—about 5 weeks into his new administration—reflects, I think, the frustration and even the angst many Americans had felt and the gratification now, as they feel like they have somebody who believes in what they believe and will not leave them on the sidelines.

I believe what President Trump represents is an antidote to what many people saw as wrong with Washington, DC. While it is true that President Trump has never held public office before—by all accounts, he is an unconventional political leader—last night, we heard he will work with all of us to actually do something about the concerns of hard-working American families. He will usher in a new era of renewed confidence in what the American people can accomplish together as we enter into, as he put it, a time of national rebuilding.

This is about restoring faith in the American dream. My parents were part of the ''greatest generation''—of those who fought in World War II, who preserved America and a great future for their children and grandchildren. It sickens me, when I read public opinion polling, that too many people today say they do not see that better life—more secure, more prosperous—for their children and grandchildren in the future. What they are saying, in essence, is that we are losing faith in the American dream. I think what President Trump talked about last night is a renewed faith and a renewed commitment to the American dream, which means some sacrifice on the part of the present generation, not just in spending money we do not have and in racking up debt we will never repay and that our children and grandchildren will be saddled with.

Just as one example, President Trump talked about taking on this tepid economic recovery he inherited and turning it into a jobs machine that grows our economy for everyone. This is an optimistic message, as many have noted—it is Reaganesque, really, in its tone—in its talking about building the American economy and reestablishing America's leadership role in the world. I know it is just one indicator.

If you want to look at some objective measure of the American people's hopefulness and optimism about the future, all you need to do is to look at the stock market, as it has gone up 10 percent since President Trump was sworn in and closed at a record high for the 12th day in a row—a record that goes back to 1987. To me, that is saying that the markets and the American people are hopeful about what might be accomplished together under this administration.

One of the things we heard last night, as well, is a reflection of what Vice President PENCE has told us in private gatherings—I have heard him say it in public gatherings as well—which is that the administration is in the ''promise-keeping business.'' Keeping your promises is important. How are you going to maintain the public's confidence when people say one thing when they are campaigning, and then,

once they are sworn into office, they forget about those promises and move on? I am grateful this administration believes in the importance of keeping promises.

We have already seen the President keep his promises to help rein in overreaching regulations; his commitment to reforming the Tax Code, which he talked about last night, so that the economy can grow again and we can all benefit; and his commitment to repealing and replacing the failed experiment of ObamaCare. All of these, he reiterated, he has begun to work on, and he has actually committed to seeing them through to completion. These just aren't talking points, these are promises he has already begun delivering on.

I am personally grateful—and I am sure the Presiding Officer is as well—that he has also reprioritized our national security. National security is just not one on a cafeteria plan that we can kind of walk into and say: I will take a little of this and a little of that. National security is the No. 1 priority for the Federal Government. No one else can do that. At a time when our country faces innumerable threats from all around the world, including terrorism here at home, I appreciate the fact that the President is committed to doing what it takes to restore our national security, to protect our borders, and to restore the rule of law.

I think it is just as simple as this President is committed to getting back to the basics of governing. He is doing what he said he would do, and I find that reassuring, together with the outstanding Cabinet members he has selected to serve with him in his administration.

What America needs and what my constituents in Texas call, write, and ask me about all the time is a way forward that delivers security to our people, encourages prosperity for everyone, and instills confidence in the job creators and investors so we can enjoy a new era of prosperity for all of our people.

I am confident President Trump, in working closely with Congress, can deliver on these and many more promises he has made to the American people. It is obvious to me, from his comments last night, that he is welcoming and inviting our Democratic colleagues to stop the resistance—to stop the obstruction—and to actually come join us in helping to move the country forward. I find that refreshing and welcome, as I hope some of our colleagues will who still haven't quite gotten over the election on November 8 and the constituents they have who feel they are still in a protest mode. There is a time for competing in elections, and then there is a time for governing. That takes all of us, as adults who care deeply about our country, working together on a bipartisan basis to try to find common ground and move the American people's agenda forward.

I look forward to working with the President to make America a stronger, safer, and more economically vibrant nation. That is something we all want and something we should all work together to achieve.

As I said, as we go forward, I hope our friends on the other side of the aisle look at the bigger picture. I have been here long enough to experience when people run for election—like many will do in 2018—and have no record of accomplishment to point to. I believe the Presiding Officer knows what I am talking about. Growing our economy and protecting our homeland should be bipartisan. It should be nonpartisan. And, as the President mentioned, now is the time to come together to unify as Americans to make our country stronger.

I hope all of our colleagues will join together, including our Democratic friends, to let us get to the work of legislating, to let us get off of this extended foot-dragging timetable on confirming the President's nominees for his Cabinet, especially when we are seeing votes like we saw on Mr. ZINKE and Mr. Ross—68 to 31, 72 to 27. There is no rationale for delaying those confirmations when our Democratic colleagues are voting to confirm them. We could have done this on January 20.

Mr. President, I thank my friend from Ohio for his courtesy.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I rise in support of Dr. Carson for Secretary of Housing and Urban Development. However, I just can't resist, as I listened to my friend Senator CORNYN—and I do like and respect Senator CORNYN, and I do mean that. It is always said here, but I actually do. I am just amused by the term ''obstructionism.'' This President was 100 yards down the hall speaking last night and still hasn't put any legislative proposals forward—nothing on immigration except Executive orders; nothing on infrastructure even though Democrats have followed the four corners, if you will, of his proposal, $1 trillion over 10 years—put ink to paper and actually written a real plan that includes public transit, that includes highways and bridges and water and sewer and housing and airports and ports and all of the things we do in doing it right on infrastructure, on public works. So we are all still waiting.

The President has made a lot of speeches. Last night he was not as combative as usual. That was welcome. I think we all, as Senator CORNYN said, applauded that. But we are still looking for substance. We are looking for one bill. Repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act—what does that mean? He still hasn't given us anything specific. They have been voting on replacing and repealing the Affordable Care Act for more than a decade, but they still don't have a plan.

If we listen to the Governor from my home State, the State where the Presiding Officer grew up—they should listen to our Republican Governor, who admonishes colleagues here: Don't repeal the Affordable Care Act unless you have a way to take care of 700,000 Ohioans who have lost their insurance under Medicaid; not to mention 100,000 who will lose their insurance who are on their parents' health plan; not to mention 100,000 who are on the exchanges; not to mention 100,000 seniors who are saving $1,100 on their prescription drugs a year; not to mention 1 million Ohio seniors who get free, no copay, no deductible osteoporosis and diabetes screenings and physicals and all the things the Affordable Care Act gives them. They offer no proposals to replace any of those services. They talk about State lines, and they talk about health savings accounts, and they talk about tort reform. That is like this many people compared to this many people. They know that. Yet I still hear this talk of obstructionism. Give us stuff. Give us legislative proposals.

The assistant majority leader started off by talking about I guess a slow-walk of nominees. Now, I am the ranking Democrat, and my friend Senator CRAPO is now the chairman of the committee. He was not chairman then, and he is not mostly responsible for this. But I am on the Banking Committee, and last year, with a Democratic President—I don't want to look back and do tit-for-tat. It is not about that. It is about moving the country forward. But last year—what was it—25 to 30 nominees came from the President. Some were very significant, including the Export-Import Bank. Some were Federal Reserve. Some of them were inspectors general, and most people don't quite know what they do. But all nominees, more than 25, more than two dozen nominees—1 of them was confirmed by the Senate last year, 1 of 28 or so in our committee, and he was confirmed in December, in the 24th month of the 2-year term. So don't lecture us about people slow-walking and obstructionism and all of that. There were more than 25 nominees, and 1 of them was confirmed. SEC, Securities and Exchange Commission, didn't move; Federal Reserve, didn't move; the public transit administrator, didn't move—one after another after another. The Under Secretary for Terrorism and Financial crimes didn't move. Even though he was originally a Bush nominee and then was promoted in the Obama years, he didn't even come to a vote because of whatever reason the Banking Committee gave us. So we don't need that lecture.

But more important, on these nominees, we all know the history. When I look at criticism and hear ''Why aren't these nominees all passed?'' let's look at about 6 or 8 months ago. Every Presidential candidate, until this last election, starts to put together a transition team in August, and President Trump—Candidate Trump began to do that but not with much seriousness. Then the person he had leading his

transition team he fired in November, soon after the election, so he had to start again. So he had no people kind of ready to go on these nominations, what, in fact, he was going to do on all of these Cabinet positions.

After that, he didn't really vet, he didn't really analyze, he didn't really look at the backgrounds of these nominees. So if they didn't do it—usually the President's people look at these nominees and analyze and see how corrupt they are, if they have conflicts of interest, all of that. Well, they didn't do that in this administration because apparently they didn't have time. So they nominated these people, and we have never seen this many conflicts of interest, we have never seen this kind of wealth, and we have never seen this many billionaires appointed to the Cabinet.

Just out of the Finance Committee, the Secretary of Health and Human Services bought and sold health care stocks of companies—on the floor of the House of Representatives, he was working on bills and amendments; yet he bought and sold hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of health care stock, and then he didn't tell the committee the full story.

The Secretary of the Treasury had a $100 million investment he forgot to report. Maybe somebody out there would forget if they had a $100 million investment. They might forget they had it, but most Americans wouldn't forget that. He lied to the committee. He lied to the committee about robo-signings. Hundreds of—and this was directly related to this nomination—hundreds of Ohioans, at least, maybe thousands, lost their homes—including in the Presiding Officer's home city where he grew up—because of these robo-signings.

So that is why this has been slowed down—because many of these nominees are unqualified for the jobs, many of them have conflicts of interest, and many of them have very complex financial holdings and portfolios that take a long time to sort through. That is the reason for the delay, and to accuse us of anything else is just playing politics.

As I said, I am here today to argue for the confirmation of Dr. Carson.

I voted for a number of these nominees when I thought they could offer something to our country. I voted against some of the most corrupt and some of the most out-of-step and some of the most far-right, radical nominees, and that list is, unfortunately, much longer with this President than any President in American history.

Dr. Carson had a distinguished career as a pediatric neurosurgeon. We know that about him, and that is good. His remarkable life story is well known to millions of Americans. We know that about him, and that is good. But he is not the nominee I would have chosen to lead HUD. In fact, he is not the nominee any President in my lifetime would have chosen to lead HUD because he has no direct experience with the housing and community development fields.

He made troubling statements on public policy issues prior to his nomination. My colleagues and I on the Banking Committee asked Dr. Carson several very direct questions about his views now that he is the nominee for Secretary of HUD. I will give Carson the benefit of the doubt—that is why I will vote for him—because he made commitments to me in person, sitting in my office, across the table, and he made commitments in the Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee in his testimony and in his written responses.

Dr. Carson promises to address the scourge of lead hazards that threaten the health and the future of children in Ohio and nationwide.

Under oath, he pledged to uphold the Fair Housing Act and the housing rights of LGBTQ individuals. That wasn't what his past has been. He has made comments that I find offensive or worse about gay people in this country, but he made the commitment under oath to our committee that he would fight any discrimination against people because of their sexual orientation.

He has pledged to advocate for rental assistance and investment to end homelessness. He has pledged to push to include housing in the President's infrastructure plan.

Those are commitments he made. Those are commitments he made under oath. Those are commitments I will hold him to in spite of perhaps his prior philosophy of government and in spite of perhaps some of his comments he might have made in the past. My job is to hold him accountable for this. The job of everybody in this Senate, of both parties, is to hold him accountable.

Dr. Carson's responses to my questions for the record are available as part of the record of the Banking Committee's January 12, 2017, hearing on the nomination of Dr. Carson to be Secretary of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. I have also made them available online as part of my statement on the Banking Committee's approval of Dr. Carson's nomination on January 24, 2017.

My statement and the link to the questions for the record are available on the Banking Committee's website at http://www.banking.senate.gov/public.

Mr. President, as the ranking member of the Banking Committee—and I would emphasize the committee—while the last 2 years, it might only have been called banking, maybe it could have just been called Wall Street for the way it was running, but the full name of the committee is Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs. It is important to remember that. We oversee housing policy, and I see how important this Department is for people in Ohio and across our country.

HUD is in charge of enforcing fair housing laws. It has been an essential partner in our national efforts to prevent and end homelessness for veterans—something Senator CRAPO talked about—for the chronically homeless, and for youth and families. The Department's primary rental assistance program helped 4.5 million low-income families, the elderly, and people with disabilities find a place to call home—something that should be a right in this country.

HUD has assisted cities and towns in their efforts to revitalize neighborhoods and invest in communities and promote lead-safe, healthy housing for children. There is still a great challenge in States like mine where there is deteriorating lead paint in old homes that threaten so many children. In my hometown of Cleveland and where I grew up in Mansfield and in Appalachia and in city after city and community after community in my State, there are lots of older homes. In the city of Cleveland, well over half the homes are at least 60 years old.

I asked somebody from the Cleveland health department: What percentage of those homes have toxic levels of lead? And he said 99. Understand that old homes in this country—homes that are 60, 70, 80 years old—many homes fall into that category, and they overwhelmingly have toxic levels of lead.

My support for Dr. Carson centers around the fact that he may not know much about housing policy yet—I am hopeful that in the tours he takes, including to my State and the chairman's State of Idaho—I hope and I assume he will learn more about housing, but one thing he does know as a brain surgeon is he knows what lead does to the development of children.

The Cleveland Plain Dealer reported 70 census tracts in Cuyahoga County where as many as one in three children are poisoned because of the age and the condition of the housing stock. One in three children has her or his physical and emotional and mental development sometimes arrested or slowed because of lead poisoning.

Through the Federal Housing Administration, HUD works with lenders to help creditworthy borrowers access stable mortgage credit so they can purchase a home. FHA played a central countercyclical role in providing mortgage credit following the financial crisis when the private sector largely withdrew from the field, as we remember. It has since receded into its typical share of the housing market. It is still essential, though, for home buyers, including many first-time and minority home buyers. HUD'S role will only become more important as housing communities' development challenges have grown. The need for affordable housing has grown dramatically since the great recession. The demand for units has increased while wages have stagnated.

The market alone is not producing sufficient housing for families and those on fixed incomes. Studies have demonstrated that many people who perform essential work—child care

teachers, school bus drivers, retail workers, people working full time, people working just as hard as the staff in front of me, people working just as hard as people who have titles like mine—simply can't afford the rent in the communities they serve. Half of the people who rent pay more than 30 percent of their income for housing.

One-quarter of all renters—25 percent of all renters, 11 million people in this country—pay more than half of their incomes for rent. If you are paying 51, 52, 55 percent of your income in rent, if one bad thing happens—a sick child, your plant lays you off for 2 weeks, your roof leaks, any number of things can happen. When you are living on the edge, when half of your income is for housing, what happens? You lose your home. You get evicted.

These burdens are more severe at the bottom of the income spectrum among extremely low-income renter households—those with incomes at or below 30 percent of median income, and 75 percent may pay more than half of their income in rent.

The National Low Income Housing Coalition identified a shortage of 7 million affordable and available rental units for the Nation's extremely low-income renter households. We are reaching only one out of four of those eligible families. Many end up on years' long waiting lists for lack of funding.

Government extends a hand to some of these families, but not to nearly enough. That needs to change. Despite the growing need for affordable housing, we risk losing the affordable housing resources we have due to physical deterioration or the end of long-term affordability contracts of property owners.

Families burdened by high housing costs have fewer resources available to meet other needs such as transportation for work and food and medicine. They even face eviction and homelessness; 500,000 people were homeless on any given night in January of 2016—550,000, actually.

The Department of Education data, which includes families doubled up for economic reasons, indicates that 1.4 million school children and their families were homeless at some point during the 2013–2014 school year. Think about that. Some of these kids were exposed to lead and have learning disabilities. Others don't get enough to eat, in spite of the family school breakfast and lunch program, because they don't eat so well on weekends and at night and on summer vacations or whenever. In addition, 1.4 million are homeless.

Matthew Desmond wrote a book called ''Evicted.'' He is a gentleman I have gotten to know a little bit. He lived in Milwaukee, a poor White neighborhood, a poor Black neighborhood. He wrote about people he got to meet and got to know, and he spent enough time where he got to know people. When he signed this book, he wrote: Home equals life. If you don't have a decent place to live—and I would imagine that none of us in this Chamber has that challenge. When you don't have a place to call home, your life can be upside down. With all of the challenges and all of the things that can happen, when you get evicted, your kids have to move to a new school district. You don't know where you are going to end up. You lose the few possessions you have when you're evicted. This book is recommended reading for anybody who works on housing issues. It is a book called ''Evicted'' by Matthew Desmond.

One last point: I look forward to working with colleagues in the administration on the President's proposed $1 trillion investment and infrastructure, including housing. To jump-start the conversation about the President's proposed infrastructure package, my colleagues and I announced a blueprint to rebuild America's infrastructure.

I find it interesting, again, that the assistant majority leader talked about Democrats' intransigence and Democrats' obstruction when the President has put nothing out there on infrastructure, nothing out there on housing, nothing out there about healthcare—repeal and replace—none of those kinds of legislation.

We don't even know what he is talking about, other than saying ''$1 trillion.'' Democrats acted responsibly and put out our $1 trillion 10-year plan, hoping the President's $1 trillion 10-year plan can match up and we can work together. This blueprint talks about ways we invest in American infrastructure to improve the Nation's transportation, water, housing, and community infrastructure and create thousands of good-paying union jobs in construction and manufacturing jobs with strong ''Buy American'' provisions.

Even though the President in his prior life as a businessman wore suits, sold suits, sold tableware, and sold glassware made overseas, and even though this suit I wear is made by union workers 10 miles from my house, the President, now that he is President—the issue is not his own private business or his family's own private business where they outsource jobs to do production so they make more money. I don't like that, but that is no longer our business. What is our business is that the President steps forward with ''Buy American.''

''Buy American'' means if there is steel in an infrastructure project, it should be made by steelworkers in Youngstown or Lorain, OH, or somewhere in Ohio. If there is iron in these projects, if there is aluminum in these projects, if there is concrete, if there is any kind of product, if taxpayers are paying for it, it should be made by American workers.

Our blueprint is central to HUD's mission. It includes $100 billion to rebuild Main Street and communities. It includes ideas to address affordable housing challenges, eliminate blighted properties that bring down local property values, and remediate lead hazards that threaten children. We are ready to work on real infrastructure.

As I said, I am going to vote for Ben Carson for Secretary of HUD. He is not an inspiring choice, but he is someone who is an accomplished man. I count on him to help us address this terrible lead problem. I count on him to stand with us, as he pledged, to address the scourge of lead. I count on him to uphold the Fair Housing Act and the housing rights of LGBTQ individuals. I count on him to advocate for rental assistance and investment and homelessness. I count on him to push to include housing in the President's infrastructure plan. I count on him to fight the President. If the President is going to increase defense by $50 billion and cut a whole host of housing and urban programs, I count on this nominee. He promised our committee. He said it. He said it in private meetings. He said it in public meetings. We will hold him accountable. I plan to vote yes.

To reiterate, I rise today to speak on the pending nomination of Dr. Benjamin Carson to be the new Secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, or HUD.

Dr. Carson is not the nominee I would have chosen to lead HUD, due to both his lack of direct experience with the housing and community development fields, and his often troubling public statements prior to his nomination.

Despite my reservations, and my disagreements with some of his positions, I will give Dr. Carson the benefit of the doubt based on commitments he has made to me in person and to the Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee in his testimony and written responses.

This includes Dr. Carson's promises to:

Address the scourge of lead hazards that threaten the health and futures of children in Ohio and nationwide; Uphold the Fair Housing Act and the housing rights of LGBTQ individuals; Advocate for rental assistance and investment to end homelessness; And push to include housing in the President's infrastructure plan. Let me be clear: I will do everything in my power to hold Dr. Carson accountable for making good on his promises.

Role of HUD. As the ranking member of the Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee responsible for housing policy, I have seen how important the Department is for people in Ohio and across the country.

HUD is charged with enforcing our fair housing laws. It has been an essential partner in our national efforts to prevent and end homelessness for veterans, the chronically homeless, and youth and families.

The Department's primary rental assistance programs help over 4.5 million low-income households of families, the elderly, and people with disabilities find a place to call home.

It assists cities and towns in their efforts to revitalize neighborhoods and invest in communities; and promotes lead-safe, healthy housing for children.

Through the Federal Housing Administration, HUD works with lenders to help creditworthy borrowers access sustainable mortgage credit so they can purchase a home.

The FHA played an essential, countercyclical role in providing mortgage credit following the financial crisis, when the private sector largely withdrew from the field.

It has since receded to its typical share of the housing market, but it is still essential for many homebuyers, including first-time and minority homebuyers.

HUD's role has only become more important as our housing and community development challenges have grown.

The need for affordable housing has grown dramatically since the Great Recession, as demand for rental units has increased and wages have stagnated.

The market alone is not producing sufficient affordable housing for families and those on fixed incomes.

A person with a full-time job would need to earn an hourly wage of $20.30 in order to afford a modest, two-bedroom rental at HUD's national average fair market rent.

This ''housing wage'' is far above the minimum wage, income available to people with disabilities who rely upon Supplemental Security Income, or even the median wage earned by renters.

Studies have demonstrated that people performing essential work—like child care teachers, school bus drivers, and retail workers—are often unable to afford rent in the communities they serve.

Half of all renters—over 21 million households—paid more than 30 percent of their incomes towards housing in 2014. And a quarter of all renters—over 11 million—paid more than half their incomes for rent.

These burdens are more severe at the bottom of the income spectrum. Among extremely low income renter households—those with incomes at or below 30 percent of area median income, 75 percent pay more than half their incomes on rent.

In 2016, the National Low Income Housing Coalition identified a shortage of 7.2 million affordable and available rental units for the nation's ELI renter households.

We are reaching only one out of four eligible families. Many end up on years-long waiting lists for lack of funding.

Despite the growing need for affordable housing, we risk losing the affordable housing resources we have due to physical deterioration or the end of long-term affordability contracts with property owners.

Public housing alone needs an estimated $26 billion in major repairs. HUD estimates that we are losing 10,000 units of public housing every year due to physical obsolescence.

According to Harvard's Joint Center on Housing Studies, nearly 2.2 million units of HUD-assisted and low income housing tax credit-supported housing will reach the end of their affordability periods by 2025. Families burdened by high housing costs have fewer resources available to meet other needs like transportation to work, food, and medicine, and they may even face eviction and homelessness.

Nearly 550,000 people were homeless on a given night in January 2016. Department of Education data, which include families doubled up for economic reasons, indicate that nearly 1.4 million school-age children and their families were homeless at some point during the 2013–2014 school year.

The hardships stemming from evictions and homelessness make it harder for families to climb the economic ladder.

As Matthew Desmond, author of Evicted, points out: ''Eviction is a cause, not just a condition, of poverty.''

Trump Urban Renewal Plan. Throughout his campaign, President-elect Trump promised to rebuild America's ''inner cities,'' which he labeled ''hell holes.''

Mr. Trump spelled out his views in his, quote, ''New Deal for Black America, With a Plan for Urban Renewal.''

The plan covers issues such as school choice, investing in law enforcement, tax reform, trade, and infrastructure investment.

At a time when more than 11 million families are paying more than half their income toward rent, and half a million people have no place to call home, the President-elect's plan does not mention this housing crisis.

In addition, cities, like Black Americans, are not monolithic.

In recent years, many cities have seen a wave of population growth and investment that have led to greater economic activity, tighter rental housing markets, and rising rental housing costs.

As a result, many lower-income families and businesses who endured challenging decades in their communities are finding themselves priced out of their long-time neighborhoods just when additional economic opportunities are opening up.

Loss of housing in urban neighborhoods can push residents away from access to jobs, transit, and local support networks such as hospitals and child care.

In many of these neighborhoods, federally-assisted housing may be coming to the end of long-term affordability contracts or at risk of loss due to physical deterioration and HUD will be called on to help low-income people access the opportunity that has finally come to their neighborhoods.

HUD will need to respond to a diverse set of challenges across the country.

Dr. Ben Carson is a distinguished pediatric neurosurgeon. His remarkable life story is well known to all of us, and to millions of Americans beyond this room. He is an inspiration and a testament to the American dream.

Dr. Carson's experience, while impressive, does not automatically qualify him to lead HUD.

In reviewing Dr. Carson's nomination, I had the opportunity to question him extensively about his plans as Secretary. His answers were responsive, in contrast to many of President Trump's nominees.

Dr. Carson committed to: Address the scourge of lead paint hazards that threaten the future of too many of Ohio's children; Uphold the Fair Housing Act and housing rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) individuals; Advocate for rental assistance and investment to end homelessness; and Push to include housing in the President's infrastructure plan.

Some of Trump's appointees have taken positions antithetical to the agencies for which they would be responsible. In his testimony, Dr. Carson did not seem to be in this camp.

At that hearing, Carson stated that he plans to go on a listening tour across the country and at HUD to learn what is working and what is not. And he promised to surround himself with pragmatic, bipartisan, senior advisers.

He said: ''I will surround myself with people who have a passion for improving the agency, not breaking down its programs.''

In many cases, Dr. Carson moderated or reversed controversial positions he had taken previously.

I will discuss a few of the commitments Dr. Carson made during our committee process.

Lead Paint Poisoning. Dr. Carson promised to work to end the scourge of lead poisoning that threatens the health and futures of too many children in Ohio and across the country.

There is a growing realization that safe, affordable housing is a platform for good health.

Whether that is healthy housing that protects kids from lead and asthma-inducing mold, accessible units that help seniors safely age in place and avoid expensive institutional care, or housing that enables people with disabilities to live in the community.

As Dr. Carson said in his written statement: ''There is a strong connection between housing and health . . . Housing (and housing discrimination) is a ''social determinant'' of health . . . These problems occur across America—in cities as well as suburbs and rural areas . . . We cannot have social mobility without a strong healthy foundation in the home.''

When Dr. Carson and I met privately, we discussed the tragic effects of lead in Ohio and nationwide. He knows—from a medical perspective—the terrible price that children and society pay for the legacy of lead in water, industrial settings, and, all-too-often, deteriorating paint in their homes.

While we have rightly focused on lead in water in Flint, MI, and Sebring, OH,

the most prevalent source of childhood lead poisoning is lead-based paint in homes built before the federal government stepped in to prohibit its use in 1978.

Approximately 23 million older homes have significant lead paint hazards, 3.6 million of which house children under six who are most susceptible to the effects of lead paint poisoning. This is a great challenge in states like mine that have a lot of older homes.

The Cleveland Plain Dealer reported that that there are nearly 70 census tracks in Cuyahoga County, where I live, where as many as 1 in 3 children are likely poisoned because of the age and condition of the housing stock.

This is a tragedy not just for these kids and families, but for society. We all absorb the increased costs of medical care, education, criminal justice, and lost economic potential that stem from childhood lead poisoning.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with Dr. Carson to address the avoidable tragedy of childhood lead paint poisoning.

Fair Housing. Dr. Carson pledged to uphold the nation's fair housing laws, which includes the requirement that HUD's grantees affirmatively further fair housing.

At the hearing, Dr. Carson was clear about his support for the Fair Housing Act, stating:

I think the Fair Housing [Act] in 1968 was one of the best pieces of legislation we had. It was modified 1988. LBJ said no one could possibly question this, I agree with him.

I asked Dr. Carson about a 2015 Washington Times Op-Ed in which he objected to HUD's rule implementing the Fair Housing Act's Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing provision, likening it to a failed socialist experiment.

The rule, which implements a requirement of the Fair Housing Act, was adopted after a two-year public comment period and responds to GAO criticism of HUD's previous guidance in this area.

Carson stated that his op-ed had been ''distorted by many people.'' He went on to say that he has no problem with ''affirmative action or . . . integration'' but that he does have a problem with people dictating policy when they don't know the area when we have ''local HUD officials . . . who can assess what the problems are in their area and, working with local officials, can come up with better solutions.''

The fair housing rule is such a locally driven conversation, because it requires HUD grantees to analyze their own situations and develop locally driven plans to address their fair housing challenges.

Finally, Dr. Carson stated in writing that he would enforce the Fair Housing Act and support HUD's 2015 rule.

If Dr. Carson were to reverse the fair housing rule, it would violate his commitments at the hearing and in writing.

LGBTQ Housing Rights. During the Committee's process, I sought information on Dr. Carson's views of the housing rights of LGBTQ individuals.

In the past, Dr. Carson has made troubling comments about LGBTQ people that raised questions about whether LGBTQ people should enjoy the same rights as everyone else.

Dr. Carson's views in this area are important because the HUD Secretary oversees the housing rights of all Americans, including LGBTQ people. LGBTQ people face housing discrimination, bullying, and an alarmingly high incidence of youth homelessness.

In his written statement, Dr. Carson clearly stated that he wants to improve the lives of all families and communities ''no matter their race, creed, color, or orientation.''

In light of his previous statements, my colleague and I asked further questions.

I asked Dr. Carson whether he believes that HUD has a duty to take actions that promote equal access to housing opportunities for LGBTQ people. In response, he stated that he believes that ''all Americans . . . should be protected by the law,'' but went on to say that no one gets ''extra rights.''

To clarify his meaning, I asked whether he could think of any instances where protecting equal access to housing opportunities for LGBTQ people would mean providing them ''extra rights.''

His response was ''I cannot.''

I also asked whether he believes that HUD provides ''extra rights'' to LGBTQ people that need to be withdrawn.

His response was ''I do not.''

In other statements, Dr. Carson also clearly pledged to protect the LGBTQ community from discrimination and to continue to support and enforce HUD's equal access rules.

These rules ensure that all individuals have equal access to the Department's programs ''without regard to actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity or marital status'' and in accordance with their gender identity.

If Dr. Carson is confirmed, any actions that he or the agency take to discriminate against or limit the housing rights of LGBTQ individuals and families would be contrary to his statements to me and the Committee.

Rental Assistance. Dr. Carson promised to be an advocate for HUD rental assistance.

During the hearing, Dr. Carson backed away from his previous position calling for 10 percent across-the-board cuts to Federal programs as a budget-cutting measure.

At our hearing, Dr. Carson noted that he had revised his position to 1 percent across-the board cuts as a way to achieve budget savings. While I do not subscribe to this policy, it shows moderation of Dr. Carson's previous position.

With respect to HUD programs, he recognized the value of HUD rental assistance programs in meeting the needs of the lowest income individuals, stating:

When it comes to deep affordability, though, removing all regulatory barriers won't get you there. It comes down to subsidy. . . . I think we can all agree that we will all make sure housing is a key consideration in every appropriations bill . . . If confirmed I will be a vocal advocate internally for funding, but prioritization will continue to occur in this Administration as it did in the last.

Dr. Carson also recognized the value of the important safety net provided by HUD programs, stating that ''the rental assistance program is essential'' and that ''safety net programs are important. I would never . . . advocate abolishing them without having an alternative route for people to follow.''

Ending Homelessness. In 2010, Opening Doors, the Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness, set out goals to end homelessness for veterans, the chronically homeless, families, children, and youth and all other homelessness.

Through a combination of bipartisan federal investments in appropriate housing solutions particularly permanent supportive housing for the chronically homeless and HUD-VASH vouchers for veterans and improved practices at the federal and local levels, we have made real progress toward these goals. Since 2010, such investments have helped reduce chronic homelessness by 27 percent and veterans' homelessness by 47 percent.

Yet, more remains to be done.

According to HUD's ''2015 Annual Homeless Assessment Report'' to Congress, approximately 549,928 people were homeless on a given night in January 2016. Nearly 195,000 of the homeless on this night were in families including at least one child.

Stating that ''No one can argue with the goal of ending homelessness,'' Dr. Carson said he intends to build on the progress we have made toward ending homelessness. He also said he will ''call for continued investment to end homelessness for veterans, the chronically homeless, and children and families.''

Dr. Carson also praised the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, which coordinates Federal efforts to efficiently and effectively combat homelessness and helps facilitate local communities' coordinated efforts.

Housing and Infrastructure. The President's promised $1 trillion investment in infrastructure is one of the pillars of the President's Plan for Urban Renewal. This is an area where I have said I would like to work with the new administration.

Our grandparents built an infrastructure for us that was the envy of the world and became the foundation of our economy for years to come. But after decades of neglect, we need to reinvest.

My colleagues in the Democratic caucus and I are taking the President up on his call for a $1 trillion investment in American infrastructure.

To jump-start the conversation about the President's promise, we announced ''A Blueprint to Rebuild America's Infrastructure.''

This blueprint talks about ways we can invest in American infrastructure to improve the Nation's transportation, water, housing, and community infrastructure while creating thousands of construction and manufacturing jobs in Ohio and across the country.

Our blueprint includes $100 billion to rebuild our main streets and communities, which is central to HUD's mission.

This includes ideas to address affordable housing challenges, eliminate the blighted properties that bring down local property values in neighborhoods, and remediate lead hazards that can set children back for life and increase public costs.

We need to invest in the infrastructure of our communities.

I've talked about the need to address lead-based paint to prevent childhood lead poisoning.

In communities across Ohio and the country, blighted properties are holding our neighborhoods back. They reduce neighbors' property values, reduce tax base necessary to support public services, and create crime and safety threats.

A 2015 report from Policy Matters Ohio estimated Ohio alone would need $750 million to address the State's residential demolition needs.

Our public housing alone needs an estimated $26 billion in repairs.

When we met, Dr. Carson said that he is supportive of investing in our public housing infrastructure.

In questions following the hearing, I asked Dr. Carson whether he would work with the President to ensure that there is a real infrastructure package to address the needs of our urban and rural communities and that it includes funding for preserving and creating affordable housing.

In response, Dr. Carson responded by saying, ''I will absolutely commit to advocating for the inclusion of housing in the President Elect's infrastructure package.''

I look forward to working with Dr. Carson to ensure that the administration supports these job-creating investments in our housing and other infrastructure.

Support Despite Reservations. As I stated at the outset, Dr. Carson is not the nominee that I would have chosen to lead HUD.

I do not agree with all of his positions.

For example, Dr. Carson wants to help people increase their incomes so that they can become self-sufficient. I also believe we should do everything we can to help families escape poverty and find good, middle-class jobs that can sustain a family.

However, Dr. Carson seems to believe that this can be done without raising the minimum wage and without the Labor Department's overtime rule that would help 100,000 workers in my state get the pay they deserve. He believes incomes will rise just by creating the right ''environment.''

I believe that the Federal Government should stand on the side of workers rather than advancing a billionaire agenda.

But despite my reservations and my disagreements with some of his positions, I am voting to confirm him, based on the commitments he made to the committee that I discussed here today.

The National Low Income Housing Coalition, or NLIHC, is a leading national organization advocating for safe, affordable housing for low-income people, including the residents of HUD-assisted housing.

NLIHC recently circulated a statement that reads:

> Despite our initial concerns about Carson's lack of experience with and knowledge of the HUD programs that he would oversee, NLIHC does not oppose his nomination:
>
> As demonstrated in his Senate confirmation hearing, Carson has clearly taken the time to begin to understand and come to appreciate the importance of HUD's programs.
>
> Once confirmed, NLIHC is committed to working with Dr. Carson to ensure that the lowest income people in America have decent, affordable and accessible homes.

In the coming years, I will do everything in my power to hold him to his promises and to advocate for HUD's important work.

I Hope the Administration Helps Him Succeed. Even if Dr. Carson and I shared the exact same views, I would be concerned about what the next few years bodes for HUD and our communities.

On January 23, the Trump administration adopted a hiring freeze and called for a reduction in the Federal workforce.

HUD already experienced the greatest percentage drop in career employees across the government from 2005 through 2014, and now HUD faces the highest percentage career employees eligible to retire by 2019.

According to HUD's FY 2017 budget justifications, ''This retirement wave can cause a loss of leadership and institutional knowledge at all levels.''

Such a loss could also cause a failure to ensure that the Department is upholding its duties to taxpayers by ensuring the quality of federally-assisted housing, fair housing enforcement, and overseeing FHA lending programs, for examples.

Dr. Carson says he wants to learn from and be on the side of HUD's career staff. Let's hope the administration gives him sufficient staffing to accomplish his mission.

I am also very concerned about HUD's budget going forward.

The Senate recently confirmed Mick Mulvaney, an ideologue who threatened to default on our debt and wants to gut our retirement safety net, to lead the President's Office of Management and Budget.

There have been reports that the administration has been considering using Heritage Foundation budget blueprints as the basis for its budget proposals.

Heritage has proposed budget outlines that would literally zero out the HUD rental assistance programs and the Community Development Block Grant Program.

We are also hearing reports that the Trump administration is making plans to cut nondefense discretionary programs by $54 billion in fiscal year 2018—about a 10 percent cut—in order to fund increased defense spending.

This cut would come on top of the sequestration-related cuts to nondefense discretionary, or NDD, programs that will kick in in FY 2018 if we don't do something to stop them.

NDD programs at HUD have already absorbed cuts. Since 2010, funding for public housing has fallen 21 percent, while funding for the HOME program has fallen by more than 50 percent.

Sequestration cuts in FY 2013 reduced the number of housing vouchers by more than 80,000. In recent years, Congress and local agencies have been able to restore many of these lost vouchers, but further cutbacks will reverse this trend.

At a time when our families are facing growing affordable housing needs, the administration may be considering cuts that would devastate our housing safety net and leave families, seniors, formerly homeless veterans, and communities reeling.

All of this is coming at the same time that they are repealing the ACA and working to repeal rules that protect workers, consumers, and retirees.

At our hearing, Dr. Carson himself walked away from previous comments he had made in support of 10 percent across-the-board cuts.

At the nomination hearing, Dr. Carson stated:

> I want to advocate for the HUD budget. . . . In the process of doing a listening tour and in talking to the people who were there already I want to put together a world-class plan on housing in this country and then I want to come to you with that world-class plan and I want to convince you all that this is what we need to do.

I hope that the administration and those setting budget priorities here in Congress will give Dr. Carson and HUD the tools they need to fulfill their mission.

If not, I hope my colleagues and citizens across the country will work with me to ensure that we have a housing and community development policy that meets the needs of all Americans.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. ERNST). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TILLIS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONGRATULATING THE STATE OF NEBRASKA ON THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ADMISSION OF THAT STATE INTO THE UNITED STATES

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I rise to recognize a pivotal moment in our Nation's history. On this day, 150 years ago, the Territory of Nebraska became the 37th State to enter the Union.

Let me tell you the story of Nebraska. In a deep and powerful way, it is the story of America. America grew up in Nebraska. We were the first State admitted after the Civil War, but our admission was first vetoed by President Andrew Johnson. It was the only time in American history that this had happened. The reason? President Johnson disagreed with a fundamental condition of Nebraska's statehood—that Black men be allowed to vote.

Fortunately, Congress overrode this veto, and on March 1, 1867, Nebraska became a State. I said before that Nebraska's statehood was a pivotal moment for our country. Nebraska gave America a chance to be better.

By bringing Nebraska into the Union, our country turned away from slavery forever. We turned toward the truth about humankind—that everyone is precious in Heaven's eyes. By making Nebraska a State, America reached for a future more closely aligned with that truth.

Since that new birth of freedom, our Nation has taken many more steps—some bold strides, some stumbles—but always we seek to be more fully the country we were made to be. At a crucial moment, Nebraska strengthened our commitment to do that. Nebraska renewed America's identity.

As a State, Nebraska had not only hard but also humble beginnings. They called it the Great American Desert. In the early 1800s, the famous military officer and explorer Zebulon Pike shrugged us off, saying simply: ''Not a stick of timber.'' A few years later, geologist Edwin James and MAJ Steven Long gave us this review: ''The land was uninhabitable by a people depending on agriculture.''

Today, wagon ruts can still be seen on Windlass Hill on the Oregon-California Trail, where settlers passed through. They were looking for greener pastures.

Well, last year Nebraska ranked No. 1 in the Nation in beef exports. The State ranked No. 1 in both the number of mother cows and cattle on feed. We are the beef State. We are Corn Huskers. With both corn and cattle, we produce high quality protein products that are sought by consumers all around this globe. We are No. 1 in the Nation in great northern bean production, popcorn production, and irrigated acres of cropland. Nebraska agriculture is diverse and it is expansive.

We also have more miles of river than any other State. As we sit over the great High Plains in the Ogallala Aquifer, water flows to seven other States from Nebraska. Our abundant supply of groundwater makes us leaders in producing soybeans, wheat, pork, and grain sorghum.

But I am getting ahead of myself.

In 1862, President Abraham Lincoln signed the Homestead Act. It made Americans really a simple offer: Strike out west, cultivate 160 acres of surveyed government land for 5 years, and at the end of that time, the land would be theirs. Families crossed the plains in covered wagons to take Mr. Lincoln up on that offer, and this time they stayed. In fact, the law's very first claimant was a doctor and a Civil War veteran named, fittingly enough, Daniel Freeman. So powerful was his dream that Dr. Freeman filed his paperwork just a few minutes after midnight on New Year's Day, 1863, the day that law went into effect. His homestead lies just outside of Beatrice, NE, where today we find the Homestead National Monument of America. In this vast and ruthless land, the homesteaders made the American dream real. They tilled the earth, first to feed themselves and then to feed the world.

Nebraskans made the Great American Desert into one of the greatest agricultural exporting regions in world history. They did this in part by scientific discovery. Developments in agricultural technology, including the center pivot, pioneered in Nebraska, have allowed Nebraska ag producers to feed the world. Nebraska continues to lead the Nation in center pivot irrigation technology, and today we are home to the four largest irrigation companies in the United States.

Other technological breakthroughs came in transportation, especially rail. These developments helped us to connect our communities and our country. The route of the First Transcontinental Railroad runs through my State. Today, Bailey Yard in North Platte is the world's largest railroad classification yard. In addition, Nebraska now connects her families by 97,000 miles of public roads. Well, that is a far cry from those wagon ruts. These improvements allow us to continue that noble work which we gladly accept of feeding the world.

I would like to take a moment to reflect on something. Nebraska not only helped America find its moral compass again, but our State also shows what wonders a free and virtuous people may work, and it reveals the relationship between the two. When you seek the right thing first and you work at it hard, amazing things follow. This is true not only in our rural areas but also in our cities.

Omaha began as the ''Gateway to the West.'' Pioneers and immigrants made it a mighty city in its own right. From the former stockyards to the strong family businesses and Fortune 500 companies that you will find there today, the fingerprints of hardworking, dedicated people cover every inch of concrete.

Omaha leads in banking, insurance, telecommunications, transportation, and in medicine. Last year, the University of Nebraska Medical Center was ranked fifth in America among the best medical schools for primary care. I think Dr. Daniel Freeman, America's first homesteader, would be proud of that, but I doubt if he would be surprised. This is what happens when we work hard and let ourselves be guided by goodness.

It happened in Lincoln, our State capital, which was renamed after President Lincoln was assassinated. It happens in our Nebraska Panhandle towns and in our cities along the broad and braided Platte River, all along our I–80 corridor, and in so many rural small towns across our State. Nebraskans are a people who are engaged in manufacturing, technology, ag business, education, and the arts. We are strong people, and we build strong communities.

I have to say another word about doing the right thing. In 1879, Nebraska was the site of the first time that American Indians had their day in court, when Standing Bear made his famous statement: ''I am a Man.'' The U.S. district court eventually ruled what we all know to be absolute truth—that a person is a person. Here again, Nebraska gave America the opportunity to be better. There are many other moments.

Nebraska was the first State in which women were the two major party candidates for Governor, when Kay Orr, a Republican, defeated Helen Boosalis, a Democrat, in 1986.

I am on the Senate floor honoring the State I love on its 150th anniversary. I encourage you to come and see what the good life is about. See our cities—their industry, their creativity, their culture—where our innovators work new wonders, so much so that we are now called Silicon Prairie. Feel the thrill of Memorial Stadium, which becomes our third largest city on a game day. Shout ''Go Big Red'' and cheer on the Huskers. Delight in our opera and ballet. Breathe in our small towns. Stop in at a family-run bakery. Have lunch at a local cafe. Enjoy some of the national food sensations that began in Nebraska: Kool-Aid, our Reuben sandwich, and, of course, runzas.

Enjoy local favorites, like kolache, kuchen, fried tacos, and pork chili. Enjoy a Nebraska rodeo. Ride out to our rural areas, where, as Poet Laureate Ted Kooser says, the ''pickup kicks its fenders off and settles back to read the clouds.'' Be awed by the vastness of Nebraska, which gives us perspective on things great and small. Learn from Chimney Rock, our western buttes, and the Pine Ridge, how to stand tall no matter the weather or the season of life. Be soothed by the Sandhills—the largest grass-covered sand dunes in the world and God's own cattle country. Find peace in the song of the Sandhills cranes. Take in the Central Flyway, where millions of migratory birds fly, including our State bird—the western meadowlark. See our gently rolling eastern hills. Canoe our

rivers, fish our trout streams, and relax on our lakes. Follow the trails that tell the story of our history and the roads that lead to a bright future. See Nebraska at night, under a sky filled with stars. Know why people travel from all across the world simply to stargaze.

Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist Willa Cather, who grew up in Nebraska, wrote of the West: ''Elsewhere, the sky is the roof of the world; but here the Earth was the floor of the sky.''

We are a people of the Great Plains, the prairie, the Sandhills. We remember our enduring sources of strength—faith in God, reliance on family, and a habit of hard work. These things give us a sure footing.

For America for 150 years, Nebraska has been a place to look up and begin again, a land of vast possibility, of opportunity, a place to dream and to realize dreams—a model for America and the envy of the world.

Congratulations to the people of the great State of Nebraska as we celebrate our rich history, the exciting present that we are building, and the brighter future we will have in our next 150 years.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

Mr. SASSE. Mr. President, if I could just begin with a hearty ''amen'' to the great words of my senior Senator, it felt like old home week there for a moment, with the quote about the Nebraska sky. My kids—I have one of them with me almost every week in DC. We commute, and I bring somebody with me. Another two of them are almost surely going to be exploring along the Platte River later this afternoon, as happens almost every day. As for the comments about the 1986 campaign between Kay Orr and Helen Boosalis, it was the first time in America that two women had run for Governor of any State. I worked for Kay, the Republican Governor; it was the first campaign I had ever worked on as a 14-year-old. And then, most fundamentally, were her great words about the Homestead Act and the settling of America. I am a fifth generation Nebraskan and descended from homesteaders in the exact counties that the Senator was talking about engaged in Jefferson County.

Our State on its 150th anniversary, looks back on a history built by grit from homesteaders, as Senator FISCHER mentioned, to a football team at Memorial Stadium in Lincoln. Today, we celebrate all of those things that make Nebraska special: hard work, resolve, and love and care for our neighbors.

Millions of men and women settled Nebraska when our State was still known as the Great American Desert. The Homestead Act made land ownership accessible to anyone—to widows, to former slaves, to immigrants. People of totally different backgrounds could legally own 160 acres of American land, and as long as they worked and lived on that land for 5 years, they would get the deed. Your care of the land is what mattered, not your background, not your status, not your family name, but your willingness to work and to contribute and to feed the world as our State still does today.

Today, Nebraska is the breadbasket of the world, exporting more than $6 billion a year of agricultural products. We have cared about the land for this last century and a half, but we care even more about our neighbors. Two towns tell that story well.

During World War II, North Platte launched a hospitality initiative that reached 6 million American troops as they would head for Pacific and European theaters in World War II. Folks in the town saw trains stop in North Platte every day and decided that they would cheer those servicemen who were on their way to the war to fight for our freedom.

On Christmas Day in 1941, a young woman named Rae Wilson, a 26-year-old saleswoman, founded the North Platte Canteen. For 4 years, volunteers would meet each train—full of troops and passing through North Platte—with candy, with fruit, with smiles, with hugs, and with encouragement, thanking those men for how they were going to fight to defend the freedoms that made places like Nebraska and the rest of this Nation great. Some soldiers would go on to become POWs, including the first train of men that went through North Platte on Christmas Day in 1941. They had been sent off by these women of North Platte with food and with encouragement for their fight. Some never returned home. Who knows how much the kindness of those women meant to people from all of the States as they passed through Nebraska on the way to their deployments.

In recent years, that same generosity has shown up in Pilger, NE. In June of 2014, twin tornadoes ripped through this small Nebraska town, killing two and leveling the entire town—destroying 78 buildings. Only in the two corners of the town were structures left standing. Some people might not consider a town of 352 people a top priority, but those folks are not from Nebraska. From all across our State, thousands of volunteers just began driving to this town where tornadoes had destroyed people's livelihoods and their homes, bringing meals and sorting through rubble with people who had been strangers until the volunteers arrived and became family.

Young and old, Nebraskans from all across our State pitched in 2½ summers ago. One retired teacher would drive 180 miles every day round trip to serve in this community, helping people dig out of the rubble. One little girl sent $70 in from her lemonade stand. Pilger became the town known as the town too tough to die.

When we are not coming together to help our neighbors, we are usually coming together to celebrate Husker football. Our team represents something much bigger than just a typical collegiate sports team. It is about toughness, and it is about community. The Bugeaters, as the Nebraska Cornhuskers were first known in the 1890s, started with a volunteer coach and now boast many Heisman Trophy winners, five national titles, and a sell-out streak that dates to October of 1962.

For those of you who think there are football teams in your States—and I say this with all due respect to the Presiding Officer, who comes from a State that has passable football—and for those of you who think you are from States where football is taken seriously, there has not been a seat available to a game in Nebraska since October of 1962. Nebraska has had, by far, the biggest winning streak—the winningest team—over the course of the last half century in American college football.

Nebraskans know and love this team, not just because of the prowess on the field but because Nebraska football is the undisputed champion of Academic All-Americans in the country, having a 43-award lead over the second closest team in the history of Academic All-American Awards and American life.

That is Penn State, not North Carolina, that is in second place, I say to the Presiding Officer.

We live, we breathe, and we love our football team. After each Husker win, church attendance goes up, and crime goes down. Literally, for generations, half of the boys in Nebraska grew up wanting to play quarterback for Tom Osborne in the option offense. Why only half, you ask? It is because the other half wanted to play Blackshirts defensive football to smack the snot out of whoever was going to line up against the Huskers on a given Saturday.

Success on the field is great, but the real reason Nebraskans are so proud of this team is that the Cornhuskers embody the hard work, resolve, teamwork, passion, and sportsmanship of the Nebraska people. While these are the trademarks and hallmarks of our football, they are really the hallmarks of our community associations—of Nebraska's pioneers, of our farmers, our ranchers, our teachers, our small business men and women, our churches, and our Rotary clubs.

Do you know what? We could not be any more proud of that heritage. On this 150th anniversary, I join my senior Senator in saying, please, come visit, and ''Go Big Red.''

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to proceed as in legislative session.

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

Mrs. FISHCER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 74, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 74) congratulating the State of Nebraska on the 150th anniversary of the admission of that State into the United States.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 74) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I yield the floor.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The assistant Democratic leader.

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS TO CONGRESS AND RUSSIA INVESTIGATION

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, last night, I joined most of the Members of Congress to hear President Trump give his first address to a joint session. His speech lasted about 60 minutes, and I listened carefully, as did everyone in the Chamber, to the President's first remarks from that historic setting as he addressed a joint session of Congress.

There were some omissions, which I found very interesting. Not once—not one time—in the course of an hour did President Trump ever say the word ''Russia''—not one time—even though we have been told by 17 of our intelligence agencies that Russia made an overt effort to influence the outcome of the last Presidential campaign. That has never happened before in American history. A foreign country attacked the sovereignty of the United States in the election process for the highest office in the land. I think that is noteworthy. It is certainly historic. It would certainly be worth at least a mention when a President speaks to a joint session of Congress just a few months after that election. Instead, there was radio silence, mute button, crickets—nothing about Russia.

What do we have in terms of congressional response to the possibility that Vladimir Putin was trying to pick our next President? We have the suggestion by the Republican leaders in the Senate and the House that this matter should be taken up by the Intelligence Committees.

It sounds reasonable on its face. Having served on Intelligence Committees, I can tell you it is an awesome responsibility and assignment. I can also tell you we have some extraordinarily gifted, talented, patriotic members of those committees from both political parties in the Senate and in the House, but there is a fundamental flaw to this approach. If you went searching on Capitol Hill to find the room in which the Senate Intelligence Committee meets, you would come up empty. There is no sign on the door. It is basically kept clandestine, confidential, and secret. For 4 years, I entered that door, sat down in closed hearings, with no one from the public able to hear or even appreciate what we were doing. It is a lonely assignment—unlike any other committee on Capitol Hill.

I wonder: Is that what we want to do to explore the involvement of Vladimir Putin in our Presidential campaign—to go behind closed doors in secret and meet clandestinely? I think not.

There is an aspect of this that will require some intelligence gathering, some discussion of intelligence—and certainly that would be secret—but there is much more of it that is public in nature that will never be disclosed if we rely on the Senate Intelligence Committee. It is an invisible process, and that invisible process does not serve the needs of a democracy that wants the truth—the straight talk, the answers.

Secondly, the work of an Intelligence Committee ends up in a report that is classified, which means the public doesn't get to see it. We have seen some renditions of it—heavily redacted pages, where one or two words might escape being crossed out.

How do you move from a classified document on Putin's involvement in our Presidential campaign to a public document the people can understand? It takes declassification. Who makes the decision on whether we declassify the information from the Intelligence Committee investigation? The White House.

So, with the possibility—and I underline that word—with the possibility that some people in the President's campaign may or may not have been involved in this, the President has the last word as to the American people ever hearing the results of an Intelligence Committee report.

Many of us believe this is serious, and many of us believe there should be an independent, transparent commission, just like the 9/11 Commission. Let's call on people we respect, such as GEN Colin L. Powell, Sandra Day O'Connor, a former Supreme Court Justice, and many others just like them, who could get to the bottom of this and answer the basic questions: What were the Russians up to? We hear they had 1,000 trolls sitting in offices in Moscow dreaming up ways to hack into the computers and Internet of the United States and to disclose information to try to influence the outcome of the election. It is not a new tactic from Russia. They have done it over and over again.

The last couple of weeks I visited Poland, Lithuania, Ukraine. They know these tactics oh so well. Under Soviet times and since, Russia has tried to invade their space when it comes to election decisions—overtly, covertly, through propaganda, through cyber attacks. They have done it in many countries around the world. Sadly, they are good at it. Now they have decided they can do it in the United States. They can decide who our President will be or at least try to. Are we going to take this sitting down?

November 8, 2016, election day, was a day that will live in cyber infamy in the United States. The Russians invaded the U.S. election process. The President of the United States spoke to the American people last night and never mentioned one word—not a single word—about this.

How many Republican Senators and Congressmen have come to the floor? I don't know about in the House, but I can tell my colleagues I know about the Senate. None. Not one has come to the floor to even address this issue.

So when President Trump ignored it last night, refused to even mention it, I wasn't surprised, but it is not going away. It is a fact.

We currently have an investigation underway in our intelligence agencies. I just met with former Senator Dan Coats of Indiana. He has been designated by the President to be the DNI—the Director of National Intelligence. He made a statement publicly yesterday before a hearing in Congress that he is going to cooperate with the committees and with Congress in disclosing information they have accumulated in our intelligence agencies as to this Russian involvement in our election.

We also know the Federal Bureau of Investigation is involved in this same exercise to find out exactly what happened and to disclose as much as possible and take action—prosecutorial action—if necessary.

There is a problem, though. The Federal Bureau of Investigation works for the Attorney General. The Department of Justice has the power to impede or stop any FBI investigation. Our former colleague Jeff Sessions was deeply and personally involved in the Trump Presidential campaign. He should recuse himself. He has an obvious conflict of interest on this issue. For the integrity of the office and for his own personal integrity, he should step aside and appoint a special prosecutor who can follow up, if necessary, with this FBI investigation.

This is a serious matter that was not addressed at all last night by the President of the United States speaking to a joint session of Congress.

The Associated Press went through some of the claims that were made by the President last night, and I want to give them credit for their homework on this. It is important for the RECORD that some of the things the President said be explained.

The President said:

According to the National Academy of Sciences, our current immigration system

costs American taxpayers many billions of dollars a year.

The Associated Press writes:

That's not exactly what the report says. It says immigrants ''contribute to government finances by paying taxes and add expenditures by consuming public service.''

The report found that while first-generation immigrants are more expensive to governments than their native-born counterparts, primarily at the state and local level, immigrants' children ''are among the strongest economic and fiscal contributors in the population.'' This second generation contributed more in taxes on a per capita basis, for example, than non-immigrants in the period, 1994–2013.

The report [that the President unfortunately mischaracterized] found that the ''long-run fiscal impact'' of immigrants and their children would probably be seen as more positive ''if their role in sustaining labor force growth and contributing to innovation and entrepreneurial activity were taken into account.''

So to argue, as the President did yesterday, that the National Academy of Sciences, as he said, stated that our current immigration system costs American taxpayers many billions of dollars is, at best, incomplete and misleading.

The President then went on to say during the course of his speech last night:

We've saved taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars by bringing down the price of the F–35 jet fighter.

I remember when he said that.

The Associated Press says as follows:

The cost savings he persists in bragging about were secured in full or large part before he became President.

He has taken credit for something he didn't do.

According to the AP:

The head of the Air Force program announced significant price reductions in the contract for the Lockheed F–35 fighter on December 19—after [candidate] Trump, [President-Elect Trump] had tweeted about the cost but weeks before he met with the company's CEO.

The AP goes on:

Pentagon managers took action even before the election to save [this] money. . . . Richard Aboulafia, an analyst with the aerospace consulting firm Teal Group, said there is no evidence of any additional cost savings as a result of President Trump's actions.

Here is another statement made by the President last night:

We will provide massive tax relief for the middle class.

I remember that one. That is something I hope we all can aspire to, but let me tell my colleagues what the Associated Press says about that claim.

Trump has provided little detail on how this would happen. Independent analyses of his campaign tax proposals found that most of the benefits would flow to the wealthiest families. The richest 1 percent would see an average tax cut of nearly $215,000 a year, while the middle one-fifth of the population would get a tax cut of just $1,010, according to the Tax Policy Center, a joint project with the Brookings Institution and Urban Institute.

Here is another statement the President made last night:

Ninety-four million Americans are out of the labor force.

The Associated Press says:

That's true, but for the vast majority of them, it's because they choose to be. That 94 million figure includes everyone aged 16 and older who doesn't have a job and isn't looking for one. So it includes retirees, parents who are staying home to raise children, high school and college students who are studying rather than working.

They are unlikely to work regardless of the state of the economy. With the huge baby boomer generation reaching retirement age many of them retiring, the population of those out of the labor force is increasing and will continue to do so, most economists forecast.

It's true that some of those out of the workforce are of working age and have given up looking for work. But that number is probably a small fraction of the 94 million President Trump cited.

Another statement the President made: He said his budget plan will offer ''one of the largest increases in national defense spending in American history.''

I will not dwell on this other than to say that the absolute number—a $54 billion increase, or about 10 percent, is the largest single number. On a percentage basis, there have been larger increases in previous years, like 2002, 2003, and 2008.

Here is another claim made by the President last night:

Since my election, Ford, Fiat-Chrysler, General Motors, Sprint, Softbank, Lockheed, Intel, Walmart, and many others have announced they will invest billions of dollars in the United States and will create tens of thousands of new American jobs.

The Associated Press reports that ''many of the announcements reflect corporate decisions that predate [Trump's Presidential] election,'' making it unlikely his administration ''is the sole or even primary reason for the expected hiring. . . . In the case of Intel, construction of the Chandler, Arizona, factory referred to by Trump actually began during Barack Obama's presidency. The project was delayed by insufficient demand for Intel's high-powered computer chips, but the company now expects to finish the factory within four years because it anticipates business growth.

Another statement made by President Trump last night in his speech:

We will stop the drugs from pouring into our country and poisoning our youth, and we will expand treatment for those who have become so badly addicted.

The facts:

Addicts and mentally ill people who gain access to treatment programs for the first time as a result of ObamaCare—the Affordable Care Act—are worried about repeal that President Trump has called for. Repeal could end coverage for 1.8 million people who have undergone addiction or mental health treatment, cut $5.5 billion on spending on such services according to estimates by economist Richard Frank, a former administration official under Barack Obama, now with the Harvard Medical School.

The AP goes on to say:

The key question is what will happen to Medicaid as a result of changes Republicans are pursuing? Broadly speaking, Republicans want to transform the health insurance program for low-income people from an open-ended Federal entitlement to a system that provides States with a limited amount of financing and gives them latitude on how to spend it.

The AP goes on to say:

If Congress is too stingy with State allotments, States would be hampered dealing with the emergencies like the opioid epidemic.

The next statement by President Trump last night:

According to data provided by the Department of Justice, the vast majority of individuals convicted for terrorism-related offenses since 9/11 came here from outside of our country. We have seen the attacks at home, from Boston to San Bernardino to the Pentagon, and yes, even the World Trade Center.

The Associated Press responds:

It's unclear what Justice Department data the President is citing. The most recent government information that has come out doesn't back up his claim. Just over half the people President Trump talks about were actually born in the United States, according to Homeland Security Department research. That report said of 82 people the government determined were inspired by foreign terrorist groups to attempt to carry out an attack on the U.S., just over half [of them] were [born in the United States] native-born citizens.

The AP goes on to say:

Even the attacks Trump singled out weren't entirely the work of foreigners. Syed Rizwan Farook, who along with his Pakistani wife killed 14 people in the deadly 2015 attack in San Bernardino, California, was born in Chicago.

It's true that in the immediate aftermath of September 11, the FBI's primary concern was with terrorists from overseas feared to be plotting attacks in the United States. But that's no longer the case. The FBI and Justice Department have been preoccupied with violent extremists from inside the U.S. who are inspired by the calls to violence and mayhem of the Islamic State group. The Justice Department has prosecuted scores of Islamic State-related cases since 2014, and many of the defendants are U.S. citizens.

Another statement by President Trump last night:

ObamaCare is collapsing . . . imploding Obamacare disaster.

The AP writes:

There are problems with the 2010 health care law, but whether it's collapsing is hotly disputed.

One of the two major components of the Affordable Care Act has been a spike in premiums and a drop in participation from insurers. But the other component, equally important, seems to be working fairly well, even if its costs are a concern.

Trump and congressional Republicans want to repeal the whole thing, which risks leaving millions of people uninsured if the replacement plan has shortcomings. Some critics say GOP rhetoric itself is making things worse by creating uncertainty about the future.

The health law offers subsidized private health insurance along with a state option to expand Medicaid for low-income people. Together, the two arms of the program reach more than 20 million people.

Republican governors whose states have expanded Medicaid are trying to find a way to persuade Congress and the administration to keep this expansion, and maybe even build on it, while imposing limits on the long-term costs of Medicaid.

While the Medicaid expansion seems to be working, the markets for subsidized health insurance are stressed in many states. Also affected are millions of people who buy individual policies outside the government markets, and face the same high premiums with no financial help from the health law. Larry Levitt of the nonpartisan Kaiser Family Foundation says ''implosion'' is too strong a term. An AP count found that 12.2 million people signed up for this year, despite the Trump administration's threats to repeal the law.

I might add, that it is despite all of the speeches made on the floor of the Senate and the House, promising that it would be repealed as well.

The last point I want to make is this. I was troubled last night by a recurring theme in the President's speech. It was a theme about immigration in the United States. We are a nation of immigrants. My mother was an immigrant to this country. I am proud to serve as a Senator from the State where she and her family settled. I am proud of the struggle they went through—coming to this country, not knowing the language, going through some pretty rough times, facing poverty, taking the dirtiest and toughest jobs. Because of that, the second generation of my family—the one I represent—has brought some great people to this world in our own families and perhaps even added to the benefits of the United States for others.

Last night, if you listened to the characterization of immigrants, it was negative, virtually from start to finish.

In the audience last night, I had a young lady as my guest. She is an extraordinary lady. Her name is Aaima Sayed. She is Pakistani, and she was brought to the United States at the age of 3 by her parents from Pakistan. They settled in Chicago and eventually moved to New Jersey. It turns out the family had its difficulties and the mother and father split and separated. When the father left, he left behind his paperwork—which was in place or at least in the process—of trying to legalize the presence of his family, and nothing was done.

It wasn't until she was in high school that this young lady realized that she was undocumented. That creates obstacles for any young person. In her case, a special obstacle was the cost of higher education. As an undocumented child in America, she didn't qualify for government assistance—Federal Government assistance—and limited State assistance. Yet she aspired to go on to school and to borrow the money, if necessary, at high interest rates from private sources in order to finish her education. She graduated from Rutgers University magna cum laude and then wanted to go to medical school.

There weren't many medical schools accepting undocumented students, but there was one. I am proud to tell you that it was Loyola University of Chicago, the Stritch School of Medicine. There were about 65 undocumented young people in medical school in the United States, and 30 of them were at Loyola in Chicago. I have met most of them. Each and every one of them is more inspiring than the next.

They opened up the competition. They didn't give them slots to fill. They said: Compete with everyone. These students were so outstanding from across the United States that they made it to Loyola.

This young lady, in her third year, faces another 6 years of education before she completes her medical degree. When she is finished with those 6 years, it isn't over. In Illinois, we told her she could go to school, but it was part of a contract. She could attend school, and we would reduce the interest payments at a later part in her life if she gave us 1 year of service in an underserved community in Illinois for each year of medical school. She has 6 years of school left and 4 years of serving in a rural community or an underserved neighborhood clinic in the city of Chicago or nearby.

She signed up for it. She is an amazing young person. She is determined to get this medical degree—despite the debt, despite the obstacles. The only reason she can do this is because she is protected by something called DACA.

Let me explain. Some 16 years ago, I introduced a bill called the DREAM Act. It said that if you were brought to the United States, like she was, under the age of 16, you had a good life, no criminal record or history of a problematic nature, and completed your education, you can stay in the United States and eventually work your way toward legalization.

President Obama took it up and created an Executive order called DACA and said to the young people in that situation: Come and apply, pay a $600 filing fee, then go through a criminal background check, and if you make it, we will give you 2 years to live in the United States without fear of deportation, with a work permit.

She signed up. That is how she can go to medical school. You need to work to go to medical school. She is going through a clinical experience where she is actually working in these hospitals. Without a work permit, she wouldn't be able to complete medical school.

The obvious question is this: What is going to happen to this program under President Trump? In fairness, the President has said positive things about DACA and DREAMers. I thanked him personally. I have only met him three times, but I thanked him personally twice for doing that. I hope that it means that ultimately there will be some path for the 750,000 young people, just like her, who are simply asking for a chance to be educated and be part of America's future.

I hope that, as people who listened to the speech last night think about immigrants to the United States, they will think about this young woman, as well, who has worked so hard her entire life to better herself and to be able to help others at a later point in life.

She is an extraordinary person, and there are so many more just like her. They are immigrants to this country. In this case it is Muslim immigrant to this country who someday will be an exceptional doctor, who is going to give 4 years of her life back to my home State and then is going to help others all across the United States. That, to me, is an image of immigrants that shouldn't be lost with the negative connotations that were raised last night.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

MINERS PROTECTION ACT

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I rise today to call for immediate action on the Miners Protection Act. Today, as we sit here, 22,600 miners have received letters. This is a copy of the letter, and I am going to read it to you. This is a letter they received today letting them know their healthcare benefits will be terminated at the end of April. This letter basically says:

The UMWA 1993 Benefit Plan notified you in December 2016—

This is one of multiple letters they received. Can you imagine getting a 4-month extension? Then by law you have to have 90 days before they can terminate you. Every time you get an extension, within 30 days you get another letter saying you are going to be terminated. That is the inhumane treatment our retired miners and mostly widows are receiving—

that the U.S. Congress had passed the Continuing Health Benefits for Miners Act, which provided for the transfer of federal funds to the Plan to cover the health care benefits you receive through April 30, 2017. The Plan cautioned that further Congressional action would be necessary in order for the Plan to provide health care coverage to you after April 30. At this time, Congress has not taken the action needed to continue your benefits. Unless Congress acts before the end of April, the 1993 Benefit Plan will not be able to provide you with the health benefits that you have been receiving from the 1993 Plan, and those benefits will terminate effective May 1, 2017. In addition, your Funds' Health Service Card will no longer be valid.

Can you imagine a 75- or 80-year-old woman—a lady, a widow—who has lost her husband, probably because of black lung, and all the work he did for our country and for himself and his family, and she has received that three times or more now—not knowing what in the world or why they can't do something that we promised, something that was done in 1946, where the Krug amendment and the Krug act basically said that we would take care of our miners so that they would have permanent healthcare and a pension. It was not done by taxpayers' dollars. It was done by the coal they mined. For every ton of coal, there would be so much set aside. Then we had the bankruptcy laws happen in the 1980s, which basically destroyed a lot of companies for paying into it. Then we had the crash of 2008, which took it further down.

Now we stand here today, and we have a fix coming out of the AML, the

abandoned mine lands, coming, again, from coal that was mined to pay for the miners' pension and benefit plan, and we can't get it done.

I will tell you, if that piece of legislation was allowed to be voted on tonight, we would have well over 60 votes, bipartisan. My Republican colleagues and all of our Democrat colleagues here understand the importance of the working people.

President Trump is speaking about this every time. Last night he shouted out to miners. I was so pleased. I have not heard that since I have been here—anyone saying: Thank you for the job you have done. We are not leaving you behind. You have given to this country the country we have, the superpower of the world. You have produced the energy through the toughest of times, and we appreciate that.

I was very, very appreciative to see that type of recognition. I can't tell you how much more appreciative I would be right now to see us as a bipartisan group—Democrats and Republicans—standing up for the working people that we talk about every day and saying: Listen, as to the pension guarantee act, which basic to the Miners Protection Act, we are going to pass that. We are going to put this aside. We don't have to worry about this anymore. We have done it.

That is all we are asking for. Everybody who has joined me in this journey understands that we are all fighting for the working people, which is what we were sent here to do, from your wonderful State of South Carolina to my beautiful State of West Virginia. They depend on us. The retired miners are walking our halls. Maybe you have seen them. If not, I am sure they will come by and say hi to you. They are very appreciative of the consideration we are all giving them. They are hoping we finally get this done.

I am doing it for them and for their families and what they have done for our country. The 4-month extension is not even humane. I have said that. My reason for saying that is that these people can't comprehend it. I can assure you that, when I go back to my office after I leave the floor, I will get phone calls: JOE, they are going to take my healthcare again. What am I going to do?

I keep saying: Ma'am, please, trust us; hold tight.

We could have had this fixed before. We kicked the can down the road 4 months. Now I have been told—and we all seem to accept it—that they are going to do a permanent healthcare fix. I am appreciative of that. The bottom line is that we have pensions out there hanging, which is going to be a bigger albatross around us if we don't something, and we have a chance to fix it all and put that aside.

I spoke to President Trump, and I am hopeful that he will speak out on this, and he has spoken out. He has told me that he supports it.

I said: Please, Mr. President, speak to our friends on the other side—our leadership—and let them know how much you support this, and let us put this behind us because we can fix it once and for all.

We were told to get a legislative hearing, and we did that. We were told to go through regular order. We went to the Finance Committee, and it was passed out—bipartisan, overwhelmingly bipartisan.

I know we have the 60 votes. I was told we have to reintroduce it again. So here we are. I reintroduced it, and we have bipartisan support again. We are ready to go.

Why do we put these people through this type of agony? I don't know. We have so many other challenges, and we have to come together. This is one we have already agreed we are together on and can't move it.

I know you have always been a dear friend and supportive, and you know the hard work our people have done, and I appreciate that. However, it is time to act. It is time to get this done. If we wait until April, that is exactly when our continuing resolution is coming up, and, basically, we have no budget to work off of. So we have to do another extension until we can get something more permanent. They could get caught up in that CR again. We are going to say: We are sorry; we couldn't get it done, but we will give you another 2, 3, or 4 months.

I can't go home and continue to tell these wonderful people who have been so good and so patient that I am sorry, but we just have to wait another few months.

When is enough enough? When are those few months going to be up and we do the right thing? I am asking all of you; I am asking all of my colleagues: Please, this is one time when we can do something and feel good about it and go home over the weekend and go back to our constituents and tell them that this one is finished, that we fixed this.

I am asking for that vote. I would encourage all of my colleagues to do the same, to speak to the leaderships to make sure that we can move the miners protection and make sure the miners get the healthcare and the pension benefits they were guaranteed and they have been promised and which has been kept until now, and that we are not going to let them down.

With that, Mr. President, I thank you, and I thank all of my colleagues for the support we have been receiving. I am asking the majority leader to please let us have this vote and put it on the floor. Let's go from there and see what happens. I am willing to do that.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

FAMILY PLANNING PROVIDERS

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, thank you, and thank you to some of my colleagues who are going to be joining me on the floor this afternoon.

The day after President Trump was inaugurated was one of the most inspiring I have ever gotten a chance to be part of. Millions of people, men and women, marched in Seattle, in Washington, DC, and in cities and towns in between. They carried signs, they chanted, and they made it absolutely undeniably clear that when it comes to women's rights and healthcare, people across the country do not want to go backward. Since then, they have continued to speak up and stand up.

But we are here today because Donald Trump and Republicans in Congress simply are not getting the message. I want to discuss one crucial example in particular—the possibility that in a matter of days, Senate Republicans could roll back a rule protecting family planning providers from being discriminated against and denied Federal funding.

Let me start by explaining a bit about what family planning providers mean to our community. These providers—part of the Title X program, which has bipartisan history—deliver critical healthcare services nationwide but are especially needed in rural and frontier areas. In 2015 alone, Title X provided basic primary and preventive healthcare services, such as Pap tests, breast exams, birth control, and HIV testing, to more than 4 million low-income women and men at nearly 4,000 health centers. In my home State of Washington, tens of thousands of patients are able to receive care at these centers each year. They often have nowhere else to turn for healthcare. In fact, 4 out of 10 woman who receive care at health centers funded by Title X consider it to be their only source of healthcare.

Taking resources away from these providers would be cruel. It would have the greatest impact on women and families who are most in need. But that is exactly what the law passed in the House, which is now on its way to the Senate, would mean. It would undo a valuable effort by the Obama administration to ensure that healthcare providers are evaluated for Federal funding based on their ability to provide the services in question, not ideology. In doing so, the bill would make it even easier for States, led by extreme politicians, to deny family planning providers Federal funding, not because of the quality of the care they provide or the value to the communities they serve but based on whether the politicians in charge agree that women should be able to exercise their constitutionally protected rights to safe, legal abortion.

It is the 21st century. It is time for politicians to stop telling women what they can and can't do with their own bodies. That is what the women and men who have been marching and speaking up all over our country believe. That is what I believe. It is what Democrats believe.

If Leader MCCONNELL thinks he can rush this harmful legislative effort through without a fight, we are here to say he is wrong. He can expect Democrats and maybe even some Republicans who are concerned about losing healthcare providers in their own States to fight back. So today I am calling on the leader to commit right now to drop this effort and agree not to bring this bill to the floor. It is well past time that extreme Republicans end their damaging political attacks on women. I think the opportunity to start that is right this minute. So we urge him to take this action and not bring this to the floor. We want him to know that we are going to fight back every step of the way if he does.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I came to the floor to join my colleague and friend Senator MURRAY to say that I, too, am ready for this fight to oppose S.J. Res. 13, which would allow the discrimination against Title X family planning providers. This is a misguided measure that would leave millions of women and families with fewer healthcare options. It would drastically decrease women's access to basic primary and preventative health services, including lifesaving cancer screenings and HIV testing.

Make no mistake, as Senator MURRAY said, the primary target of this legislation is Planned Parenthood. For years now, Republican leaders in Congress have tried to keep women from choosing Planned Parenthood as their healthcare provider—this at a time when Planned Parenthood serves millions of women nationwide, including nearly 12,000 women in New Hampshire, my home State. Most of the women in New Hampshire have incomes below or near the poverty line. Many of those women live in rural areas where they don't have other options for healthcare coverage.

The sad irony of this attack on Planned Parenthood is that study after study has shown that cutting back access to birth control and to other family planning methods actually increases the number of abortions. So I understand that opponents are interested in supporting this legislation because they think Planned Parenthood provides abortions, but the coverage Planned Parenthood is providing to women in New Hampshire and across this country with Federal dollars does not allow for abortions. So what we are doing is taking away women's access to contraception and to other family planning services and saying: You have no choice now.

More than ever right now, facts matter. Research matters. Talking away women's access to birth control and family planning will lead to more abortions, not fewer abortions. Yet this legislation is part and parcel of a broader national campaign against Planned Parenthood, whose clinics have been the target of vilification, of threats, and of violence. In October of last year, the Planned Parenthood clinic in Claremont, NH, was vandalized not once but twice. The second attack, a breaking-and-entering incident, caused extensive damage. It forced the clinic to close for 5 weeks.

I have great admiration for the courage of doctors and other healthcare providers at the Claremont clinic. Despite threats and attacks, they are determined to continue serving women across the Connecticut River Valley, many of whom have no alternative to the Claremont clinic. They are typical of the dedicated healthcare professionals at Planned Parenthood clinics all across our country.

The good news is that, according to poll after poll, the American people across the political spectrum—from Independents, to Libertarians, to Democrats, to Republicans—strongly support Planned Parenthood and oppose efforts to take away women's ability to choose Planned Parenthood as their healthcare provider.

At last night's Presidential address to Congress, I was honored to have as my guest Jennifer Frizzell of Planned Parenthood of Northern New England. Jen knows exactly what is at stake for women if President Trump and Republican leaders succeed in closing hundreds of Planned Parenthood clinics across the United States.

So let's be clear again: Supporting family planning clinics is not about abortion, which by law is never funded by taxpayer dollars—something that I think is often misrepresented by some of our colleagues here in Congress. What this is about is ensuring that American women have access to the basic healthcare they need. For 40 percent of women, their visits to a family planning center is the only care they receive annually. In 2015 alone, Title X provided basic primary and preventive healthcare services, such as Pap tests, breast exams, birth control, and HIV testing, to more than 4 million women and men at nearly 4,000 health centers.

I am sure that every one of our colleagues is receiving letters and emails and phone calls from constituents on this issue. They are pleading with us not to take away their access to Planned Parenthood and the healthcare they trust and depend on.

I received this message from Caitlin Parnell of Hampstead, NH. She said:

> As a young mother of a 2-year-old, my husband and I knew we wanted to wait to have more children. We were both working full time but barely making ends meet. The companies we worked for offered health insurance, but they were small companies, and the monthly cost was well more than we could afford. So we went without. With no insurance, I turned to Planned Parenthood for birth control. With the sliding pay scale, I was able to get exams and birth control within my budget. We were able to decide the best time to have more children, which also allowed us to responsibly manage our finances as well. An unplanned pregnancy at that point would have destroyed the little financial stability we had. I don't know where our family would be without Planned Parenthood.

Karla Canderhoof is a stay-at-home mother in Newfields, NH. She wrote this:

> After being diagnosed with ovarian cyst issues that caused debilitating pain, I turned to Planned Parenthood for treatment. In my case, the treatment for ovarian cysts was birth control. At the time (during my college years) I could not afford the cost of birth control due to my lack of insurance. But Planned Parenthood gave me birth control free of charge.

Amanda Arel of Rochester, NH, sent this message:

> During the ages of 22 to 25, I utilized Planned Parenthood for my annual exams and birth control. As I did not have insurance and was in college, I was not able to afford most medical care. Planned Parenthood not only provided me with essential care, they made it very comfortable for me and were very knowledgeable and answered any questions I had. They provided birth control for me that, if it wasn't for them, I would not have been able to get, at a cost I could afford.

I still support Planned Parenthood because they provide safe, affordable healthcare for all, and that is so important.

We need to listen to our constituents, those who are speaking out in passionate support of Planned Parenthood and other family planning clinics.

As Senator MURRAY said so eloquently, this is about respecting women's access to healthcare services, including those millions of vulnerable women who have nowhere else to turn for essential care. This is also about respecting women's constitutionally protected right to make our own reproductive choices. We must not allow Congress to strip away Federal investments in family planning clinics by allowing States to discriminate against providers like Planned Parenthood.

I urge our Republican colleagues, don't bring S.J. Res. 13 to the floor. If it does come to the floor, I certainly intend to join in the fight with my colleagues—Senator MURRAY, Senator BLUMENTHAL, and so many other Democrats and, I believe, Republicans—to defeat this legislation.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I am proud and honored to follow my very distinguished colleague from New Hampshire, Senator SHAHEEN, and Senator MURRAY of Washington in this cause which invokes a line that I think the President used last night in his address to us, pledging cooperation for causes where we can make a common cause.

Surely no cause is more important than healthcare, no goal is more important than preventive services for

women so we can all avoid the costs not only in dollars and cents but the cost of human suffering and foreclosed futures that will come when women are denied these kinds of basic services.

I met this morning with a group from Planned Parenthood, patients and providers working in clinics across New England. They told me their story—some of them patients, some of them service providers and volunteers—about the kind of transformative effect that primary care, examinations and screenings, can have for women who would otherwise lack those services. The community health centers cannot substitute for them.

Family planning programs under title X are often the only Federal programs dedicated to providing comprehensive services in family planning but also in related preventive health services.

Over the past year alone, title X providers have provided cancer and HIV screenings, contraceptive services, and other primary and preventive services to over 4 million women and men at nearly 4,000 health centers in New England and across the country. This network of healthcare providers is a safety net. They compose a network, the title X network, including providers of State and local health departments, federally qualified health centers, and family planning councils. They create a network that provides a critical source of healthcare to people who otherwise would be denied it. They are trusted providers who are willing to serve the uninsured, the uninsured and low-income individuals who risk losing all access to healthcare if it was not for this network.

These clinics are often the only healthcare providers in rural areas and other parts of the country. So the political attacks on providers that provide abortion services would mean a loss of access to all family planning and preventive healthcare in these parts of the country—rural, metropolitan, suburban. Not only are these services necessary, but family planning services are really good investments, especially when it comes to the money that otherwise would be spent when illnesses or diseases become more serious.

In 2010, the $1.14 billion that was spent in this country on family planning resulted in more than $8 billion in gross savings. That is a clearly worthwhile investment.

The resolution that passed the House last month that Senator MCCONNELL is considering bringing to the Senate floor would eliminate protections that prevent discrimination against these very providers, discrimination based on facts or sometimes nonfacts that have nothing to do with the quality of care or the worthiness of the investment in these clinics and healthcare providers.

The regulation that Republicans are seeking to eliminate ensures that no qualified providers will be excluded from eligibility for Federal funding for discriminatory reasons outside of that provider's ability to provide care. That is really the criterion that matters. The ones who want to eliminate this regulation apparently would rather risk limiting access to healthcare in order to score political points. Unfortunately, it is really that simple.

At a time when Republicans continue to try to push ahead with repealing the Affordable Care Act, which also includes essential support for preventive healthcare, they also want to disrupt the country's healthcare system for this kind of women's healthcare.

Just last night, after President Trump claimed he wanted to work with Members of both parties to invest in women's health, we are threatened with this step to eliminate an important regulation that protects women's health. I ask the President and my colleagues across the aisle to join in this common cause, which should unite us on a bipartisan basis. If they want to continue these attacks, we are ready for the fight, but we would much rather cooperate and collaborate in the cause of women's healthcare.

I urge my Senate colleagues to listen to the kind of providers and patients whom I met with this morning, the kind of provider that Senator SHAHEEN brought with her last night as her guest, the kind of providers and patients and volunteers who work in these clinics all across the country, whether it is Planned Parenthood or other kinds of clinics. I ask them to listen to the advocates here, supporters, like the National Coalition of STD Directors, the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy, the American Psychological Association, the National Association of County and City Health Officials, the ACLU, and the American Medical Student Association. They are just a few of the stakeholders who advocate strongly that this regulation be continued and who oppose the step the House passed and that the majority leader may bring to the floor.

These people have dedicated their lives and their careers to assisting the vulnerable, whether they are providing healthcare or legal services or other kinds of support, and they are saying to us: Do not eliminate this regulation. I think we ought to listen to them. I hope my colleagues will.

I am determined that we will fight tooth and nail if we need to do so, but I would much rather that we follow the President's offer and that we collaborate to stop the elimination of this regulation, which is so important to making sure that women's healthcare is based on quality, not on discriminatory reasons based on political motive.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Mr. KING. Mr. President, I rise to oppose S.J. Res. 13, which is a Congressional Review Act resolution to undo the regulations which protect title X health centers. I believe this resolution, although well meaning, will have the opposite effect of its intention.

I particularly want to discuss the organization known as Planned Parenthood, but, more generally, these women's health centers, these title X health centers, No. 1, provide many healthcare services to women, particularly low-income women. They are the choice of those women. They are a place they have chosen to go to receive their healthcare treatment.

I do think that one of the problems with this whole debate is the use of the term ''funding'' of Planned Parenthood. What we are talking about here is not funding, as in a budget line or a budget provision that says: Planned Parenthood gets $58 million or $100 million or $10, whatever it is. That is not the way it works. What we are talking about is reimbursement for women's healthcare services provided on an individual, case-by-case basis, and this does not include abortion. It does not include abortion.

These organizations in Maine—Planned Parenthood, for example, serves 10,000 people. Ten thousand women choose to get their healthcare services from Planned Parenthood.

The other piece of this debate I have never understood is why those who are opposed to abortion would be so opposed to organizations that allow women to make choices about pregnancies and provide contraception and contraception advice, which statistically we know reduces abortion.

In Maine, because of the access to organizations like Planned Parenthood and other women's healthcare clinics, we have seen our teen pregnancy rate drop 58 percent in the last 20 years or so—58 percent. That is a significant reduction, and it is attributable, at least in some significant part, to the availability of the services provided by these organizations.

It has always struck me as ironic, in the extreme, that someone who says they are against abortion should be against an agency that provides contraception and family planning services that prevent pregnancy and therefore prevent abortion.

I subscribe to President Clinton's formulation that abortion should be safe, legal, and rare. It should not be something that is chosen just casually—and of course it isn't. This is a terribly difficult decision for a women, but that is not the subject today. The subject today is curtailing the reimbursement for women's healthcare services to an organization or organizations that may also provide abortion services.

It is contrary to the very idea of trying to prevent abortion, but it is also denying healthcare services of choice to thousands of women in Maine and millions across the country.

I have sat in this body for 4 years and heard people talking about how consumers and patients should be able to choose their physicians, they should be able to choose their healthcare options. This was a basic principle. It is one of the arguments we have heard as we have been discussing other healthcare

issues in this body. This Congressional Review Act provision would take away that choice. I think that is a great disservice to those citizens, many of whom are low income, many of whom are covered by Medicaid, many of whom do not have private health insurance. To take this step that this resolution would entail would be very shortsighted, and I believe it is a violation of the rights of those people to choose their healthcare providers.

It also does not achieve the ends that the sponsors want to achieve. That is why I believe that this resolution—although it may be denominated as something to do with being anti-abortion, I think it is just the opposite. If this resolution passes and these healthcare centers under Title X, including Planned Parenthood, are unable to deliver these services, there will be more unwanted pregnancies and more abortions. I think that is a sad and unfortunate outcome to be perpetrated by people who say they are trying to oppose abortion.

Planned Parenthood provides women's healthcare services. It provides contraceptive services. I know the people in Maine who work for this agency, and I know this is a terribly controversial issue, but I believe that if what we want to do is minimize the number of abortions, then it makes no sense whatsoever to somehow indiscriminately strike out at the funding of the agencies that provide healthcare services.

Nobody in this body is talking about Federal funds for abortion. That is not what the issue is. If that were the issue, this would be an entirely different debate. The issue is taking reimbursement away from the Planned Parenthood clinic or Title X clinic for mammograms, cervical exams, or other women's healthcare services. Why would we want to do that in the name of achieving some other goal that won't even be achieved? In fact, it will be made a more widespread issue.

I hope the Senate will realize that whatever the motivation behind this provision is, it just makes no sense. It makes no sense from the point of view of preventing abortion. It makes no sense in terms of the taxpayers. Preventive services, contraceptive services, cost about $200 a patient; a Medicaid birth costs about $10,000. If it is a Medicaid patient, those are taxpayer dollars. We are talking about saving taxpayers money.

This goes to the healthcare system in general: Why would we want to undo prevention, whether prevention of unwanted pregnancies or prevention of a disease? Prevention is part of the solution to the healthcare crisis in this country because of the excessive cost.

Here is a specific case. Again, we are not talking about funding abortions. We are not talking about funding Planned Parenthood. We are not talking about funding these Title X health centers. We are talking about protecting them in terms of their reimbursement for women's health services delivered. That is what this vote is about. If you vote for this, you are voting to take away reimbursement for health services that are necessary to protect the health and well-being of women across this country.

I hope my colleagues will vote no on this resolution, and I believe it will serve the public and it will even serve those people who are concerned most deeply—and I understand—about abortion. If you want fewer abortions, fund Planned Parenthood. It seems to me that is a fairly clear correlation, and it is one we should respect. But we also should respect the rights, needs, and choices of those millions of women who rely on these clinics for their healthcare needs aside from the issue of reproductive rights, just straight healthcare needs. That is what this vote is all about.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TOOMEY). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 15 minutes as in morning business.

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

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I am here today for the 158th time to ask this Chamber to wake up to the mounting evidence of climate change. The sad truth is that, in Congress anyway, this issue has turned starkly partisan thanks to a torrent of dark political money that the fossil fuel industry uses to both threaten and reward the Republican Party in a dirty, dark money game of stick-and-carrot. Republicans in Congress ignore climate change for the simple reason that the fossil fuel industry has become their political life support system. It does not have to be this way.

Outside this Chamber, even Republicans see things very differently. In the investment sector, where people have to make decisions based on real facts and where duties to shareholders limit overly creative accounting, the Republican signal is clear.

An impressive group of Republican former Treasury Secretaries and Republican former Presidential economic advisers recently proposed a conservative, market-based climate solution. Republican Presidents trusted these folks with the conduct of the U.S. economy. Jim Baker was Secretary of the Treasury under President Reagan, Hank Paulson was Secretary of the Treasury under President George W. Bush, and George Shultz was Secretary of the Treasury under President Nixon, in addition to other distinguished offices that they held. Joining those three were Martin Feldstein, Chairman of President Reagan's Council of Economic Advisers, and Greg Mankiw, who held that position for President George W. Bush; Rob Walton, the former chairman of the board of Walmart, the world's largest retailer and employer; and Tom Stephenson from Sequoia Capital, the venture capital firm out in Silicon Valley. This Republican group proposed a ''carbon dividends'' plan. It combines a carbon tax on fossil fuels—which reflects harm from carbon emissions which market economics ordinarily requires to be built into the price of the product—with a big dividend returning all of the revenues to the American people, and a reduction of regulations, which may be mooted by a good enough carbon fee. This idea is actually not so different from my own American Opportunity Carbon Fee Act.

In their report, they all note that the ''mounting evidence of climate change is growing too strong to ignore.'' Many would say that it grew too strong to ignore a good decade ago, but it is important that these Republican leaders have acknowledged this.

They also said: ''Economists are nearly unanimous in their belief that a carbon tax is the most efficient and effective way to reduce carbon emissions.''

This report lines up with many other Republicans outside Congress who support a revenue-neutral carbon fee. It is the favorite climate solution in conservative economic circles. Indeed, it is the only widely accepted climate solution among Republicans.

The Niskanen Center, a Libertarian think tank that spun off from the Cato Institute, last month wrote this:

> The case for climate action is now so strong that one would be hard-pressed to find a serious academic economist who opposes using market forces to manage the damage done by greenhouse emissions.

Like the Treasury Secretaries, economists and investors throughout the financial community are saying loud and clear: We can no longer ignore climate change.

Goldman Sachs, for instance, in 2015 did a report on the low-carbon economy. It was called: ''Goldman Sachs equity investor's guide to a low carbon world, 2015–2025.'' So unless somebody here is going to say that Goldman Sachs is in on the hoax, Goldman Sachs is taking this pretty seriously.

Last year, the investment firm BlackRock, with more than $1 trillion in assets under management, issued a report titled: ''Adapting Portfolios to Climate Change.''

I don't think investors trust $1 trillion to a firm that falls for hoaxes. BlackRock, like Goldman, knows that climate change is real and is helping its investors plan for the economic fallout.

BlackRock warns in its report: ''Investors can no longer ignore climate

change. . . .'' Parenthetical editorial comment: That is the job of Republicans in Congress.

BlackRock also had something to say about a price on carbon. They said this: ''Higher carbon pricing would help address [externalities from fossil fuels] and would be the most cost-effective way for countries to meet their Paris agreement pledges.''

So in the real world, where real decisions are being made by very smart people backed by real money, they are telling their clients: You must take climate change seriously, and you must take carbon pricing seriously.

The BlackRock report had this data on prices that companies are setting on carbon internally—in their own internal accounting—across sectors, including healthcare and energy and utilities. As we can see, the price per metric ton ranges from a low of about $10 in information technology, up to over $350 per metric ton—internal costs of carbon accounting in these industries.

The point ought to be pretty clear. The business community is acting, investors are insisting on it, and a price on carbon is a key part of the program.

The legendary Wayne Gretsky's rule was to ''skate to where the puck is going to be.'' These major firms recognize where the carbon economy is heading. We should too. We would, if it weren't for the political mischief wreaked in Congress by the fossil fuel industry.

BlackRock and Goldman Sachs are not alone. The insurance and reinsurance industry is one of the world's biggest investors, as well as one of the world's best analyzers of risk. Munich Re and Swiss Re, and others in property casualty and reinsurance, warn us that climate change is real and portends huge costs for society. Munich Re's head of risk accumulation in the United States said in 2015: ''As a nation, we need to take steps to reduce the societal impact of weather events as we see greater variability and volatility in our climate.''

One of the biggest investors in the housing market is the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation, Freddie Mac. Freddie Mac has warned about climate change impact on the real estate sector: ''The economic losses and social disruption may happen gradually, but they are likely to be greater in total than those experienced in the housing crisis of the great recession.''

When we think of what we went through in the housing crisis of the great recession, wow, Freddie Mac is warning that the economic losses and social disruption from climate change in our housing markets are likely to be worse.

These are all serious investors and they have serious warnings for us, and ignoring all of them just to please fossil fuel industry patrons is a big, big mistake.

Even President Trump's nominee to head the Securities and Exchange Commission, Jay Clayton, thinks we need action. For years, his law firm has encouraged clients, including ExxonMobil, to disclose climate change-related risks to the SEC and to investors. If he is confirmed, I hope he will enforce the SEC's existing disclosure requirements for climate risk and clarify that public disclosures should include asset valuations based on global compliance with international treaties. Investors need climate change risks disclosed against a ''reality check'' baseline that assumes international compliance with the Paris climate commitments. An assumption that we fail should not be acceptable.

Slowly, investor disclosures are improving. Last year, New York attorney general Eric Schneiderman forced Peabody Energy to restate its disclosures. Just last week, Chevron acknowledged to its investors in an SEC filing that, lo and behold, some of its products ''may be considered pollutants,'' noted ''new conclusions about the effects of the company's operations on human health or the environment,'' and they acknowledged ''an increased possibility of governmental investigations and, potentially, private litigation against the company.''

It is better late than never, I suppose. Now it is time for the rest of the industry to report fully and fairly, first on the risks that shareholders bear from assets that are wrongly valued now—that are falsely valued in their reports—and, second, on the company's potentially culpable behavior in climate denial.

Institutional investors are joining in those efforts. Our Rhode Island pension fund, managed by our treasurer, Seth Magaziner, is pushing for greater transparency on political and lobbying spending at large energy companies like Exxon, Chevron, ConocoPhillips, and Devon. For the resolution filed at ConocoPhillips, Rhode Island was joined by over 20 other cofilers, including the State of Connecticut, Senator MURPHY's home State, whom I see here on the floor.

Just recently, the G20 nations—the 20 biggest economies in the world—set up a group called the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures. It is made up of 32 members from large banks, insurance companies, asset management companies, pension funds, credit rating agencies, and accounting and consulting firms—you know, liberal extremists. And they are saying: Here it comes; let's get ready. They have asked that companies begin to come clean on the climate risk they face.

The big energy companies need to come clean on how much they are spending to deny climate science and where they are spending it, because, ultimately, it is their own investors who will be hurt by their irresponsibility. Ultimately, all the phony climate denial they pay for is a fool's errand because the laws of physics, chemistry, and biology aren't going away, and a day of reckoning for all this mischief and nonsense they have paid for inevitably will come.

We in the Senate have a duty to the American people to find a way to combat climate change. I realize this body will need help in that task. We will need help from the business community, which can apply its understanding of market forces and risk analysis to this challenge. It would help if the fossil fuel industry would focus on the long term health of its shareholders rather than on short-term gain. The fossil fuel industry should stand down the relentless political opposition it has maintained to any climate solution, and it should stand down the phony climate denial operation it continues to support.

It will take all of us coming together—companies, investors, regulators, governments, citizens, Republicans and Democrats—to achieve Donald Trump's once-stated goal of combating the ''catastrophic and irreversible effects of climate change''—his quote: ''catastrophic and irreversible effects of climate change.''

I did not misquote President Trump, although he was Donald Trump then. It was 2009, and this full page advertisement was taken out in the New York Times declaring that the science of climate change was ''irrefutable'' and the consequences of climate change would be ''catastrophic and irreversible.'' It was signed by none other than Donald J. Trump, as well as his children, Donald Trump, Jr., Eric Trump, and Ivanka Trump. They were right then. If they get back to this, they will be right now.

The evidence and the science have only piled up since 2009. It is time for all of us to heed the advice of our universities, our scientists, and the people who actually know what they are talking about, and put the arguments of the fossil fuel industry where they belong—in the trash bin of history. We need to wake up before it is too late.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

GUN VIOLENCE

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, last night, President Trump began his speech with an appropriate reference to the anti-Semitic attacks that have occurred all over the country. Two bomb threats were called into a Jewish community center in the New Haven area in Connecticut. I visited that center and the staff and the kids of that center, who are now being housed in a nearby synagogue. He also condemned, in strong terms, the murder of a young man in Kansas City, the victim of an apparent hate crime, targeted for simply being a foreigner or being of a different religion. We can't know exactly what the reason was, but it was an attack based on hate.

I want to tell my colleagues a little bit about that young man, to begin with, as a means of, once again, coming to the floor of the Senate to tell my colleagues about the victims of gun violence in this country—the 86 or so

people every day who are taken by guns, suicides, and murders and accidental shootings; the 2,600 people a month whose lives are taken through gun violence, and the 31,000 a year. By the way, that number is just the number of people who are killed. Those are the lives that are eliminated. There are another 75,000 every year who are injured by gun fire, whose lives are irrevocably altered by that act of violence.

Srinivas Kuchibhotla was a 32-year-old engineer. He was working for Garmin. He was just hanging out at a bar. It was Austin's Bar and Grill, and he was enjoying the company of friends. Witnesses saw a man enter the bar. He was agitated, and he was drunk. He was a patron of the bar. He had left and he reentered, and he began shooting at Srinivas and his friend. Witnesses say that the shooter told Srinivas to ''get out of my country'' before killing him and then critically injuring his friend and an unbelievably brave bystander who tried to stop the shooter.

Hundreds of grief-stricken family members and friends gathered in his hometown in India for this young man's funeral. In accordance with Hindu tradition, his body was carried on a carriage and his ashes were laid to rest. Friends said that his mother was absolutely wailing as the carriage went by.

His mother had wondered whether America was a safe place for her son. Months before the shooting, she asked him to return to India if he was feeling insecure, but he told her he was safe, that he was fine. His wife also wondered how safe it would be to stay in the United States, but she said that Srinivas always assured her that only good things could happen to good people.

He undoubtedly was a good person. His family members remember him as the kindest person you would meet. He was, in their words, ''full of love, care and compassion for everyone. He never uttered a word of hatred, simple gossip, or a careless comment.''

His friends and family members remember him as ''brilliant, well-mannered and simply an outstanding human being.''

He was ''a very sharp, top-of-his-class kind of guy,'' said one of his classmates at the University of Texas at El Paso where Srinivas earned a master's degree in electrical and electronic engineering. He was also an avid cricket player and a big fan of cricket as well.

He was 32 years old. He was sitting at a bar, enjoying time with his friends when a man who was at the bar, who probably saw Srinivas, thought that he looked different from him and, filled with hate, walked back into the bar and shot and killed him.

That is only one story from that day. On average, there are 85 other stories across the country in which people lose their lives to gunfire. What made me so mad last night was that after that moment—that appropriate moment in which President Trump talked about this horrible shooting—moments later, he referenced the daily slaughter that happens in our cities. He spoke in front of the joint session for, it seemed, nearly an hour and a half and offered absolutely no solutions to do anything about the cascading gun violence that is enveloping our Nation.

Irony of all ironies, the same week that he is lamenting, eulogizing Srinivas's death in Kansas City, he is signing a law passed by this body that would allow for more people with serious mental illness to get their hands on guns.

We don't know the full story of Adam Purinton yet, but you have to imagine that this was someone who was deeply disturbed. Maybe he was just drunk, but in order to decide to pull out a gun in a bar and shoot someone just because they look different than you do probably means that there is something going on—more than a few beers. Mr. Purinton probably had some stuff going on. He might have been mentally ill.

When I got here, I thought that one of the few things we agreed upon—Republicans and Democrats, liberals and conservatives—was that if you were seriously mentally ill, you probably shouldn't be able to buy a weapon, not because people with a mental illness are inherently dangerous—that is not true at all—but because erring on the side of caution when it comes to someone who is seriously ill would probably be the safe thing to do. That used to be a bipartisan commitment.

A few weeks ago, this body passed a law to allow tens of thousands of people who have serious mental illness, who have been judged by a government agency to be so sick that they can't manage their own financial affairs, they literally can't cash a check, their Social Security check has to be sent to someone else because they can't manage their affairs—we passed a law to allow those people to buy guns.

Spare me your concern for the victims of gun violence if you are not willing to do anything about it and, in fact, you are going to take steps to make gun violence more likely rather than less likely in this country. So 31,000 people a year, 2,600 a month, 86 a day—there is no other country in the world in which this happens. There is no other country in the world in which these numbers of people are dying from guns. It is our fault because week after week, month after month, year after year, we do nothing about it, and now we are making it worse.

In the 4 years after Sandy Hook happened, I went back to tell people that we had done nothing. That was embarrassing enough. Now I have to go back to the families of Sandy Hook and tell people that when Congress thinks about gun violence, we think about making changes in the law to make gun violence more likely, to put more guns into the hands of dangerous people. We are going backward now.

Teresa Robertson owned a floral shop in a beauty shop in Fairfax, OK. Fairfax is a really small town, a really tight-knit community. It is still on edge because about a week ago, Teresa's estranged husband walked into the store, started shooting at Teresa, and then barricaded himself inside city hall, firing shots at the local police, who returned fire, fatally killing Teresa's husband.

She had filed a protective order against her husband about 2 weeks before because she feared for her life. She filed for divorce a week later, and a week following that, he shot her.

Laws can protect against something like that, right? We have the power to stop that. In Connecticut, if you file a protective order against a spouse who you believe is going to harm you, the police have the ability to take those weapons away for the period of time in which you were adjudicating that protective order.

If that law had been in effect in Oklahoma, maybe Teresa Robertson would still be alive today and maybe her husband would still be alive and maybe their two kids—ages 13 and 16—wouldn't be without both of their parents.

The fact is, every single day, domestic partners—women primarily—are killed or are shot by boyfriends or estranged husbands. It often plays out just like this: protective order, divorce filing, murder. That is on us.

We have the ability to protect women from their estranged husbands. There are laws. We can't stop every shooting, but it certainly can cut down on these numbers.

Two days later, emergency responders found 26-year-old Michael ''Shane'' Watkins bleeding profusely from a gunshot wound to the head on Berkshire Avenue in Bridgeport, CT. He died shortly after arriving at the hospital. The police are still investigating the shooting, but they believe that Shane was an innocent victim of a robbery that went bad.

His friends said that Shane was someone who was always laughing, who was always smiling, who had a good heart, was a caring person. A neighbor said that Shane was ''always upbeat, always joking, always smiling.'' This was a good kid.

He was a dedicated family man. He was a long time employee of the local Stop & Shop. He was 26 years old. This was a robbery gone bad. Shane Watkins was one of those 86.

Twelve-year-old Kanari Gentry Bowers was playing basketball with friends in Chicago, IL, at Henderson Elementary School. A stray bullet hit her on February 11. For 4 awful, agonizing days, Kanari sat lying unconscious in the hospital with a bullet lodged in her 12-year-old spine before she died on February 15.

Her family released a statement that said: ''Please keep your children close and do whatever it takes to protect them from the senseless gun violence in our city.''

That doesn't sound exceptional, does it? ''Please keep your children close and do whatever it takes to protect them.'' Think about that idea. Think about the idea that you can't let your children get far away from you in Chicago today because they are not at risk of getting lost; they are at risk of being shot.

The little girl had dreams of becoming a judge. That is not something that a lot of 12-year-old girls are thinking about, but Kanari wanted to be a judge. She was described as a vivacious young girl.

I hear President Trump talk about Chicago all the time. He talks about Chicago as though he cares, but he doesn't propose anything that would reduce the trajectory of gun violence, the horror of living in neighborhoods that you can't let your child stray more than a few feet from you without fearing for their lives. He has proposed nothing to do with making that city safer.

People say Chicago has some of the toughest gun laws in the Nation, yet it is one of the most violent places. Exactly, exactly: Chicago has some of the toughest gun laws in the Nation. New York City has some of the toughest gun laws in the Nation. They are still violent places. Why? Because the vast majority of guns in those cities, the illegal guns that spread throughout the city like poison ivy come from outside of Chicago. They come from Indiana. In New York, they come from South Carolina. They come from North Carolina. They come from places in which it is easy to buy a gun without a background check at a gun show or on the internet. They flow into these cities and become used in murder after murder.

If you don't have a Federal requirement that background checks have to be conducted wherever you buy a gun, no matter how strong the laws of Chicago are, they can't be protected; 12-year-old girls can't be protected.

This was all in February, by the way. This was all in the last 3 weeks.

On February 20, some friends got together at a local church in Pomona, CA, and all of a sudden, gunshots started firing through the windows and the walls of this church—a drive-by shooting.

You know who was dead at the end of that? An 8-year-old little boy named Jonah. He was adopted from an orphanage in Taiwan. He had been in the United States for only 3 years. His adoptive parents and his friends—you should read what they say about this kid: ''He had an infectious smile and loved everyone and everything.''

He was still learning English, but with his playful demeanor, he had adapted almost immediately to life in the United States. He loved wrestling with his adoptive dad, running, laughing. He loved superheroes. He was always injuring himself jumping off of something. He loved living in this country.

He was a 5-year-old in an orphanage in Taiwan, and then he was in the United States with a dad and with superhero action figures, and now he is dead because somebody fired bullets randomly into a church in Pomona, CA.

Why don't we do anything about this? We are not so coldhearted as to be unable to understand what life is like for a mom and a dad who lose an 8-year-old child. We are not so braindead as to not be able to comprehend the fact that every time someone is shot, there are at least 20 people whose lives are permanently altered.

The post-traumatic stress involved in one shooting has enormous ripple effects. I have talked at length on this floor about the constant grief that envelopes my town of Sandy Hook because of what happened there. It will never end.

Now, instead of defending the status quo, we are talking about making it easier for deeply mentally ill people to get guns. A bill was just introduced on the floor of the Senate this week that would allow for someone to carry a concealed weapon anywhere in the Nation, regardless of what that local State jurisdiction wanted. If you had a concealed weapon permit in Texas, you would be able to walk into Manhattan without any way for the local police to check you out. There is even an effort to make silencers legal.

Mr. President, 31,000 a year, 2,600 a month, 86 a day. I have come down to the floor I don't know how many times—certainly not as many as Senator WHITEHOUSE but many times to tell the stories of the victims. I told a few more this afternoon because if the data doesn't move you—again, only in this country; in no other country in the world does this happen—then maybe the stories of these victims will move you. Maybe being able to put yourself in the shoes of a mom who lost a child, of a husband who lost a wife way before their time, will move you to action.

This is only controversial here. Ninety percent of the American public wants us to move forward with the universal background checks. The majority of Americans think these superpowerful military weapons should stay in the hands of the military and law enforcement. Everybody out there wants to give law enforcement the tools and the funding necessary to carry out the existing law. It is not controversial out in the American public; it is only controversial here.

It is about time that we do something about this epic level of carnage that continues to plague our Nation and have some response to these voices of victims that seem endless.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GARDNER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to enter into a colloquy with the Senator from Delaware.

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

RUSSIA

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, I am here to discuss, along with the Senator from Delaware, the issue of Russia. I know it has been at the forefront of much of the debate that is ongoing in this country. I wanted to begin by commending the Vice President and Secretary of Defense and Secretary of Homeland Security and Secretary of State for the strong message of support for NATO. That includes the President last night and their strong support, by the way, for the Transatlantic Alliance that these individuals outlined during their respective visits to the Munich Security Conference and meetings with allies in February.

At that Munich Security Conference on February 18, the Russian Foreign Minister, Sergey Lavrov, said: ''I hope [he means the world] will choose a democratic world order, a post-West one, in which each country is defined by its sovereignty.'' I think that based on recent history, it is clear that when a Russian leader says ''post-West,'' we should interpret that as a phrase to mean post-America.

So I would ask the Senator with regard to this, what are his views with regard to Vladimir Putin's desire to establish spheres of influence in Europe and the Middle East, create divisions with our allies. How should we view the Russian world view as it compares to the national interests of the United States?

Mr. COONS. I would like to thank my friend, the Senator from Florida, my colleague on the Foreign Relations Committee and on the Appropriations Committee. I would like to answer his question by saying, it seems clear to all of us on the Foreign Relations Committee who have had the opportunity to travel to Eastern Europe to visit with our NATO allies that Vladimir Putin has a world view and an agenda that is in sharp contrast with our own.

Vladimir Putin dreams of returning Russia to the days of the Russian Empire, to reexerting influence over a broad geographic region from the Baltic Sea and Poland and Ukraine to the Caucasus and Central Asia. He has internally used the West and NATO as a scapegoat for Russia's internal economic woes. He has, as we know, launched invasions or extended his influence through forces and supported illiberal and separatist fighters in Georgia and Ukraine and Moldavia, former Soviet republics, and has launched cyber attacks and propaganda campaigns and coordinated the use of all his tools of state power against our NATO allies in the Baltic region and Central and Western Europe.

All of these things suggest a very different world view, a different set of values than we have in the United States and a different set of values in a way that really worries me. As my colleague from Florida has suggested, when Foreign Minister Lavrov talks about a world order defined by sovereignty, he is challenging us. He is challenging what the West really stands for, what we in America stand for.

I believe what we stand for is the universal values on which we forged the Transatlantic Alliance more than 70 years ago, a Transatlantic Alliance that has been a force for stability and good in the world, a Transatlantic Alliance that has secured peace in Western Europe, North America ever since the close of the Second World War but a Transatlantic Alliance that is rooted in values, values of freedom of speech, freedom of press, rule of law and democracy, and in opposition to authoritarianism.

We support American leadership because a stable and prosperous world makes us safer and more economically secure. So I would ask my friend from Florida what he views as the agenda or the objective of Russia and whether we can be hopeful, in any way, that Vladimir Putin's Russia has an agenda that is harmonious with ours, that can be put in the same direction as ours or whether it is fundamentally at odds.

Mr. RUBIO. To answer that question, I would begin by reminding everyone that when we are talking about Russia, we are not talking about the Russian people. We are talking about Vladimir Putin and the cronies who surround him and their goals for the future. We have no quarrel with the Russian people, who I actually believe would very much want to have a better relationship with the United States and certainly live in a world in which their country was more like ours than the way their government now runs theirs.

The second thing I would point to is, it is important to understand history. At the end of the Second World War, Nazism had been conquered, and the Japanese Empire and its designs had also been ended, fascism defeated. The United States and the world entered this period of a Cold War, a battle between communism and the free world. The United States and our allies stood for that freedom. At the fall of the Berlin Wall, the end of the Soviet bloc, the fall of communism, the world we all hoped had entered into this new era, where every nation had a different system—maybe some had a parliamentary system, maybe some had a republic, such as ours—but in the end, more people than ever would have access to a government responsive to their needs.

That was the growing trend around the world, up until about 7, 8, 10 years ago. We now see the opposite. We see a rising arc of the totalitarianism, and within that context is where I believe Vladimir Putin's world view is constructed. He views the values we stand for, which some may call Western values, and perhaps that is the right terminology, but I really believe in universal values: the idea that people should have a role to play in choosing their leader, that people should have a freedom to worship as they see fit, that people should be able to express their opinions and ideas freely without fear of retribution or punishment by the government.

These are the values I think we have stood for and that our allies have stood for and that we had hoped Russia would stand for in this new era, but Vladimir Putin viewed that as a threat. In particular, over the last number of years, he has decided the best way for him to secure his place in Russian politics is through an aggressive foreign policy in which he views it as a zero-sum game.

That is not the way we view it. We actually view the world as a place where we can help rebuild Japan; we can help rebuild Germany. They are stronger, and we are stronger. It isn't one or the other.

He does not see it that way. He views the world as a place where in order for Russia to be greater, America has to be less; in order for him to be more powerful, we have to be less powerful, and it is a world in which he has to undermine democratic principles and try to expose them as fraudulent.

That is why you saw the Russian intelligence services meddle in our elections in 2016. One of the main designs they had was to create doubt and instability about our system of government and to not just discredit it here at home but to discredit it around the world.

I just returned from Europe a week ago. Germany and France, which both have upcoming elections of their own, are seeing an unprecedented wave of active measures on the part of Russian intelligence to try to influence their elections. In the Netherlands, we have seen some of the same. So this is very concerning.

Our European allies are very concerned about the weaponization of cyber technology to strategically place information in the public domain for purposes of undermining candidates, steering elections, and undermining policymaking.

I want everybody to understand this is not just about elections. The exact same tools they used in the 2016 Presidential election, they could use to try to influence the debate in the Senate by attacking individual Senators or individual viewpoints and using their control over propaganda to begin to spread that.

I will give you just one example, and that is in May of 2015, the German intelligence agencies reported an attack on the German Parliament, on energy companies, on universities. They attribute that to Russian hackers.

In Montenegro, the Prime Minister has sought membership in NATO, an action we have supported in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, which both of us serve on, but Russian intelligence has plotted at a very aggressive level to disrupt their elections late last year.

Moscow has used TV and Internet outlets like Russia Today, or RT, and Sputnik to launch propaganda campaigns to galvanize anti-EU extremists ahead of the Dutch elections. The list goes on and on. There is no shortage of them.

The point is, we are in the midst of the most aggressive, active measures ever undertaken by a foreign government to not just meddle in American policy debates and American elections but in those throughout the free world, and it is deeply concerning.

I think another matter that I would love to hear the Senator's opinion on is on the issue of human rights violations because, on top of being a totalitarian state, what goes hand in hand with totalitarianism are human rights violations. In fact, totalitarianism is, in and of itself, a human rights violation; that there can be no dictatorship, no repressive regime, no totalitarian leader who can maintain themselves in power without violating the human rights of their people.

So I would ask the Senator—I would love to have his comment on whether or not, indeed, Vladimir Putin is a serial human rights violator and what our policy should be in terms of outlining that to the world.

Mr. COONS. We have worked together on a number of bills in this area. Let me respond to my friend the Senator by saying it is clear that Vladimir Putin's Russia has been a serial human rights violator. When we talk about human rights, we talk about things that belong to everyone, and they are necessary as a check on state power. When nations break these rules, we believe they should be held accountable.

Russia continues to engage in efforts, as my colleague said, that undermine democracy in free elections throughout Europe. We have shared concerns about the upcoming elections—the Dutch elections, French, and German elections—where there are overt actions and covert actions by Russia to influence the outcome of those elections, but part of why they are doing that, part of why they are violating these norms around Europe is because they are seeking to distract from their brutal rule at home.

The reality is, many of the critics of Putin's regime end up dead or incapacitated.

Boris Nemtsov, a Russian politician who supported the introduction of capitalism into the Russian economy and frequently criticized Vladimir Putin, was assassinated 2 years ago, on February 27, on a bridge just near the Kremlin in Moscow.

Vladimir Kara-Murza, a Russian politician and journalist, was apparently poisoned last month, the second time in recent years. He had been actively promoting civil society and democracy in Russia.

Back in September of 2012, Putin threw USAID out of Russia altogether, claiming that U.S. efforts were undermining Russian sovereignty when, in fact, we had been working in Russia since the nineties, supporting human rights, independent journalism, and promoting fair elections.

Most importantly, in my view, Russia doesn't just violate the human rights of its own citizens, it exports brutality.

Russia's support for Bashar al-Assad's murderous regime and brutal war in Syria continues. Their military has targeted hospitals, schools, and Syrian first responders. They have blocked the provision of food and medicine to starving families and children. Russia's diplomats have vetoed any efforts at the United Nations to act to stop the suffering in Syria. Also, Russia, having illegally invaded Ukraine and annexed Crimea, continues to promote violence and instability in eastern Ukraine, in the Donbas region, leading to the deaths of thousands.

All of these human rights violations within Russia and in countries around its sphere of influence, in its region, suggest to us that they need to be held accountable for these violations of basic human rights.

Like the Senator from Florida, I led a codel to Eastern and Central Europe. Mine was not last week. It was last August, but with two Republican House Members and two Democratic Senate Members, the five of us went to the Czech Republic, to Ukraine, and to Estonia. We heard widespread concern about this record of human rights and a disrespect for democracy in Russia and about this aggressive hybrid warfare campaign that threatens Ukraine's very stability and existence, that puts Estonia, our NATO ally, on warning, and that is putting at risk Czech independence and Czech elections all across Central and Western Europe.

We have heard from Ambassadors, experts, those who have testified in front of committees on which we serve, about a Russian campaign—a brutal campaign—to undermine human rights within Russia and to undermine democracy throughout Western Europe, with a larger strategic goal of separating the United States from our Western allies and undermining the Transatlantic Alliance that has been so essential to our peace, security, and stability for 70 years. We cannot let this stand.

There is no moral equivalence between Russia and the United States. If we believe in our democracy and if we believe in our commitment to human rights, we must stand up to this campaign of aggression. So I ask my colleague what he believes we might be able to do on the Foreign Relations Committee, on the Appropriations Committee, or here in the Senate, what we might do, as voices working in a bipartisan way, to stand up to these actions undermining democracy and human rights?

Mr. RUBIO. That is the central question. The first is what we are doing now, which is an important part: shining the sunlight on all of it, making people aware of it. For example, we know in France two of the leading candidates have views that I think the Kremlin would be quite pleased with, if that became the foreign policy of France—a third, not so much. He is a very young candidate running as an independent. His last name Macron. Suddenly, as he began to surge in the polls, all these stories started appearing, ridiculous stories about his personal life, about his marriage, things that are completely false, completely fabricated. Fortunately, French society and the French press understands this and has reported it as such.

It is important for us. This is happening and is real, and it is unprecedented in its scope and in its aggression. So shining a light on the reality and understanding, as I always tell my colleagues—I said this last October, that this is not a partisan issue.

I am telling you that—to my Republican colleagues who might be uncomfortable about discussing Russian interference—this is not about the outcome of the election; this is about the conduct and what happened throughout it. And what they did last year, in the fall, in the Presidential race, they can do against any Member here. If they don't like what you are saying, if they think you are getting too far on policy, you could find yourself the target of Russian propaganda in the hopes of undermining you, perhaps even having you eliminated from the debate because they understand our political process quite well.

The second is to do no harm. There is this notion out there—and I think on paper it sounds great, right—why don't we just partner up with the Russians to defeat ISIS and take on radicalism around the world.

The problem is this: No. 1, that is what Russia claims they are already doing. Vladimir Putin claims he is already doing that. So if he is already doing it, why would we have to partner with him? He is already doing it. Obviously, the answer is because he hasn't. This has been about propping up Assad.

Here is the other problem. When you partner up with someone, you have to take responsibility for everything they do and all the actions they undertake.

Senator COONS just outlined a moment ago, he said: Well, we talked about the bombing in Aleppo.

Think about it. If we had partnered with Russia in Syria and they were bombing Aleppo and they were hitting hospitals and they were killing civilians and they were our partners, we have to answer for that as well. We would be roped into that.

The third is to understand their strategic goal is not to defeat radical elements in the Middle East; their strategic goal is to have inordinate influence in Syria, with Iran, potentially in other countries at the expense of the United States.

We have had two Presidents—a Republican and a Democrat—previous to the current President who thought they could do such a deal with Vladimir Putin. Both of them fell on their face because they did not understand what they were dealing with. It is my sincerest hope that our current President doesn't make the same mistakes.

In addition to that, I know there are a number of legislative approaches that we have worked on together, as members of both the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the Senate Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee, and I would ask the Senator from Delaware if he could highlight some of those legislative matters that we have been talking about: resolutions, laws, and public policy that we have been advocating.

Mr. COONS. Well, briefly, if I could. Two bills that are currently gathering cosponsors—and which I hope our colleagues will review and consider joining us in cosponsoring—one is S. 341, the Russia Sanctions Review Act of 2017, which currently has 18 cosponsors. The other is S. 94, the Counteracting Russian Hostilities Act of 2017, that has 20 cosponsors—10 Republicans and 10 Democrats. In both cases, we are proud to have a very broad range of both Republicans and Democrats engaged in this important legislation, which ensures that Russia pays a price for breaking the rules. It starts by taking action to support the sanctions against the Russian Government for its occupation, its illegal annexation of Crimea, for its egregious human rights violations in Syria, and for meddling in the U.S. election. It prevents the lifting of sanctions on Russia until the Russian Government ceases the very activities that caused these sanctions to be put in place in the first place. It supports civil society, pro-democracy, anti-corruption activists in Russia and across Europe to show that many of us are determined, as members of the Foreign Relations Committee, as members of the Appropriations Committee, as Senators—not as partisans—that we intend to fund the tools that will enable the United States and our NATO allies to push back on Russia's aggression. Most of these tools come from the international affairs budget: State Department and foreign assistance accounts.

I want to commend you, Senator, for giving a strong and impassioned speech on the floor today about the importance of our keeping all of these tools in our toolkit so that as we confront our adversaries around the world, we have the resources and the ability to partner with and strengthen our allies as well.

We have no quarrel with the Russian people, but we are here because there is nothing Vladimir Putin's regime would love more than to see his actions divide us in this Chamber and divide us in this country from our vital allies in Europe and divide the whole North Atlantic community that for seven decades has brought peace and stability to

Europe, has brought prosperity to the United States, not as an act of charity but as an investment in the best interests of security.

We are here to say with one voice that we will stand up to Russian aggression that undermines democracy and violates human rights.

I am grateful for my colleague, for the chance to join him on the floor today, and I look forward to working together with any of our colleagues who see these issues as clearly as my friend and colleague, the Senator from Florida.

Mr. RUBIO. I thank the Senator for joining me in this endeavor here today. It is important that we speak out about this.

In a moment, the majority leader will be here with some procedural matters that will, I guess, take the Senate to a different posture.

Before that happens, I wanted to close by not just thanking him for being a part of this but by making a couple more points.

The first is, I want you to imagine for a moment, if you are sitting at the Kremlin and you are watching on satellite television the debate going on in American politics today, you are probably feeling pretty good about yourself. You have one group arguing that maybe the elections weren't legitimate because the Russians interfered. In essence, there have been news reports about a tension between the President and the Intelligence Committee. You have these reports every single day back and forth. You are looking at all this chaos, and you are saying to yourself: We did a pretty good job. If what we wanted to do was to divide the American people against each other, have them at each other's throats, arguing about things, and sowing chaos and instability into their political process, I think you look at the developments of the last 6 weeks and 6 months, and if you are in the Kremlin, you say: Well, our efforts have been pretty successful with that. I think that is the first thing we need to understand.

The second thing is, this should all be about partisanship. I am a member of the Senate Intelligence Committee. It is probably known that we are undertaking an investigation into Russian interference in the 2016 elections. I want everyone to know—I speak for myself and I believe almost all of my colleagues when I say, on the one hand, I am not interested in being a part of a witch hunt; on the other hand, I will not be part of a coverup. We are going to get to the truth. We want to get to the truth. We want to be able to deliver to this body and to the American people a document with truth and facts, wherever they may lead us, because this is above political party. Our system of government and this extraordinary Republic has been around for over two centuries. It is unique and it is special, and with all of its blemishes and flaws, I wouldn't trade it for anything in the world.

I want people to think about that. The next time you wonder and say to yourself that things are so tough in America and things are going so poorly, well, with whom would you trade places? I am not saying we don't have problems, because we do, but I ask, in what country would you rather be? I promise you that you won't say China if you know anything about China. I promise you that you won't say Russia if you know anything about Russia. There is no nation on Earth we would trade places with, and there is no process of government I would trade for ours. It is not perfect.

One of the strengths of our system is our ability to stand up here in places like the Senate and discuss our differences and our problems and make continuous progress forward even if the pace is slower and more frustrating than we wish. That is what is at stake in this process and what is at stake in this debate. That is what none of us can allow to see erode because of interference by a foreign government, especially one that is a thug and war criminal in every sense of the word.

So our quarrel is not with the Russian people and it is not with Russia. I have extraordinary admiration for the Russian people. I have extraordinary admiration for the sacrifices and contributions they have made throughout history to our culture and to the world. But, unfortunately, today their government is run by an individual who has no respect for his own people and no respect for the freedom and liberty of others, and it is important for our policymakers on both sides of the aisle to be clear-eyed and clear-voiced in what we do moving forward.

I thank the Senator for being with us today and allowing us to engage in this discussion. I hope we will see more of that in the weeks and months to come so we can speak clearly and firmly in one voice that on issues involving America and our sovereignty and our system of government and decisions we must make, we will speak with one voice as one Nation, as one people, as one country.

I thank the Presiding Officer, and I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the sesquicentennial anniversary of the founding of the University of Illinois, a nationally recognized institution of higher education with a long record of innovation and discovery and the home of the Fighting Illini.

In 1867, 150 years ago, my home State of Illinois established the University of Illinois with the purpose of fostering access to higher education for the working people. It would become one of 37 public, land-grant institutions established as a result of the Morrill Land-Grant Colleges Act signed into law by President Abraham Lincoln.

Over the past 150 years, the University of Illinois and those associated with it have been responsible for pushing the boundaries of human knowledge, scientific discovery, social justice, and equality.

In 1941, David Blackwell, the son of a railroad worker from southern Illinois, received his Ph.D. in mathematics from the University of Illinois. In 1965, Dr. Blackwell became the first African American elected to the National Academy of Sciences, whose members advise the President and Congress on matters related to science and technology. Dr. Blackwell is regarded as the most famous African-American mathematician in history.

In 1948, the University of Illinois became, and remains to this day, the most accessible campus in the world for individuals with disabilities. Timothy Nugent founded the first comprehensive program of higher education for individuals with disabilities at the University and helped create a campus that allowed individuals with disabilities to move about freely and independently. While the availability of buses with wheelchair lifts, accessible street curbs, and comprehensive collegiate programs for those with disabilities all have become the national standard, they started at the University of Illinois.

The University of Illinois has long been a leader in groundbreaking research and innovation in science. In the early 1970s, Paul Lauterbur discovered magnetic resonance imaging—better known by its initials: MRI. For his pioneering work, he was awarded a Nobel Prize in 2003.

Today the university is one of the premier public research universities in the world. It ranks in the top 50 universities in America for research and development dollars spent in science and engineering. It is also home to one of the world's most powerful supercomputers, known as Blue Waters. Blue Waters is the fastest supercomputer located on a college campus in the world.

What began 150 years ago as a small building on the Illinois prairie between

the Illinois Central train station in Champaign and the courthouse in Urbana is today a 785-acre campus with a reputation admired around the world. It is home to more than 44,000 students from all 50 States and more than 100 different countries each year. The University of Illinois has enhanced the lives of over 450,000 living alumni and produced 23 Nobel Laureates and 22 Pulitzer Prize winners in the process. In addition, the university has grown to include campuses in Chicago and Springfield and regional campuses in Rockford, Peoria, and the Quad Cities.

It is with great pride that I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the sesquicentennial anniversary of the founding of the University of Illinois. I offer my best wishes and congratulations to President Timothy Killeen and all the University faculty, staff, students, and alumni on this important milestone.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

RULES OF PROCEDURE

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, the Committee on the Judiciary has adopted rules governing its procedures for the 115th Congress. Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 2, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that a copy of the Committee rules be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE UNITED STATES SENATE COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY—115TH CONGRESS

I. MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE

1. Meetings of the Committee may be called by the Chairman as he may deem necessary on three days' notice of the date, time, place and subject matter of the meeting, or in the alternative with the consent of the Ranking Minority Member, or pursuant to the provision of the Standing Rules of the Senate, as amended.

2. Unless a different date and time are set by the Chairman pursuant to (1) of this section, Committee meetings shall be held beginning at 10:00 a.m. on Thursdays the Senate is in session, which shall be the regular meeting day for the transaction of business.

3. At the request of any member, or by action of the Chairman, a bill, matter, or nomination on the agenda of the Committee may be held over until the next meeting of the Committee or for one week, whichever occurs later.

II. HEARINGS OF THE COMMITTEE

1. The Committee shall provide a public announcement of the date, time, place and subject matter of any hearing to be conducted by the Committee or any Subcommittee at least seven calendar days prior to the commencement of that hearing, unless the Chairman with the consent of the Ranking Minority Member determines that good cause exists to begin such hearing at an earlier date. Witnesses shall provide a written statement of their testimony and curriculum vitae to the Committee at least 24 hours preceding the hearings in as many copies as the Chairman of the Committee or Subcommittee prescribes.

2. In the event 14 calendar days' notice of a hearing has been made, witnesses appearing before the Committee, including any witness representing a Government agency, must file with the Committee at least 48 hours preceding appearance written statements of their testimony and curriculum vitae in as many copies as the Chairman of the Committee or Subcommittee prescribes.

3. In the event a witness fails timely to file the written statement in accordance with this rule, the Chairman may permit the witness to testify, or deny the witness the privilege of testifying before the Committee, or permit the witness to testify in response to questions from Senators without the benefit of giving an opening statement.

III. QUORUMS

1. Seven Members of the Committee, actually present, shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of discussing business. Nine Members of the Committee, including at least two Members of the minority, shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of transacting business. No bill, matter, or nomination shall be ordered reported from the Committee, however, unless a majority of the Committee is actually present at the time such action is taken and a majority of those present support the action taken.

2. For the purpose of taking down sworn testimony, a quorum of the Committee and each Subcommittee thereof, now or hereafter appointed, shall consist of one Senator.

IV. BRINGING A MATTER TO A VOTE

The Chairman shall entertain a non-debatable motion to bring a matter before the Committee to a vote. If there is objection to bring the matter to a vote without further debate, a roll call vote of the Committee shall be taken, and debate shall be terminated if the motion to bring the matter to a vote without further debate passes with eleven votes in the affirmative, one of which must be cast by the minority.

V. AMENDMENTS

1. Provided at least seven calendars days' notice of the agenda is given, and the text of the proposed bill or resolution has been made available at least seven calendar days in advance, it shall not be in order for the Committee to consider any amendment in the first degree proposed to any measure under consideration by the Committee unless such amendment has been delivered to the office of the Committee and circulated via e-mail to each of the offices by at least 5:00 p.m. the day prior to the scheduled start of the meeting.

2. It shall be in order, without prior notice, for a Member to offer a motion to strike a single section of any bill, resolution, or amendment under consideration.

3. The time limit imposed on the filing of amendments shall apply to no more than three bills identified by the Chairman and included on the Committee's legislative agenda.

4. This section of the rule may be waived by agreement of the Chairman and the Ranking Minority Member.

VI. PROXY VOTING

When a recorded vote is taken in the Committee on any bill, resolution, amendment, or any other question, a quorum being present, Members who are unable to attend the meeting may submit votes by proxy, in writing or by telephone, or through personal instructions. A proxy must be specific with respect to the matters it addresses.

VII. SUBCOMMITTEES

1. Any Member of the Committee may sit with any Subcommittee during its hearings or any 1) other meeting, but shall not have the authority to vote on any matter before the Subcommittee unless a Member of such Subcommittee.

2. Subcommittees shall be considered de novo whenever there is a change in the Subcommittee chairmanship and seniority on the particular Subcommittee shall not necessarily apply.

3. Except for matters retained at the full Committee, matters shall be referred to the appropriate Subcommittee or Subcommittees by the Chairman, except as agreed by a majority vote of the Committee or by the agreement of the Chairman and the Ranking Minority Member.

4. Provided all members of the Subcommittee consent, a bill or other matter may be polled out of the Subcommittee. In order to be polled out of a Subcommittee, a majority of the members of the Subcommittee who vote must vote in favor of reporting the bill or matter to the Committee.

VIII. ATTENDANCE RULES

1. Official attendance at all Committee business meetings of the Committee shall be kept by the Committee Clerk. Official attendance at all Subcommittee business meetings shall be kept by the Subcommittee Clerk.

2. Official attendance at all hearings shall be kept, provided that Senators are notified by the Committee Chairman and Ranking Minority Member, in the case of Committee hearings, and by the Subcommittee Chairman and Ranking Minority Member, in the case of Subcommittee Hearings, 48 hours in advance of the hearing that attendance will be taken; otherwise, no attendance will be taken. Attendance at all hearings is encouraged.

IX. SUBPOENAS

The Chairman of the Committee, with the agreement of the Ranking Member or by a vote of the Committee, may subpoena the attendance of a witness at a Committee or Subcommittee hearing or Committee deposition, or the production of memoranda, documents, records, or any other materials. Any such subpoena shall be issued upon the signature of the Chairman or any other Member of the Committee designated by the Chairman.

X. DEPOSITIONS

1. Any subpoena issued for a deposition that is to be conducted by staff shall be accompanied by a notice of deposition identifying the Majority staff officers designated by the Chairman and the Minority staff officers designated by the Ranking Member to take the deposition, and the Majority and Minority shall be afforded the opportunity to participate on equal terms.

2. Unless waived by agreement of the Chair and Ranking Member, any deposition shall have at least one Member present for the duration of the deposition. All Members shall be notified of the date, time, and location of any deposition.

3. Any Member of the Committee may attend and participate in the taking of any deposition.

4. A witness at a deposition shall be examined upon oath administered by an individual authorized by law to administer oaths, or administered by any Member of the Committee if one is present.

5. Unless otherwise specified, the deposition shall be in private.

BUDGET SCOREKEEPING REPORT

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I wish to submit to the Senate the budget scorekeeping report for March 2017. The report compares current-law levels of spending and revenues with the

amounts the Senate agreed to in the budget resolution for fiscal year 2017, S. Con. Res. 3. This information is necessary for the Senate Budget Committee to determine whether budget points of order lie against pending legislation. It has been prepared by the Republican staff of the Senate Budget Committee and the Congressional Budget Office, CBO, pursuant to section 308(b) of the Congressional Budget Act, CBA.

My last filing, which was based on enforceable levels relative to the fiscal year 2016 budget resolution, S. Con. Res. 11, and the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015, P.L. 114–74, can be found in the RECORD for November 16, 2016. The information contained in this report for fiscal year 2017 is current through February 27, 2017.

Tables 1–3 of this report are prepared by my staff on the Budget Committee.

Table 1 gives the amount by which each Senate authorizing committee exceeds or is below its allocation for budget authority and outlays under the most recently adopted budget resolution. This information is used for enforcing committee allocations pursuant to section 302 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, CBA. All committees are in compliance with their allocations assumed in the budget resolution and match the levels that I included in the allocation enforcement filing of January 17, 2017.

Table 2 gives the amount by which the Senate Committee on Appropriations exceeds or is below the statutory spending limits for fiscal year 2017. This information is used to determine points of order related to the spending caps found in sections 312 and 314 of the CBA. As the Federal Government is currently operating under the terms of the latest continuing resolution and temporary funding is not included in enforcement totals, this scorecard shows $543.5 billion in security and $415.2 billion in nonsecurity budget authority remain available for full-year appropriations.

Table 3 tracks compliance with the fiscal year 2017 limit for overall changes in mandatory programs, CHIMPS, in appropriations bills, established in the fiscal year 2016 budget resolution. The limit for this fiscal year is $19.1 billion. To date, there are no recorded CHIMP entries on this scorecard. Division A of the Further Continuing and Security Assistance Appropriations Act, 2017, P.L. 114–254, included a qualifying CHIMP, $170 million, but the Appropriations Committee included a provision to prevent its budgetary effects from being entered onto the scorecard. This exclusion was the first of its kind since the creation of the new rule in 2015. This information is used for determining points of order under section 3103 of that resolution.

In addition to the tables provided by Budget Committee Republican staff, I am submitting tables from CBO, which I will use for enforcement of budget totals agreed to by the Congress.

CBO provided a spending and revenue report for fiscal year 2017. This information is used to enforce aggregate spending levels in budget resolutions under section 311 of the CBA.

For fiscal year 2017, CBO annualizes the temporary effects of the latest continuing resolution that provides funding through April 28, 2017. For the enforcement of budgetary aggregates, the Budget Committee excludes this temporary funding. As such, the committee views current-law levels as being $953 billion and $583.2 billion below budget resolution levels for budget authority and outlays, respectively. Revenues are consistent with the levels assumed in the budget resolution. Finally, Social Security outlays and revenues are at the levels assumed in S. Con. Res. 3.

CBO's report also provides information needed to enforce the Senate pay-as-you-go, PAYGO, rule. Following passage of the budget resolution in January, I reset the Senate's PAYGO scorecard to zero. Since passage of the resolution, there have been no laws enacted that have a significant effect on the Federal Government's budget deficit over either the 6- or 11-year periods. The Senate's PAYGO rule is enforced by section 201 of S. Con. Res. 21, the fiscal year 2008 budget resolution.

Finally, included in this submission is a table tracking the Senate's budget enforcement activity on the floor. No budget points of order have been raised since the passage of the budget resolution.

All years in the accompanying tables are fiscal years.

I ask unanimous consent that the accompanying tables be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

TABLE I.—SENATE AUTHORIZING COMMITTEES—ENACTED DIRECT SPENDING ABOVE (+) OR BELOW (−) BUDGET RESOLUTIONS

[In millions of dollars]

	2017	2017–2021	2017–2026
Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Armed Services			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Commerce, Science, and Transportation			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Energy and Natural Resources			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Environment and Public Works			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Finance			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Foreign Relations			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Judiciary			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions			
Budget Authority	0	0	0

TABLE I.—SENATE AUTHORIZING COMMITTEES—ENACTED DIRECT SPENDING ABOVE (+) OR BELOW (−) BUDGET RESOLUTIONS—Continued

[In millions of dollars]

	2017	2017–2021	2017–2026
Outlays	0	0	0
Rules and Administration			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Intelligence			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Veterans' Affairs			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Indian Affairs			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Small Business			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0

TABLE 2.—SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE—ENACTED REGULAR DISCRETIONARY APPROPRIATIONS [1]

[Budget authority, in millions of dollars]

	2017	
	Security [2]	Nonsecurity [2]
Statutory Discretionary Limits	551,068	518,531
Amount Provided by Senate Appropriations Subcommittee		
Agriculture, Rural Development, and Related Agencies	0	9
Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies	0	7
Defense	45	0
Energy and Water Development	−340	−340
Financial Services and General Government	0	0
Homeland Security	0	9
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies	0	120
Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies	0	24,570
Legislative Branch	0	−1
Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies	7,898	74,600
State Foreign Operations, and Related Programs	0	0
Transportation and Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies	0	4,400
Current Level Total	7,603	103,374
Total Enacted Above (+) or Below (−) Statutory Limits	−543,465	−415,157

[1] This table excludes spending pursuant to adjustments to the discretionary spending limits. These adjustments are allowed for certain purposes in section 251(b)(2) of BBEDCA.

[2] Security spending is defined as spending in the National Defense budget function (050) and nonsecurity spending is defined as all other spending.

TABLE 3.—SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE—ENACTED CHANGES IN MANDATORY SPENDING PROGRAMS (CHIMPS)

[Budget authority, millions of dollars]

	2017
CHIMPS Limit for Fiscal Year 2017	19,100
Senate Appropriations Subcommittees	
Agriculture, Rural Development, and Related Agencies	0
Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies	0
Defense	0
Energy and Water Development	0
Financial Services and General Government	0
Homeland Security	0
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies	0
Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies	0
Legislative Branch	0
Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies	0
State Foreign Operations, and Related Programs	0
Transportation and Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies	0
Current Level Total	0
Total CHIMPS Above (+) or Below (−) Budget Resolution	−19,100

U.S. CONGRESS,
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
Washington, DC, March 1, 2017.

Hon. MIKE ENZI,
Chairman, Committee on the Budget,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The enclosed report shows the effects of Congressional action on the fiscal year 2017 budget and is current through February 27, 2017. This report is submitted under section 308(b) and in aid of section 311 of the Congressional Budget Act, as amended.

The estimates of budget authority, outlays, and revenues are consistent with the technical and economic assumptions of S. Con. Res. 3, the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for Fiscal Year 2017.

Since our last letter dated November 16, 2016, the Congress has cleared and the President has signed the Further Continuing and Security Assistance Appropriations Act, 2017 (Public Law 114–254). That act has significant effects on budget authority and outlays in fiscal year 2017.

Sincerely,

KEITH HALL.

Enclosure.

TABLE 1.—SENATE CURRENT LEVEL REPORT FOR SPENDING AND REVENUES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2017, AS OF FEBRUARY 27, 2017

[In billions of dollars]

	Budget Resolution [a]	Current Level [b]	Current Level Over/Under (−) Resolution
ON-BUDGET			
Budget Authority	3,226.1	3,308.0	81.9
Outlays	3,224.6	3,254.7	30.1
Revenues	2,682.1	2,682.1	0.0
OFF-BUDGET			
Social Security Outlays [c]	805.4	805.4	0.0
Social Security Revenues	826.0	826.0	0.0

SOURCE: Congressional Budget Office.

[a] Excludes $81,872 million in budget authority and $40,032 million in outlays assumed in S. Con. Res. 3 for non regular discretionary spending, including spending that qualifies for adjustments to discretionary spending limits pursuant to section 251(b) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, that is not yet allocated to the Senate Committee on Appropriations.

[b] Excludes emergency funding that was not designated as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

[c] Excludes administrative expenses paid from the Federal Old-Age and Survivors Insurance Trust Fund and the Federal Disability Insurance Trust Fund of the Social Security Administration, which are off-budget, but are appropriated annually.

TABLE 2.—SUPPORTING DETAIL FOR THE SENATE CURRENT LEVEL REPORT FOR ON-BUDGET SPENDING AND REVENUES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2017, AS OF FEBRUARY 27, 2017

[In millions of dollars]

	Budget Authority	Outlays	Revenues
Previously Enacted [a]			
Revenues	n.a.	n.a.	2,682,088
Permanents and other spending legislation	2,054,297	1,960,884	n.a.
Appropriation legislation	138,258	619,553	n.a.
Offsetting receipts	−834,250	−834,301	n.a.
Total, Previously Enacted	1,358,305	1,746,136	2,682,088
Continuing Resolution:			
Further Continuing and Security Appropriations Act, 2017 (P.L. 114–254) [b,c,d]	1,034,868	613,341	0
Entitlements and Mandatories:			
Budget resolution estimates of appropriated entitlements and other mandatory programs	914,848	895,267	0
Total Current Level [e]	3,308,021	3,254,744	2,682,088
Total Senate Resolution [f]	3,226,128	3,224,630	2,682,088
Current Level Over Senate Resolution	81,893	30,114	n.a.
Current Level Under Senate Resolution	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Memorandum:			
Revenues, 2017–2026:			
Senate Current Level	n.a.	n.a.	32,351,660
Senate Resolution	n.a.	n.a.	32,351,660
Current Level Over Senate Resolution	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Current Level Under Senate Resolution	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.

Source: Congressional Budget Office.

Notes: n.a. = not applicable; P.L. = Public Law.

[a] Includes the budgetary effects of enacted legislation cleared by the Congress during the 114th session, prior to the adoption of S. Con. Res. 3, the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for Fiscal Year 2017.

[b] Emergency funding that was not designated as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 shall not count for certain budgetary enforcement purposes. These amounts, which are not included in the current level totals, are as follows:

	Budget Authority	Outlays	Revenues
Further Continuing and Security Assistance Appropriations Act, 2017 (P.L. 114–254)	−2	−1	0

[c] Division A of P.L. 114–254 contains the Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2017, which provides funding for those agencies within the jurisdiction of 11 of the 12 regular appropriations bills through April 28, 2017; those amounts are shown under the ''Continuing Resolution'' section of this table. Certain provisions in Division A provide funding until or beyond the end of fiscal year 2017; those amounts are shown in the ''Previously Enacted'' section of this table. In addition, Division B of P.L. 114–254 contains the Security Assistance Appropriations Act, 2017, which provides funding until or beyond the end of fiscal year 2017 for overseas contingency operations; those amounts are shown under the ''Previously Enacted'' section of this table.

[d] Sections 193–195 of Division A of P.L. 114–254 provided funding, available until expended, for innovation projects and state responses to opioid abuse. CBO estimates that, for fiscal year 2017:

The $20 million in discretionary budget authority provided by section 193 would result in an additional $5 million in outlays for FDA innovation projects;

The $352 million in discretionary budget authority provided by section 194 would result in an additional $91 million in outlays for NIH innovation projects;

The $500 million in discretionary budget authority provided by section 195 would result in an additional $160 million in outlays for state response to opioid abuse.

Consistent with sections 1001–1004 of P.L. 114–255, for the purposes of estimating the discretionary budget authority and outlays for these provisions under the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Act of 1974 and the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Act of 1985, these amounts are estimated to provide no budget authority or outlays.

[e] For purposes of enforcing section 311 of the Congressional Budget Act in the Senate, the resolution, as approved by the Senate, does not include budget authority, outlays, or revenues for off-budget amounts. As a result, current level does not include these items.

[f] Excludes $81,872 million in budget authority and $40,032 million in outlays assumed in S. Con. Res. 3 for non regular discretionary spending, including spending that qualifies for adjustments to discretionary spending limits pursuant to section 251(b) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, that is not yet allocated to the Senate Committee on Appropriations.

TABLE 3.—SUMMARY OF THE SENATE PAY-AS-YOU-GO SCORECARD FOR THE 115TH CONGRESS, AS OF FEBRUARY 27, 2017

[In millions of dollars]

	2016–2021	2016–2026
Beginning Balance [a]	0	0
Enacted Legislation: [b,c,d]		
Tested Ability to Leverage Exceptional National Talent Act of 2017 (P.L. 115–1)	*	*
Disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of the Interior known as the Stream Protection Rule. (P.L. 115–5)	*	*
Current Balance	*	*
Memorandum:		
	2016–2021	2016–2026
Changes to Revenues	*	*
Changes to Outlays	*	*

Source: Congressional Budget Office.

Notes: n.e. = not able to estimate; P.L. = Public Law; FAA = Federal Aviation Administration; *= between −$500,000 and $500,000.

[a] Pursuant to the statement printed in the Congressional Record on January 17, 2017, the Senate Pay-As-You-Go Scorecard was reset to zero.

[b] The amounts shown represent the estimated effect of the public laws on the deficit.

[c] Excludes off-budget amounts.

[d] Excludes amounts designated as emergency requirements.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

REMEMBERING SHERIFF RALPH OGDEN

• Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, with a heavy heart I wish to mark the passing of a pillar of the Arizona law enforcement community.

When people think of the Old West, they often picture a Stetson-wearing lawman sitting astride his horse, keeping watch over his community.

For generations of residents in southwestern Arizona, that lawman was Yuma County Sheriff Ralph Ogden.

With his towering frame and trademark mustache, Sheriff Ogden looked every bit the part.

Despite his imposing physical presence, Sheriff Ogden was a kind, compassionate man, beloved by his deputies and celebrated by his community.

After 4 years of distinguished service in the U.S. Marine Corps, Ralph Ogden began his 42-year law enforcement career as a dispatcher and jailer in Parker, AZ.

A dedicated public servant, he would eventually serve as chief deputy for 12 years.

Ralph would go on to be elected to five consecutive terms as sheriff, with

his 20-year tenure the longest in Yuma County history.

Sheriff Ogden always understood the importance of getting to know the community he served and encouraged his employees to get involved in charities, religious groups, and service organizations.

He valued teamwork and recognized that no one can succeed on their own.

This philosophy of always having each other's back was something he carried with him throughout his time with the sheriff's office, and it was reflected in the way he treated those around him.

Sheriff Ogden was known to write personal birthday and anniversary cards for each of his employees, just to show that he valued their service and friendship and that they were important to him.

When asked about the benefits of serving in law enforcement, Sheriff Ogden said that, when you go home tired and beat after a long day, you sleep well knowing you did some good.

Sheriff Ralph Ogden did a lot of good, and I know he is resting well.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Ms. Ridgway, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting nominations which were referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

(The message received today is printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 12:30 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 9355(a), and the order of the House of January 3, 2017, the Speaker appoints the following individual on the part of the House of Representatives to the Board of Visitors to the United States Air Force Academy: Lieutenant Colonel Bruce Swezey, United States Air Force, Retired, Franklin, Wisconsin.

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–889. A communication from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting a report on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General Robert R. Ruark, United States Marine Corps, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–890. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''International Affairs; Antarctic Marine Living Resources Convention Act'' (RIN0648–BB86) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 23, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–891. 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 ''Implementation of Statutory Amendments Requiring the Modification of the Definition of Hard Cider'' (RIN1513–AC31) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 23, 2017; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–892. A communication from the Associate General Counsel for General Law, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Deputy Secretary, Department of Homeland Security, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 28, 2017; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–893. A communication from the Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department's fiscal year 2014 and fiscal year 2015 inventories of commercial and inherently governmental activities; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–894. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–655, ''Elderly Tenant and Tenant with a Disability Protection Amendment Act of 2016''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–895. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–656, ''Council Financial Disclosure Amendment Act of 2016''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–896. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–657, ''Condominium Owner Bill of Rights and Responsibilities Amendment Act of 2016''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–897. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–658, ''Vehicle-for-Hire Accessibility Amendment Act of 2016''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–898. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–659, ''Downtown Business Improvement Amendment Act of 2016''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–899. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–664, ''Specialty Drug Copayment Limitation Act of 2016''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–900. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–665, ''Regulation of Landscape Architecture and Professional Design Firms Amendment Act of 2016''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–901. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–666, ''Washington Metrorail Safety Commission Establishment Act of 2016''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–902. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–668, ''Uniform Electronic Legal Material Act of 2016''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–903. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–669, ''State Board of Education Omnibus Amendment Act of 2016''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–904. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–670, ''Nationals Park and Ballpark District Designated Entertainment Area Signage Regulations Amendment Act of 2016''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–905. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–671, ''Rail Safety and Security Amendment Act of 2016''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–906. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–672, ''Collaborative Reproduction Amendment Act of 2016''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–907. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–673, ''Fair Credit in Employment Amendment Act of 2016''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–908. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–674, ''Urban Farming and Food Security Amendment Act of 2016''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–909. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–676, ''Death Certificate Gender Identity Recognition Amendment Act of 2016''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–910. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–677, ''Fair Criminal Record Screening for Housing Act of 2016''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–911. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–678, ''Omnibus Alcoholic Beverage Regulation Amendment Act of 2016''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–912. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–679, ''Office of Out of School Time Grants and Youth Outcomes Establishment Act of 2016''; to the Committee on

Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–913. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–680, ''Bryant Street Tax Increment Financing Act of 2016''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–914. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–681, ''District of Columbia State Athletics Consolidation Act of 2016''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–915. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–682, ''Universal Paid Leave Amendment Act of 2016''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–916. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–683, ''Snow Removal Agreement Authorization Amendment Act of 2016''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–917. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–684, ''Wage Theft Prevention Clarification and Overtime Fairness Amendment Act of 2016''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–918. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–685, ''Land Disposition Transparency and Clarification Amendment Act of 2016''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–919. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–686, ''First-time Homebuyer Tax Benefit Amendment Act of 2016''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–920. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 21–687, ''Advisory Neighborhood Commissions Omnibus Amendment Act of 2016''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–921. A communication from the Deputy General Counsel, Office of General Counsel, Small Business Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Civil Monetary Penalties Inflation Adjustments'' (RIN3245–AD44) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 23, 2017; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

EC–922. A communication from the Deputy General Counsel, Office of Investment and Innovation, Small Business Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Small Business Investment Companies: Passive Business Expansion and Technical Clarifications'' (RIN3245–AG67) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 23, 2017; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

EC–923. A communication from the Deputy General Counsel, Office of Policy, Planning, and Liaison, Small Business Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Credit for Lower Tier Small Business Subcontracting'' (RIN3245–AG71) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 23, 2017; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

EC–924. A communication from the Office Program Manager, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''VA Veteran-Owned Small Business Verification Guidelines'' (RIN2900–AP93) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 23, 2017; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs .

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. COTTON (for himself, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. COCHRAN, and Mr. DONNELLY):

S. 478. A bill to amend the Migratory Bird Treaty Act to prohibit baiting exemptions on certain land; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. BROWN (for himself, Mr. WICKER, Mr. CARDIN, and Ms. COLLINS):

S. 479. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to waive coinsurance under Medicare for colorectal cancer screening tests, regardless of whether therapeutic intervention is required during the screening; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. PORTMAN (for himself and Mr. UDALL):

S. 480. A bill to reauthorize the Multinational Species Conservation Funds Semipostal Stamp; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. BENNET:

S. 481. A bill to provide for the withdrawal and protection of certain Federal land in the State of Colorado, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. THUNE (for himself, Mr. MURPHY, Mrs. CAPITO, and Mr. DONNELLY):

S. 482. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to treat certain amounts paid for physical activity, fitness, and exercise as amounts paid for medical care; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. MURRAY:

S. 483. A bill to designate and expand wilderness areas in Olympic National Forest in the State of Washington, and to designate certain rivers in Olympic National Forest and Olympic National Park as wild and scenic rivers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself and Mr. HATCH):

S. 484. A bill to amend the Investment Company Act of 1940 to terminate an exemption for companies located in Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and any other possession of the United States; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. FLAKE (for himself, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. RISCH, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. HELLER, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. DAINES, Mr. TESTER, and Mr. BENNET):

S. 485. A bill to amend the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 to provide cancellation ceilings for stewardship end result contracting projects, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. CASEY (for himself, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. COONS, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. BROWN, Mr. ROBERTS, Ms. STABENOW, Mrs. CAPITO, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, and Mr. BLUNT):

S. 486. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for the non-application of Medicare competitive acquisition rates to complex rehabilitative wheelchairs and accessories; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CRAPO (for himself, Ms. STABENOW, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BENNET, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. COCHRAN, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. GARDNER, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. KING, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. MENENDEZ, and Mr. RISCH):

S. 487. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for an exclusion for assistance provided to participants in certain veterinary student loan repayment or forgiveness programs; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. TOOMEY (for himself and Mr. WARNER):

S. 488. A bill to increase the threshold for disclosures required by the Securities and Exchange Commission relating to compensatory benefit plans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mrs. FISCHER (for herself and Mr. SASSE):

S. Res. 74. A resolution congratulating the State of Nebraska on the 150th anniversary of the admission of that State into the United States; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. PORTMAN (for himself and Mr. BROWN):

S. Res. 75. A resolution recognizing the 100th anniversary of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, the largest organization of food and nutrition professionals in the world; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. CASEY (for himself, Mr. ISAKSON, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. COONS, and Mrs. SHAHEEN):

S. Res. 76. A resolution expressing support for the designation of March 21, 2017, as ''National Rosie the Riveter Day'' ; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CASEY (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. COONS, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. BROWN, Mr. ISAKSON, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. MORAN, and Mr. THUNE):

S. Res. 77. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 59

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 59, a bill to provide that silencers be treated the same as long guns.

S. 132

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 132, a bill to amend title 54, United States Code, to provide for congressional and State approval of national monuments and restrictions on the use of national monuments.

S. 152

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES) was added as a cosponsor of S. 152, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the removal or demotion of employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs based on performance or misconduct, and for other purposes.

S. 203

At the request of Mr. BURR, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 203, a bill to reaffirm that the Environmental Protection Agency may not regulate vehicles used solely for competition, and for other purposes.

S. 223

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 223, a bill to provide immunity from suit for certain individuals who disclose potential examples of financial exploitation of senior citizens, and for other purposes.

S. 236

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 236, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reform taxation of alcoholic beverages.

S. 254

At the request of Mr. UDALL, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 254, a bill to amend the Native American Programs Act of 1974 to provide flexibility and reauthorization to ensure the survival and continuing vitality of Native American languages.

S. 315

At the request of Mr. SULLIVAN, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 315, a bill to direct the Secretary of the Army to place in Arlington National Cemetery a monument honoring the helicopter pilots and crewmembers who were killed while serving on active duty in the Armed Forces during the Vietnam era, and for other purposes.

S. 339

At the request of Mr. NELSON, the names of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI), the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS), the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON), the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER), the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) and the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 339, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to repeal the requirement for reduction of survivor annuities under the Survivor Benefit Plan by veterans' dependency and indemnity compensation, and for other purposes.

S. 372

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 372, a bill to amend the Tariff Act of 1930 to ensure that merchandise arriving through the mail shall be subject to review by U.S. Customs and Border Protection and to require the provision of advance electronic information on shipments of mail to U.S. Customs and Border Protection and for other purposes.

S. 389

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 389, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that kombucha is exempt from any excise taxes and regulations imposed on alcoholic beverages.

S. 407

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 407, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend the railroad track maintenance credit.

S. 415

At the request of Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, the names of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER), the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) and the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) were added as cosponsors of S. 415, a bill to nullify the effect of the recent Executive order that makes the vast majority of unauthorized individuals priorities for removal and aims to withhold critical Federal funding to sanctuary cities.

S. 420

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 420, a bill to require the President to report on the use by the Government of Iran of commercial aircraft and related services for illicit military or other activities, and for other purposes.

S. 422

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the names of the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON), the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) and the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) were added as cosponsors of S. 422, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to clarify presumptions relating to the exposure of certain veterans who served in the vicinity of the Republic of Vietnam, and for other purposes.

S. 431

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 431, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to expand the use of telehealth for individuals with stroke.

S. 445

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 445, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to ensure more timely access to home health services for Medicare beneficiaries under the Medicare program.

S. 473

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the names of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND), the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) and the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) were added as cosponsors of S. 473, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to make qualification requirements for entitlement to Post-9/11 Education Assistance more equitable, to improve support of veterans receiving such educational assistance, and for other purposes.

S.J. RES. 11

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 11, a 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''.

S. RES. 54

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the names of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) and the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 54, a resolution expressing the unwavering commitment of the United States to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

S. RES. 70

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 70, a resolution recognizing the 75th anniversary of Executive Order 9066 and expressing the sense of the Senate that policies that discriminate against any individual based on the actual or perceived race, ethnicity, national origin, or religion of that individual would be a repetition of the mistakes of Executive Order 9066 and contrary to the values of the United States.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 74—CONGRATULATING THE STATE OF NEBRASKA ON THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ADMISSION OF THAT STATE INTO THE UNITED STATES

Mrs. FISCHER (for herself and Mr. SASSE) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 74

Whereas the name ''Nebraska'' is derived from a Native American Siouan word that means ''flat water'' and is inspired by the Platte River;

Whereas early explorers of the Great Plains called the Nebraska region the ''Great American Desert'', mistakenly believing that its vast prairies were incapable of supporting agriculture;

Whereas the Platte River Valley provided an ideal corridor for settlers traveling westward along the Oregon, Mormon, and California Trails;

Whereas the Act entitled ''An Act to secure Homesteads to actual Settlers on the Public Domain'', approved May 20, 1862, encouraged enterprising individuals to consider settling in the Nebraska Territory;

Whereas Nebraska was—

(1) the first State admitted to the United States after the conclusion of the Civil War; and

(2) the only State the admittance of which the President vetoed because of disagreement with the ''fundamental condition'' imposed by Congress with respect to giving black men the right to vote;

Whereas, by means of the Act entitled ''An Act for the Admission of the State of Nebraska into the Union'', approved February 9, 1867, Congress overrode the veto of President Andrew Johnson, opening the way for the admission of Nebraska into the United States on March 1, 1867;

Whereas the admission of Nebraska into the United States led to the further settlement of Nebraska and the construction of the transcontinental railroad westward from the Omaha terminus;

Whereas, in 1879, a Federal district court in Nebraska was the site where American Indians were first recognized as persons under the laws of the United States after Standing Bear pleaded, ''I am a man'';

Whereas Nebraska is leading the way for a new innovation frontier where entrepreneurs are engaged in building the economy of the future by establishing and growing great businesses;

Whereas Nebraska is the only State whose residents, desiring greater government accountability, voted to transition the State legislature from a bicameral system to a unicameral system, thereby reducing the size of the legislature by nearly 70 percent;

Whereas Nebraska is the home of such national food sensations as the reuben and runzas;

Whereas Nebraska leads the United States in—

(1) beef and veal exports;

(2) commercial red meat production;

(3) commercial cattle slaughter;

(4) Great Northern bean production;

(5) popcorn production; and

(6) the number of irrigated acres of cropland;

Whereas Nebraska continues to lead the United States in center-pivot irrigation technology, as Nebraska is home to the 4 largest irrigation companies in the United States;

Whereas, in 1986, Nebraska was the first State in which women were the 2 major party candidates for governor;

Whereas Nebraska has played and continues to play a significant and remarkable role in the civic, economic, educational, and cultural life of the United States;

Whereas, on March 1, 2017, Nebraska marks the 150th anniversary of the admission of that State into the United States; and

Whereas the sesquicentennial celebration of statehood offers a special opportunity for the people of Nebraska to reflect, remember, celebrate, and plan for an even brighter future that embodies the State motto of Nebraska, ''Equality Before the Law'': Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate congratulates the State of Nebraska on the 150th anniversary of the admission of that State into the United States.

SENATE RESOLUTION 75—RECOGNIZING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ACADEMY OF NUTRITION AND DIETETICS, THE LARGEST ORGANIZATION OF FOOD AND NUTRITION PROFESSIONALS IN THE WORLD

Mr. PORTMAN (for himself and Mr. BROWN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry:

S. RES. 75

Whereas, on October 20, 1917, dietitians met in Cleveland, Ohio, to identify ways in which food and nutrition professionals could help the United States Government conserve food and improve public health and nutrition during World War I;

Whereas the foundational meeting on October 20, 1917, led to the creation of the American Dietetics Association, now known as the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (referred to in this preamble as the ''Academy'');

Whereas, since the inception of the Academy, the Academy has grown from a charter membership of 58 individuals to the largest organization of food and nutrition professionals in the world, with a membership as of January 2017 of more than 75,000 individuals;

Whereas the Academy is comprised of a diverse group of registered dietitian nutritionists and technicians, scientists, clinicians, educators, students, and other food and nutrition practitioners; and

Whereas, through evidence-based research and education, members of the Academy play an important role in shaping the food choices and nutrition of the people of the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) commemorates October 20, 2017, as the 100th anniversary of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics; and

(2) applauds the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics for its past, present, and future efforts to champion the principles established by its dietitian predecessors more than 100 years ago—

(A) to promote food and nutrition professionals; and

(B) to improve the health and wellness of all people of the United States through research, education, and advocacy.

SENATE RESOLUTION 76—EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE DESIGNATION OF MARCH 21, 2017, AS ''NATIONAL ROSIE THE RIVETER DAY''

Mr. CASEY (for himself, Mr. ISAKSON, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. COONS, and Mrs. SHAHEEN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 76

Whereas National Rosie the Riveter Day is a collective national effort to raise awareness of the 16,000,000 women who worked during World War II;

Whereas the people of the United States have chosen to honor women workers who contributed from the home front during World War II;

Whereas those women left their homes to work or volunteer full-time in factories, farms, shipyards, airplane factories, banks, and other institutions in support of the Armed Forces overseas;

Whereas those women worked with the United Service Organizations and the American Red Cross, drove trucks, riveted airplane parts, collected critical materials, rolled bandages, and served on rationing boards;

Whereas it is fitting and proper to recognize and preserve the history and legacy of working women, including volunteer women, during World War II to promote cooperation and fellowship among those women and their descendants;

Whereas those women and their descendants wish to further the advancement of patriotic ideas, excellence in the workplace, and loyalty to the United States; and

Whereas March 21, 2017, during Women's History Month, is an appropriate day to designate as ''National Rosie the Riveter Day'': Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the designation of March 21, 2017, as ''National Rosie the Riveter Day''; and

(2) acknowledges the important role played by women during World War II.

SENATE RESOLUTION 77—SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS AWARENESS WEEK

Mr. CASEY (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. COONS, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. BROWN, Mr. ISAKSON, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. MORAN, and Mr. THUNE) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 77

Whereas multiple sclerosis (referred to in this preamble as ''MS'') can impact individuals of all ages, races, and ethnicities, but MS is at least 2 to 3 times more common in women than in men;

Whereas there are approximately 2,300,000 individuals worldwide who have been diagnosed with MS;

Whereas MS is typically diagnosed in individuals between the ages of 20 and 50, but it is estimated that between 8,000 and 10,000 children and adolescents are living with MS in the United States;

Whereas MS is an unpredictable, often disabling disease of the central nervous system that disrupts the flow of information within the brain and between the brain and the body;

Whereas symptoms of MS range from numbness and tingling to vision problems and paralysis, and the progress, severity, and specific symptoms of MS in any 1 person cannot yet be predicted;

Whereas, while there is no evidence that MS is directly inherited, studies show that there are genetic and environmental factors that give certain individuals a higher risk of developing MS;

Whereas the exact cause of MS is unknown, and there is no cure for MS;

Whereas the Multiple Sclerosis Coalition, a national network of independent MS organizations dedicated to the enhancement of the quality of life of individuals affected by MS, recognizes and supports Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week;

Whereas the mission of the Multiple Sclerosis Coalition is to increase opportunities for cooperation and to provide greater opportunity to leverage the effective use of resources for the benefit of the MS community;

Whereas the United States plays a critical role in coordinating MS research globally and amplifies the impact of research in the United States through which results are delivered to MS patients;

Whereas, in 2012, the National Multiple Sclerosis Society was a founding member of the International Progressive MS Alliance, which coordinates research to accelerate the development of treatments for progressive MS by removing international scientific and technological barriers and, as of 2017, includes 16 MS organizations from 15 countries, 8 foundation and trust members, and 5 pharmaceutical partners;

Whereas the Multiple Sclerosis Coalition recognizes and supports Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week during March each year;

Whereas the goals of Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week are—

(1) to invite people to join the movement to end MS;

(2) to encourage everyone to do something to demonstrate a commitment to moving toward a world free of MS; and

(3) to acknowledge those who have dedicated time and talent to help promote MS research and programs; and

Whereas, in 2017, Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week is recognized during the week of March 5 through March 11: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week;

(2) encourages States, localities, and the territories and possessions of the United States to support the goals and ideals of Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week by issuing proclamations designating Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week;

(3) encourages media organizations—

(A) to participate in Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week; and

(B) to help provide education to the public about multiple sclerosis;

(4) commends the efforts of States, localities, and the territories and possessions of the United States to support the goals and ideals of Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week;

(5) recognizes and reaffirms the commitment of the United States to ending multiple sclerosis by—

(A) promoting awareness about individuals that are affected by multiple sclerosis; and

(B) supporting multiple sclerosis research and education programs;

(6) recognizes all individuals in the United States living with multiple sclerosis;

(7) expresses gratitude to the family members and friends of individuals living with multiple sclerosis, who are a source of love and encouragement for those individuals; and

(8) salutes the health care professionals and medical researchers who—

(A) provide assistance to individuals affected by multiple sclerosis; and

(B) continue to work to find ways—

(i) to stop multiple sclerosis;

(ii) to restore what has been lost due to multiple sclerosis; and

(iii) to end multiple sclerosis forever.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I have eight requests for committees to meet during today's session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority leaders.

Pursuant to Rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today's session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

The Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to hold a meeting during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 1, 2017, at 10 a.m. in room 106 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, entitled ''Connecting America: Improving Access to Infrastructure for Communities Across the Country.''

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

The Committee on Environment and Public Works be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 1, 2017, at 10:30 a.m., in room 406 of the Dirksen Senate office building, to conduct a hearing entitled, ''Flood Control Infrastructure: Safety Questions Raised by Current Events.''

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

The Committee on Finance be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 1, 2017, at 10:30 a.m., in 215 Dirksen Senate Office Building, to consider nomination.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate, on March 1, 2017, following the first vote on the Senate Floor, in the Capitol, to conduct an executive business meeting.

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY

The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 1, 2017, at 10 a.m. to conduct a hearing entitled ''The Effects of Border Insecurity and Lax Immigration Enforcement on American Communities.''

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

The Committee on Veterans' Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 1, 2017, at 10 a.m., in room SD–G50 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a legislative presentation of The American Legion.

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

The Committee on Veterans' Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 1, 2017, at 2 p.m., in room SD–G50 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a legislative presentation of Veterans of Foreign Wars.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EMERGING THREATS AND CAPABILITIES

The Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 1, 2017, at 10:15 a.m., in closed session, to receive testimony on Global Counterterrorism.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS AWARENESS WEEK

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 77, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 77) supporting the goals and ideals of Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 77) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

APPOINTMENT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, on behalf of the President pro tempore, and upon the recommendation of the Democratic leader, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2761, appoints the following Senator as Vice Chairman of the Senate Delegation to the British-American Interparliamentary Group Conference during the 115th Congress: the Honorable Patrick J. Leahy of Vermont.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that following leader remarks on Thursday, March 2, there be 20 minutes of debate, equally divided, prior to the confirmation vote on Executive Calendar No. 5, the nomination of Ben Carson to be Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, followed by up to 10 minutes of debate, equally divided, prior to the cloture vote on Executive Calendar No. 9, the nomination of Rick Perry to be Secretary of Energy, and if cloture is invoked, time be counted as if invoked at 7 a.m. that day.

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

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, MARCH 2, 2017

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 9:30 a.m., Thursday, March 2; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate proceed to executive session and resume consideration of the Carson nomination as under the previous order.

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

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. McCONNELL. If there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 4:34 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, March 2, 2017, at 9:30 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

UNITED STATES SENTENCING COMMISSION

DANNY C. REEVES, OF KENTUCKY, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE UNITED STATES SENTENCING COMMISSION FOR A TERM EXPIRING OCTOBER 31, 2019, VICE RICARDO H. HINOJOSA, TERM EXPIRED.

CHARLES R. BREYER, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE UNITED STATES SENTENCING COMMISSION FOR A TERM EXPIRING OCTOBER 31, 2021. (REAPPOINTMENT)

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate March 1, 2017:

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

RYAN ZINKE, OF MONTANA, TO BE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH 2017

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2017

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, it is with great respect and admiration that I rise today in observance of Women's History Month and its 2017 theme: Honoring Trailblazing Women in Labor and Business. Each year, the National Women's History Project selects a unifying theme to recognize and promote Women's History Month. This year's theme features the stories of women from diverse backgrounds and different fields who have challenged and changed the paid labor force to secure equal rights and equal opportunities for women in the workplace.

Despite facing barriers in the workplace, women have always worked and, at times in America's history, have provided the majority of the volunteer labor force. Women of every race, class, and ethnic background are woven into the history of our nation's labor force and continue to significantly impact social and legal structure in the workplace.

Longstanding constraints, including religious and educational conventions, often meant women experienced limited opportunities, low wages, and poor working conditions while performing low-skill, short-term labor positions in the American workforce. Strong role models such as Kate Mullany and Lucy Gonzalez-Parsons were pioneers in the organized labor field in the late 19th century through the turn of 20th century. These women forged the way for other women in all professions, trades, and the arts and sciences to organize for better working conditions and fair wages. Because of these courageous trailblazers, women today, such as Yvonne Walker, the first African-American woman to serve as President of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), and Lily Ledbetter, whose landmark Supreme Court case of employee discrimination brought about legislative changes and the eponymous Fair Pay Act of 2009, women today are empowered to serve as activists in the fight for fairness in the workplace. These remarkable women were leaders and organizers who not only secured their own rights and access to equal opportunity but also served as a voice for many women who were undervalued and underpaid.

Women today continue to carry the torch to secure workplace justice and equality and to contest and challenge norms in the American workforce. These female entrepreneurs, labor leaders, and innovators have challenged stereotypes and social assumptions about who women are and what they can achieve. These strong women, past and present, serve as remarkable role models who reflect the 2017 theme, Honoring Trailblazing Women in Labor and Business.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to join in celebrating Women's History Month and to recognize that after decades of dedication, perseverance, contributions, and advances, the stories of American women from all cultures and classes are being printed, spoken, recognized, and celebrated. In an effort to illustrate the many courageous and dedicated women throughout America's history, we remember and recount the tales of our ancestors' talents, sacrifices, and commitments that serve as an inspiration to today's generation of both women and men. I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in celebrating meaningful and substantial impact women have had in labor and business throughout our nation's history.

HONORING COACH JIM TATE ON HIS 100TH STATE CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. BRADLEY BYRNE

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2017

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Coach Jim Tate on winning his 100th State Championship. This is a remarkable and impressive achievement, and it highlights Coach Tate's dedication to the young men and women he has coached throughout his illustrious career.

A native of Mobile, Coach Tate is a graduate of The Citadel and received a master's degree from the University of Alabama. He is also a veteran who served in the U.S. Army from 1964 to 1969. During his military service, he served in Vietnam with the elite 173rd Airborne Brigade.

After brief stints at schools in South Carolina and Georgia, Coach Tate started coaching at Mobile's St. Paul's Episcopal School in 1978. After originally coaching other sports, he settled in as the boys and girls track and cross country coach in 1981.

Throughout his career, Coach Tate broke numerous state and national records, including the nation's record for the longest consecutive state championship streak in the nation at 16 (1983 to 1998). He has also been inducted into the Mobile Sports Hall of Fame and the National High School Hall of Fame.

On February 4, 2017, Coach Tate's St. Paul's girls indoor track and field team won the Class 4A–5A state championship at the Birmingham CrossPlex. This marked Coach Tate's 100th state title.

Mr. Speaker, Jim Tate has had a positive impact on countless student athletes throughout his career. Over 60 of his former athletes have gone on to perform at the collegiate level. Like any good leader, Coach Tate attributes his success to his athletes, parents, and supporters, but there is no denying his remarkable ability to get the best out of the people he coaches.

Many high schools can only dream of having 100 state championships in their entire history, but Coach Tate has reached that level himself. This high level of success is a testament to his drive, motivation, knowledge, and character.

So, on behalf of Alabama's First Congressional District, I want to thank Coach Tate for his service to our nation and congratulate him on winning his 100th State Championship.

REMEMBERING THE VICTIMS OF THE SUMGAIT POGROMS

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2017

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate the 29th Anniversary of the pogrom against the Armenian residents of the town of Sumgait, Azerbaijan. Twenty-nine years ago, Azerbaijani mobs assaulted and killed their Armenian neighbors. When the violence finally subsided, hundreds of Armenian civilians had been brutally murdered and injured, women and young girls were raped, and victims were tortured and burned alive. Those that survived the carnage fled their homes and businesses, leaving behind everything they had in their desperation.

The pogroms were the culmination of years of vicious anti-Armenian propaganda, spread by the Azerbaijani authorities. The Azerbaijani authorities made little effort to punish those responsible, instead attempting to cover up the atrocities in Sumgait to this day, as well as denying the role of senior government officials in instigating the violence. Unsurprisingly, it was not the end of the violence, and was followed by additional attacks, including the 1990 pogrom in Baku.

The Sumgait massacre and the subsequent attacks on ethnic Armenians, resulted in the virtual disappearance of a once thriving population of 450,000 Armenians living in Azerbaijan, and culminating in the war launched against the people of Nagorno Karabakh. That war resulted in thousands dead on both sides and created over one million refugees in both Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Time has not healed the wounds of those murdered in the pogroms in Sumgait, Kirovabad, and Baku. To the contrary, hatred of Armenians is celebrated in Azerbaijan, a situation most vividly exemplified by the case of Ramil Safarov, an Azerbaijani army captain who savagely murdered an Armenian army lieutenant, Gurgen Margaryan with an axe while he slept. The two were participating in a NATO Partnership for Peace exercise at the time in Hungary. In 2012, Safarov was sent home to Azerbaijan, purportedly to serve out the remainder of his sentence. Instead, he was pardoned, promoted, and paraded through the streets of Baku as a returning hero.

The assault on ethnic Armenian civilians in Sumgait helped touch off what would become a direct conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Nagorno Karabakh. And today, Azerbaijan's dangerous behavior on the Line of Contact threatens peace and stability in the region. Artillery and sniper fire across the Line

of Contact has become a fact of daily life for civilians in the Nagorno Karabakh Republic, causing numerous casualties. In April of last year, Azerbaijan launched its most aggressive attack in many years, resulting in the loss of many lives over the course of three days of intense fighting.

Along with other Members of Congress, I have consistently called for a direct international response to Azerbaijan's aggressive behavior through deployment of international monitors and technology to monitor ceasefire violations. Azerbaijan's continued rejection of these simple steps speaks volumes, but I believe they should not prevent the installation of these technologies within Nagorno Karabakh. The anniversary of Sumgait is a reminder of the consequences when aggression and hatred is allowed to grow unchecked.

Mr. Speaker, this April we will mark the 102nd Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, an event the Turkish government, Azerbaijan's closest ally, goes to great lengths to deny. We must not let such crimes against humanity go unrecognized, whether they occurred yesterday or 28 years ago or 100 years ago. Today, let us pause to remember the victims of the atrocities of the Sumgait pogroms. Mr. Speaker, it is our moral obligation to condemn crimes of hatred and to remember the victims, in hope that history will not be repeated.

HONORING ANDREW CABLE

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2017

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Andrew Cable. Andrew is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 1376, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Andrew has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Andrew has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Andrew has served his troop as an Assistant Senior Patrol Leader, become a Brotherhood member of the Order of the Arrow, and earned the rank of Fire Builder in the Tribe of Mic-O–Say. Andrew has also contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Andrew constructed a gazebo with swings surrounding a fire pit at Immacolata Manor, a facility for women with developmental disabilities in Liberty, Missouri.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Andrew Cable for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

TRIBUTE TO STEPHANIE JUTILA

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2017

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Stephanie Jutila for being named a 2017 Forty Under 40 honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, Business Record.

Since 2000, Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of young leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities and their careers. Each year, forty up-and-coming community and business leaders under 40 years of age are selected for this prestigious honor based on a combined criteria of community involvement and success in their chosen career field. The 2017 class of Forty Under 40 honorees will join an impressive roster of 680 past business leaders and growing.

Stephanie is a passionate horticulturist, having worked at a number of gardens, zoos and arboretums, including the Smithsonian Institution and the American Horticultural Society. Since becoming its first president and CEO, she has led the transformation of the Des Moines Botanical Center from a municipal to public garden as part of an $18.6 million capital campaign. Through her leadership, the nonprofit has grown its operating budget by 175 percent, doubled the garden's annual visitation, and cultivated a signature guest experience through its garden design and innovative programming.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Stephanie in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize her today for utilizing her talents to better both her community and the great state of Iowa. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Stephanie on receiving this esteemed designation, thanking those at Business Record for their great work, and wishing each member of the 2017 Forty Under 40 class a long and successful career.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. KEVIN BRADY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2017

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on roll call No. 103, I was unavoidably detained to cast my vote in time. Had I been present, I would have voted YES.

HONORING CALEB THOMAS JAYNES

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2017

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Caleb Thomas Jaynes. Caleb is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 1028, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Caleb has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Caleb has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Caleb has earned the rank of Brave in the Tribe of Mic–O–Say. Caleb has also contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Caleb led a group of scouts to the Platte City Cemetery to use GPS tracking and photographs to document nearly 1,000 gravestones in the cemetery and preserve the historical information online.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Caleb Thomas Jaynes for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

RECOGNIZING JAMES HOLLAND

HON. JERROLD NADLER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2017

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an exceptional young Australian who is currently interning in my Washington, D.C. office. James Holland came to our office as part of the Uni-Capitol Washington Internship Programme (UCWIP) and has been a valuable contributor to our efforts on behalf of New York's Tenth Congressional District.

UCWIP has worked with congressional offices to foster strong ties and understanding between the United States and Australian governments by bringing the best and the brightest from top Australian universities to intern on Capitol Hill. I am proud to have personally hosted 13 Australians since 2003, each bringing their unique outlooks on policy and desire to contribute.

James, a student from Monash University as well as valedictorian for the UCWIP Class of 2017, has worked in our office since January and quickly proved himself to be a highly valuable member of our team. He has researched important issues, attended briefings, and drafted constituent correspondence, among many other duties. He consistently displays a deep desire to learn and treats everyone that he encounters with respect. His hard work and dedication is a tremendous asset to our office and the Tenth Congressional District.

My team has learned a great deal about the current political situation in Australia as James' fascination with America continues to grow. He is an absolute pleasure to have in the office and I offer him my thanks for a job well done. I wish him the best of luck in all of his future endeavors.

TRIBUTE TO KAREN KARR

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2017

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Karen Karr for being named a 2017 Forty Under 40 honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, Business Record.

Since 2000, Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of young leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an

impact in their communities and their careers. Each year, forty up-and-coming community and business leaders under 40 years of age are selected for this prestigious honor based on a combined criteria of community involvement and success in their chosen career field. The 2017 class of Forty Under 40 honorees will join an impressive roster of 680 past business leaders and growing.

Karen is an attorney at BrownWinick law firm, focusing on complex residential and commercial real estate transactions. She graduated with distinction from the University of Iowa in 2003 and received her J.D. with honors from Drake University in 2008. She is a member of the Polk County, Iowa State, and American Bar Associations, as well as a member of the Polk County Women Attorneys. Outside of her work, she serves on the boards for Operations Downtown and the Des Moines Social Club. Karen also serves on the Capital Campaign Committee and as a mentor with Community Youth Concepts.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Karen in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize her today for utilizing her talents to better both her community and the great state of Iowa. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Karen on receiving this esteemed designation, thanking those at Business Record for their great work, and wishing each member of the 2017 Forty Under 40 class a long and successful career.

HONORING CRAIG E. MUILLER

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2017

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Craig E. Muiller. Craig is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 397, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Craig has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Craig has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Craig has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Craig E. Muiller for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

HONORING CHIEF STEPHAN B. WILDER

HON. JAMES B. RENACCI

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2017

Mr. RENACCI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Stephan B. Wilder, Chief of Police for North Canton, Ohio, who is now retiring after 36 years of service to the city. Chief Wilder began his law enforcement career with the city in 1981 as an unpaid auxiliary officer. Two years later, he was hired as a part time patrolman, and his full time service to the citizens of North Canton began in 1986. He was promoted to lieutenant in 1996 and became Chief of Police on May 29, 2011.

Before serving the City of North Canton, Chief Wilder was a graduate of Glenwood High School and Kent State University, where he studied Criminal Justice. He went on to obtain his Master's in Criminal Justice Administration from Tiffin University, and his education also includes studies at Northwestern University Center for Public Safety School of Police and Command, as well as the Ohio Police Association of Chiefs of Police Executive Leadership College.

In addition to serving his community in a law enforcement capacity, Chief Wilder has also served North Canton through his active participation in many civic and professional organizations. He has held positions and honors with the North Canton YMCA, North Canton Chamber of Commerce, Junior Achievement, Rotary Club, Knights of Columbus, Ohio Association and the International Association of Chiefs of Police, Stark County Police Chiefs Association, and Boy Scouts of America Buckeye Council. He has been active with the Boy Scouts since he became an Eagle Scout in 1967.

Throughout his career, Chief Wilder has received numerous rewards and honors. He has been honored with the Franklin M. Kremi Leadership Award by Northwestern University and by the Plain Local Schools Foundation and Alumni Association Hall of Distinction.

This week, the City of North Canton celebrates Chief Wilder's distinguished career and his retirement. I offer my congratulations to Chief Wilder on his retirement and thank him for his years of service. North Canton and I are grateful to him for everything he has done as a member of the city's law enforcement and as a leader in the community. I ask my colleagues in the House to join me in paying tribute to a valued public servant and wishing him a happy retirement.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE VICTIMS OF THE SUMGAIT POGROMS

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2017

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the Sumgait pogroms, one of the most horrific attacks against the Armenian people, committed at the hands of Azerbaijanis 29 years ago.

On February 27, 1988, hundreds of Armenian civilians living in the city of Sumgait in Azerbaijan were indiscriminately killed, raped, maimed, and even burned alive for no reason other than their ethnicity. This senseless violence was instigated by hostile, anti-Armenian rhetoric from Azerbaijani citizens and officials against innocent Armenians.

For nearly three decades, Azerbaijan has taken steps to cover up these crimes against humanity and dismiss the atrocities at Sumgait. Even more disturbing is that perpetrators of this event and similar violent attacks have since been lauded as national heroes.

I condemn these horrific attacks. Tragically, the Azerbaijani government's approach toward the Armenian people has not changed much since these attacks were perpetrated. In 2017, we hear the same violent rhetoric and witness the intimidation tactics by the Azerbaijani government against the people of Nagorno Karabakh.

If we do not condemn crimes against humanity and allow them to go unpunished and unrecognized we only strengthen the resolve of those seeking to perpetrate these crimes in the future. The Armenian people have known this for too long, as we prepare to commemorate the 102nd Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide in April.

I will continue to work with my colleagues on the Congressional Armenian Issues Caucus to remember the victims of the pogroms at Sumgait and to condemn all acts of violence against people who are targeted simply because of their existence. I hope my colleagues will join me in rejecting violent rhetoric and intimidation and renewing our commitment to achieving a collective peace.

RECOGNIZING RUTGERS CANCER INSTITUTE OF NEW JERSEY AT UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL

HON. DONALD M. PAYNE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2017

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the newly formed partnership between the Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey and University Hospital, located in Newark, New Jersey. This landmark agreement, designated by the National Cancer Institute, brings Rutgers' NCI-designated Comprehensive Cancer Center services, as the only one in the state of New Jersey. This will expand the offering of advanced cancer-related services for residents of Newark and the greater Essex County—which includes many constituents in the 10th Congressional District of New Jersey.

The partnership expands the offering of advanced cancer-related services, including clinical trials only available at NCI-designated cancer centers, community outreach and education programs focusing on cancer prevention, and early detection including increased screenings. The focus on early detection and preventions is very important as March is National Colorectal Cancer Month. Colorectal cancer is the third most common type of cancer in men and women in our country. According to the American Cancer Society, it is the third leading cause of cancer-related deaths in the United States when men and women are considered separately, and the second leading cause when both sexes are combined. In 2016, it was estimated that 134,490 new cases would be diagnosed, and that 49,190 people would die from colorectal cancer. The availability of the latest treatment options and clinical trials at the Rutgers Cancer Institute at University Hospital are expected to improve patient outcomes and increase awareness of early detection and prevention to help reduce cancer incidence and burden in the 10th Congressional District.

This partnership embraces University Hospital's patient-centered care model, and will

create a multidisciplinary team of experts that will include: medical, surgical, and radiation oncologists, oncology certified nurses, patient navigators, social workers, registered dietitians, pharmacists, and other specially trained support personnel. The Cancer Institute is also physically connected to University Hospital, which allows patients to access additional clinical services, clinical research opportunities, screening and education programs and administrative offices. Additionally, the new partnership will create educational opportunities for community partners in the Newark area to work with University Hospital to identify cancer-related needs and develop culturally appropriate education. These activities will form the basis for future cancer-focused outreach initiatives, which will focus on improving cancer literacy and communication between patients and healthcare providers.

This collaboration is essential to expanding comprehensive cancer services, including prevention, education, early detection, increased screenings, and clinical trials in Newark and Essex County, New Jersey and I am honored to recognize this exciting partnership between the Rutgers Cancer Institute and University Hospital.

KEYBANK

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2017

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize KeyBank for being honored as the Large Business of the Year by the West Chamber of Commerce.

KeyBank is a valuable community partner across the Denver Metro area and in Jefferson County. In Colorado, KeyBank has 700 employees, 61 branches and gives generously to more than 50 community partners every year in support of education, workforce development and advancing economic inclusion through building stronger neighborhoods and communities.

For the past two years, KeyBank has sponsored the ''Launch'' program for the Jefferson County Business Resource Center. Through this sponsorship, KeyBank plays an important role in helping local entrepreneurs create business plans and develop the skills they need to start a small business.

In addition to supporting local entrepreneurs through the ''Launch'' program, KeyBank also plays an important role in funding small businesses in Jefferson County. KeyBank has provided small business loans to numerous local entrepreneurs, which have helped them acquire other businesses, purchase real estate or grow their businesses in a variety of ways.

I extend my deepest congratulations to KeyBank for this well-deserved honor from the West Chamber of Commerce.

IN RECOGNITION OF MARY MARRARA, SCRANTON UNICO'S UNICAN OF THE YEAR

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2017

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mary Marrara, who will be honored as Unican of the Year on March 4, 2017 during the annual Scranton UNICO banquet. Each year UNICO honors a member that puts Service above self. Mary has a lifetime record of service to the Scranton community.

Mary was born and raised in Fort Washington, Pennsylvania. She attended school in the Philadelphia area, and she started her career as a dental manager there. In 1970, she and her husband Phil moved to Scranton. Mary and Phil own P & M Associates, Inc. The company was one of the first to offer cabinet refacing with a major national department store. They have received every top award for over 25 years for customer service and installations. Mary was part of the team in Chicago that created the Quality Every Day program, which set the standard for the national installation. Currently, they work with major retailers and sell and install kitchens on their own. Mary also owned and operated an ice cream shop, The Mary Go Round, which included The Floral Corner with her sister Fran.

In her 47 years of living in northeastern Pennsylvania Mary has served in, helped, and advised a wide array of area organizations. One of the first charities Mary became involved with was St. Joseph's Center, which helps individuals with intellectual disabilities or developmental delays, pregnant women, young families, couples hoping to adopt, and people who require outpatient therapy. Currently, Mary serves on several boards of The Wright Center and co-chairs the Wonderful Women Program and the Wright Center Health Fair. She also serves on the boards of the American Red Cross, the NEPA Philharmonic League, LaFesta Italiana, and the UNICO Scranton chapter. She is a committee member of the Jim Minicozzi 5K Race, the Jermyn Lions Club, and she serves on the advisory boards for Meals on Wheels and the Scranton Cultural Center.

It is an honor to recognize Mary Marrara for receiving the Unican of the Year Award from Scranton UNICO. I am grateful for her commitment to the citizens of northeastern Pennsylvania. I hope that she will continue to work for the welfare of her neighbors and the improvement of her community.

HONORING MR. CONRAD CONWAY

HON. BOB GIBBS

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2017

Mr. GIBBS. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to recognize Mr. Conrad Conway's brave service in the Navy during World War II. His fight to protect our freedoms and liberties is cherished by our entire nation.

Mr. Conway served in the Pacific Theater during the Second World War as a Signalman in the Navy. For his bravery in the line of duty, Mr. Conway earned the Distinguished Service Cross and the Bronze Star. He and his fellow Seamen's service in the Pacific was documented in Life Magazine, a tribute to the heroes who fought imperialism.

When Mr. Conway returned to the United States, he worked for Cooper Industries in Mount Vernon, Ohio. A devoted member of the community, Mr. Conway served as City Council President for nearly 30 years and was deeply involved in several veterans associations. He is the proud father of nine children, several grandchildren, and even great-children.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the citizens of Ohio's 7th Congressional District, I would like to thank Conrad Conway for his service. Our country is forever indebted to the sacrifices he made to defend our freedoms.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. KEVIN BRADY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2017

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on roll call no. 104, I was unavoidably detained to cast my vote in time. Had I been present, I would have voted YES.

TRIBUTE TO JOHN LEDER

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2017

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate John Leder for being named a 2017 Forty Under 40 honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, Business Record.

Since 2000, Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of young leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities and their careers. Each year, forty up-and-coming community and business leaders under 40 years of age are selected for this prestigious honor based on a combined criteria of community involvement and success in their chosen career field. The 2017 class of Forty Under 40 honorees will join an impressive roster of 680 past business leaders and growing.

John is an account executive at Holmes Murphy and Associates, where he helps ensure clients get the best service available. But it is his family that truly drives him both professionally and personally. Their experience with his son Owen's challenges with cerebral palsy has caused John to focus much of his volunteer efforts on helping children with challenging medical conditions and their families. He has been active with Variety, The Children's Charity, Courage League Sports and Gillette Children's Specialty Hospital. He contributes in a number of ways, from sharing his experiences with other families, helping to raise money, and spreading awareness of adaptive fitness and wellness programs.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like John in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize him today for utilizing his talents to better both his community and the great state of

Iowa. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating John on receiving this esteemed designation, thanking those at Business Record for their great work, and wishing each member of the 2017 Forty Under 40 class a long and successful career.

HONORING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ST. CLAIR COUNTY (WEST) ROTARY CLUB

HON. MIKE BOST

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2017

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the 100th Anniversary of the Rotary Club of St. Clair County (West).

On March 1, 1917, the Rotary Club of St. Clair County (West) received its first charter with 30 members in attendance, becoming the first Rotary Club activated in Southern Illinois. These members represented real estate agents, bankers, lawyers, lumber and livestock workers, farmers, and many other professions that make up the fabric of Southern Illinois.

Since its activation, the Rotary Club has been a support group to countless business owners through the Great Depression, World War II, and beyond. Not only do its members focus on strengthening businesses, but they also focus on enriching the community through charitable work.

The Red Cross, Salvation Army, Boys and Girl Scouts of America, and YMCA are only a few of the organizations with which St. Clair County (West) has been instrumental in strengthening Southern Illinois, including creating the Edgemont YMCA facility and a college scholarship program for high school seniors.

We are grateful for the contributions that Rotary Clubs around the nation are making on a daily basis. I urge all of my colleagues to join me in recognition of the 100th Anniversary of the St. Clair County (West) Rotary Club.

INTRODUCTION OF THE VISION ZERO ACT

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2017

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, the true American carnage is what's happening on our roadways. More than 40,000 people were killed last year on streets in communities around the country, yet this is accepted as inevitability. We can do better. We have to do better.

Even more concerning, fatalities of our most vulnerable road users, pedestrians and bicyclists, make up a disproportionate share of those deaths, with pedestrian fatalities increasing 16 percent from 2009 to 2014 and jumping another 9 percent from 2015 to 2016. People who die on our streets are disproportionally children, seniors, and people from low-income or minority communities.

Communities across the country have recognized that there is only one number of acceptable deaths on our streets: zero. Vision Zero is the goal of eliminating all transportation-related fatalities, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, motorists and passengers. Cities from Portland, Oregon to Fort Lauderdale, Florida are implementing interagency Vision Zero plans that connect engineering, education, and enforcement to reach the goal of ending transportation deaths and serious injuries. Despite the horrific national statistics, Vision Zero is already making a difference at street level.

Congress should encourage this innovative approach to transportation safety, and today I'm pleased to introduce the Vision Zero Act of 2017 with my friend, Representative VERN BUCHANAN. This bill creates grant programs to plan and implement a Vision Zero framework, giving local communities of all sizes access to funding and best practices to set and reach safety goals. We should no longer accept bicycle and pedestrian fatalities as harsh reality, and this bill gives us the tools to reverse this trend.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN

HON. MARK MEADOWS

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2017

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend the Republic of Kazakhstan and its President on taking significant steps towards a more open and democratized form of governance. Recently, President Nursultan Nazarbayev announced constitutional reforms aimed at improving the accountability of government and the transfer of many powers to the Parliament and ministry level.

Last December, Kazakhstan celebrated twenty-five years of independence from the former Soviet Union. In those twenty-five years, Kazakhstan has become a modernized republic, moved towards a market-based economy, and stewarded growth and prosperity for its citizens. Kazakhstan's President Nazarbayev is now taking the welcomed steps towards implementing the political and constitutional reforms that a modern republic, governed by the people and for the people, requires for continued long-term stability and prosperity.

I am proud of the United States' partnership with Kazakhstan as it continues to make clear its commitment to the rights of its citizens, and we encourage its progress in protecting religious minorities and freedom of the press. These commendable steps towards the democratization of government serve as an example for other countries in the region.

In the coming months, I look forward to welcoming and working with the new Ambassador to the United States, H.E. Erzhan Kazykhanov, and commend the Kazakh government for the willingness to continuously improve the country's governmental system.

TRIBUTE TO JOSHUA MANDELBAUM

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2017

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Joshua Mandelbaum for being named a 2017 Forty Under 40 honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, Business Record.

Since 2000, Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of young leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities and their careers. Each year, forty up-and-coming community and business leaders under 40 years of age are selected for this prestigious honor based on a combined criteria of community involvement and success in their chosen career field. The 2017 class of Forty Under 40 honorees will join an impressive roster of 680 past business leaders and growing.

Joshua is committed to serving his community. As an environmental attorney at the Environmental Law and Policy Center, he is a leading voice for Iowa's clean energy economy and constantly working towards collaborative solutions to improving Iowa's water quality. As a father of two young children, he brings passion and insight to the Polk County Early Childhood Iowa board and its work to provide quality early childhood education and child care to all of Polk County.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Joshua in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize him today for utilizing his talents to better both his community and the great state of Iowa. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Joshua on receiving this esteemed designation, thanking those at Business Record for their great work, and wishing each member of the 2017 Forty Under 40 class a long and successful career.

HONORING THE LIFE AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF DR. JARED JAMES GRANTHAM

HON. EMANUEL CLEAVER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2017

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor a doctor and educator from the Kansas City area who recently passed away. Dr. Jared James Grantham passed away on Sunday, January 22nd at the age of 80, after undergoing treatment for cancer.

During his time at the University of Kansas Medical Center, he founded their Kidney Institute, and a renal research and training program. As the director of the Kidney Institute at the University of Kansas Medical Center, he pioneered research into Polycystic Kidney Disease. Dr. Grantham's many contributions to this research include the discovery of hydro-osmotic effects of the hormone vasopressin in the kidneys, as well as the discovery that the renal tubules secrete and reabsorb solutes

and water, a finding that came from a series of experiments that showed that kidney cysts in Polycystic Kidney Disease patients are in fact distended renal tubules that trap fluid within an expanding cavity lined by a single layer of cells.

Dr. Grantham's drive to find a cure for Polycystic Kidney Disease was sparked by a memory. His childhood friend, Ronnie Wilkerson, suffered from Polycystic Kidney Disease. Without this inspiration, Dr. Grantham would have never found that renal tubules in the kidney both secrete and reabsorb solutes and water. This eventually led to his confirmation that the cysts are neoplastic growths filled with liquid.

In 1982, alongside Joseph Bruening, Dr. Grantham founded the Polycystic Kidney Disease Foundation to help advance research into this horrible disease. The Polycystic Kidney Disease Foundation is the only organization in the United States solely dedicated to finding treatments and a cure for polycystic kidney disease, as well as improve the lives of those who suffer with it. Over the last 30 years, the Polycystic Kidney Disease Foundation has invested over $40 million in basic and clinical research, nephrology fellowships, and scientific meetings with a simple goal: to discover and deliver treatments and a cure for Polycystic Kidney Disease.

Before the Polycystic Kidney Disease Foundation was established, Dr. Grantham was one of the very few researchers studying the disease. In February 1981, the Kansas City Star ran an article entitled ''Research lags on hereditary condition, specialist says.'' This article caught the eye of Mr. Joseph Bruening, a Kansas City, Missouri native and businessman whose wife and daughter both suffered from Polycystic Kidney Disease. In December of 1981, Mr. Bruening mailed a letter to Dr. Grantham interested in contributing funds towards research of this disease. Eventually, the two met and agreed to create a not-for-profit independent medical foundation whose goal was to create a cure for Polycystic Kidney Disease. In 2013, the Polycystic Kidney Disease Foundation made a great stride towards a cure. Tolvaptan, the first drug to show promise in treating this disease, was accepted for priority review by the FDA.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today to pause for a moment to honor Dr. Grantham, a pioneer of research for Polycystic Kidney Disease. The lives of people with this disease are better off because of his research and vision.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RODNEY DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2017

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I was in a meeting at the White House.

Had I been present, I would have voted NAY on Roll Call No. 108, NAY on Roll Call No. 107, NAY on Roll Call No. 106, and YEA on Roll Call No. 105.

TRIBUTE TO SKYLAR MAYBERRY-MAYES

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2017

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Skylar Mayberry-Mayes for being named a 2017 Forty Under 40 honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, Business Record.

Since 2000, Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of young leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities and their careers. Each year, forty up-and-coming community and business leaders under 40 years of age are selected for this prestigious honor based on a combined criteria of community involvement and success in their chosen career field. The 2017 class of Forty Under 40 honorees will join an impressive roster of 680 past business leaders and growing.

Skylar is a commercial underwriter for Nationwide Insurance and is also a business graduate student at Iowa State. In addition to work and school, he is also very active in his community, having committed over 500 hours of community service for the past four years. He has worked with Big Brothers Big Sisters, the Oakridge Neighborhood, Young Professionals Connection, and the Greater Des Moines Partnership's Diversity and Inclusion Council. In 2015, he was a recipient of the Barack Obama President's National Volunteer Service Award. His aspiration is to one day develop a comprehensive college preparatory program for young African-American men.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Skylar in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize him today for utilizing his talents to better both his community and the great state of Iowa. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Skylar on receiving this esteemed designation, thanking those at Business Record for their great work, and wishing each member of the 2017 Forty Under 40 class a long and successful career.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ANN WAGNER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2017

Mrs. WAGNER. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I missed the second vote series as I was accompanying constituents Elizabeth Snyder and Justin Sparks to the White House where they met Vice President Mike Pence and discussed the tragic murder of Elizabeth's husband, St. Louis County Police Officer Blake Snyder.

Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 105, NAY on Roll Call No. 106, NAY on Roll Call No. 107, and NAY on Roll Call No. 108.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RICHARD HUDSON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2017

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, on roll call no. 105, I was unable to cast my vote in person due to an unexpected illness. Had I been present, I would have voted Yea.

TRIBUTE TO PHILIP SANDAGER

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2017

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Philip Sandager for being named a 2017 Forty Under 40 honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, Business Record.

Since 2000, Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of young leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities and their careers. Each year, forty up-and-coming community and business leaders under 40 years of age are selected for this prestigious honor based on a combined criteria of community involvement and success in their chosen career field. The 2017 class of Forty Under 40 honorees will join an impressive roster of 680 past business leaders and growing.

Philip is an investment management actuary with Principal Financial Group, a job which has taken him to São Paulo, Brazil, London, and the United Kingdom as an active leader in the department. Outside of work, Philip is very active with United Way of Central Iowa, his church's multicultural outreach campus, as a volunteer math tutor, and with the Des Moines Choral Society, where he helps to increase their online presence. Philip has also been recognized by the Des Moines Playhouse with a Gypsy Volunteer Award. In his spare time, Philip enjoys playing piano, scuba diving, learning languages, and traveling around the world.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Philip in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize him today for utilizing his talents to better both his community and the great state of Iowa. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Philip on receiving this esteemed designation, thanking those at Business Record for their great work, and wishing each member of the 2017 Forty Under 40 class a long and successful career.

TRIBUTE TO WIGGIE SHELL

HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2017

Mr. CARTER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay special tribute to Wiggie Shell, a great American and a great Texan, on the occasion of his 60th birthday. I am honored to call this business and civic leader a friend.

A fifth generation descendant of a Central Texas ranching family, William Carroll ''Wiggie'' Shell was born March 1, 1957 in Georgetown, Texas. His family has long been committed to his beloved home town. During the early 1950s to 1968, Wiggie's father owned and operated the only public swimming pool in Georgetown known as ''The Shell Pool'' which was a favorite place where young and old spent many of their summer hours.

Wiggie graduated from Georgetown High School in 1975. A true child of Texas, Wiggie was a rodeo bull rider in his youth and used that knowledge to wrangle Donna, his wife and love of his life, marrying in 1977. They have two children and three grandchildren.

Wiggie started his railroad career as a carman at Georgetown Railroad Company, worked his way up to Chief Mechanical Officer, spending 20 years with the railroad. Wiggie then started at a supplier company called Georgetown Rail Equipment Company (GREX) in the Operations department and worked his way up to President and CEO. Under his leadership, GREX doubled in size and revenue in just three years. Wiggie made GREX into an industry leader by pioneering high-technology solutions for thorny long-standing railroad problems. Under his direction, the company is now moving into international markets. His work as an innovator led to Wiggie being a respected railroad industry support spokesperson in Washington, DC and Austin, TX.

Wiggie's contributions don't stop when the work day ends. He served in the Georgetown Volunteer Fire Department for 28 years and volunteers with Sky Ball, the premier fundraising event for the Airpower Foundation, one of the oldest military support organizations in the U.S. When he's not working or volunteering, Wiggie relishes his family time, whether enjoying NASCAR races or fishing with his grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, I join Wiggie's friends, family, and colleagues in wishing him a happy 60th birthday. His has been a life of innovation and service. With Wiggie, the best is yet to come and I wish him nothing but success in all his future endeavors.

RECOGNIZING THE RETIREMENT OF LIEUTENANT GENERAL MICHAEL E. WILLIAMSON

HON. MARTHA McSALLY

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2017

Ms. McSALLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Lieutenant General Michael E. Williamson, United States Army, for his selfless service to our nation, culminating in his assignment as the Principal Military Deputy to the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology and Director of Acquisition Career Management. Lieutenant General Williamson will retire from active military duty this year after 34 years of service.

Born in Tucson, Arizona, Lieutenant General Williamson was commissioned at the University of Maine as a Second Lieutenant in the Air Defense Artillery in 1983. His assignments included company grade assignments in Germany and command in the 11th Brigade at Fort Bliss, Texas, and the 31st Air Defense Artillery Brigade at Fort Hood, Texas.

Throughout his career, Lieutenant General Williamson has grown as a skilled practitioner, respected leader, and mentor within the Army acquisition workforce. He served with distinction as Senior Military Software Analyst at NATO's military headquarters in Belgium; Chief of Information Technology, Acquisition Career Management; Product Manager for the Global Command and Control System-Army; Military Assistant to the Secretary of the Army; Project Manager for Future Combat Systems Network Systems Integration; Director of Systems Integration; Deputy Program Executive Officer, Integration; Joint Program Executive Officer for the Joint Tactical Radio Systems; and Assistant Deputy for Acquisition and Systems Management. Lieutenant General Williamson will complete his career as Principal Military Deputy to the Assistant Secretary for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology and Director of Acquisition Career Management as the most senior military officer within the Army Acquisition Corps where he tirelessly advocated for equipment modernization and ensured that our Soldiers have the best equipment available.

In addition to his extensive acquisition experience, Lieutenant General Williamson served in the Congressional Fellowship program as a Military Legislative Assistant to former Representative Silvestre Reyes of Texas' 16th District. He also served as the Deputy Commanding General for the Combined Security Transition Command—Afghanistan during OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM from 2013 to 2014.

Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to recognize the remarkable career of Lieutenant General Michael E. Williamson and congratulate him as he enters the next chapter of his life. I wish Michael, his loving wife, Tracy, and their beloved daughter, Darcy, the very best as they embark on their new journey together.

TRIBUTE TO BRIAN WALLER

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2017

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Brian Waller for being named a 2017 Forty Under 40 honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, Business Record.

Since 2000, Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of young leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities and their careers. Each year, forty up-and-coming community and business leaders under 40 years of age are selected for this prestigious honor based on a combined criteria of community involvement and success in their chosen career field. The 2017 class of Forty Under 40 honorees will join an impressive roster of 680 past business leaders and growing.

Brian is president of the Technology Association of Iowa, where his many accomplishments include rebranding the organization, creating strategic partnerships across the state and launching an Iowa Technology Summit for the fall of 2017. With a passion for his home state, he co-founded a web application to identify Iowa expats around the world called The Iowan Project. He and his wife, Dr. Callie Waller, have a daughter, Parker, a son, Asher, and a border collie named Mr. Jenkins. In his free time, you can find Brian on the golf course or making music.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Brian in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize him today for utilizing his talents to better both his community and the great state of Iowa. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Brian on receiving this esteemed designation, thanking those at Business Record for their great work, and wishing each member of the 2017 Forty Under 40 class a long and successful career.

CONDEMNING THE ATTACKS ON ARMENIANS IN SUMGAIT, KIROVABAD, AND BAKU

HON. BRAD SHERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2017

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, we have reached the 29th anniversary of a dark chapter in modern history. During the Nagorno-Karabakh War of 1988 to 1994, Armenian civilians were indiscriminately attacked in the city of Sumgait. Today, I condemn these pogroms and commemorate the victims.

On the evening of February 27, 1988, a three-day rampage against Armenian civilians living in Sumgait, Soviet Azerbaijan began. Armenian civilians were hunted down and brutally assaulted. There were cases of rape, murder, and maiming of Armenian civilians.

The Soviet Union prohibited journalists from entering the area. It was reported that over 30 people were murdered and over 200 injured. However, it is believed that more, perhaps hundreds, were murdered by roving mobs.

Sadly, the Sumgait pogrom was only the beginning.

Despite international condemnation of the pogrom in Sumgait, another anti-Armenian pogrom occurred later that year in Kirovabad, Azerbaijan, from November 21st to 27th. Due to the brutality, the Armenians of Kirovabad and the surrounding areas were forced to flee their homes. Another crime against humanity occurred from January 13th to the 19th, in 1990. Members of the Armenian community of Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan, were assaulted, tortured and killed by violent mobs.

I would like to commemorate the Armenian victims of the Sumgait, Kirovabad, and Baku massacres, to honor the memory of the murdered, and to stop future bloodshed. If we hope to stop future massacres, we must acknowledge these horrific events and ensure they do not happen again.

We must urge Azerbaijan to cease all threats and acts of coercion against the Republic of Nagorno Karabakh. We should actively monitor and condemn Azerbaijan's violations of the ceasefire in Nagomo Karabakh.

Lastly, we must reaffirm America's commitment to an enduring, peaceful and democratic resolution of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict that includes the Nagorno Karabakh Republic as a party to negotiations.

HONORING THE 200TH ANNIVERSARY OF FORT COVINGTON

HON. ELISE M. STEFANIK

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2017

Ms. STEFANIK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and recognize the 200th Anniversary of Fort Covington, New York.

Situated directly on the Canadian border, the town of Fort Covington serves as a proud reminder of the North Country's deep history and strong character. Before Fort Covington was formally signed into existence on February 28, 1817, men from the area had already fought for liberty in the American Revolution. It was not until the War of 1812 that the town gained its namesake by witnessing the death of General Leonard Covington, who had been fatally wounded in a nearby battle. The role that Fort Covington played in the Underground Railroad is also worthy of note, with the town harboring slaves along the last leg of their journey to freedom.

These stories have been brought forward by the newly-created Fort Covington Historical Society, which has made an effort to gather, store, and display the town's proud history. By encouraging historical exploration, the Fort Covington Historical Society has helped foster a community-wide celebration of the town's past, while also ensuring a bright and informed future.

Congratulations to Fort Covington as it celebrates its 200th Anniversary. I would like to wish its residents all the best as they celebrate this momentous occasion.

TRIBUTE TO KELLY WHITING

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2017

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Kelly Whiting for being named a 2017 Forty Under 40 honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, Business Record.

Since 2000, Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of young leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities and their careers. Each year, forty up-and-coming community and business leaders under 40 years of age are selected for this prestigious honor based on a combined criteria of community involvement and success in their chosen career field. The 2017 class of Forty Under 40 honorees will join an impressive roster of 680 past business leaders and growing.

Kelly is the Vice President of Business Development for The RAS Companies, Inc. She began her insurance career right out of college and has moved quickly up the ranks, holding roles in sales, claims and underwriting. She is the former Chairwoman of the Membership Committee of the Nationwide Iowa PAC, and currently is the Vice Chair of the Planning & Zoning Commission for the City of Ankeny. She is a member of MENSA, a published author and is working hard to impress her eldest son by organizing a Pokemon Club at his school. In her limited free time, she assists her husband with their real estate investment company, and is an avid reader and golfer.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Kelly in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize her today for utilizing her talents to better both her community and the great state of Iowa. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Kelly on receiving this esteemed designation, thanking those at Business Record for their great work, and wishing each member of the 2017 Forty Under 40 class a long and successful career.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RICHARD HUDSON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2017

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, on roll call No. 106 through 108, I was unable to cast my vote in person due to an unexpected illness. Had I been present, I would have voted Nay.

HONORING FRANCIS ''DANNY'' MALCOLM

HON. JUDY CHU

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2017

Ms. JUDY CHU of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Francis ''Danny'' Malcolm, an outstanding citizen who has done so much for his country and his community.

Danny Malcolm was born on August 2, 1946 in Boston, Massachusetts. He was one of six siblings who grew up and went to school in Boston until the outbreak of the Vietnam War. Not one to stand idly by during times of trouble, Danny chose to join the United States Marine Corps on November 8, 1963. He was only 17 years old at the time but he quickly proved to be a highly capable young man that was more than willing to serve his country.

Danny was assigned to the 3rd Battalion 9th Marine Regiment that was stationed at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina; a unit that was part of the first amphibious landing in Vietnam. Danny was a proud Marine but he also had the distinction of serving as part of Force Recon, an elite Special Forces unit within the Marine Corps.

As part of this unit, Danny served three tours in Vietnam and was engaged in some of the most important battles of the war including the Defense of Airfields Saigon and Chu Lai in 1965, as well as Operation Kansas, Operation Teton, Operation Madison, and Operation Glenn in 1966. Many of these missions were extremely dangerous and required Danny to engage enemy combatants behind enemy lines, obtain crucial enemy intelligence, provide support to other military units and save fellow service members who had become prisoners of war. His courage and commitment to the United States did not go unnoticed and earned him several medals, including the Sharp Shooter Medal, National Service Medal, Good Conduct Medal, Vietnam Service Medal and Vietnam Special Campaign Medal.

Once the war came to a close, Danny returned home to the United States and earned a degree in Biomedical Engineering and Design from California State University, Long Beach. After graduating from college he joined Kaiser Permanente and committed thirty-four years of his life to the organization. During his tenure at Kaiser he played an important role in opening up the Kaiser facility in Baldwin Park, CA. He was highly respected among his colleagues and considered to be a problem solver that could always be depended on to get the job done.

Despite the many demands of life, Danny always went out of his way to make family a priority. He was a loving husband of thirty-four years to Carol Facciponti-Malcolm, a dedicated father of seven children, a caring grandfather of thirteen and an admiring great grandfather of three. Over the years, Danny became an important part of the community and was seen by friends and family as a wonderful and trustworthy human being who loved his husky dogs, cherished the outdoors and enjoyed to ride his motorcycles.

Above all, Danny was a Marine and as with most service members who fought in Vietnam, the war left a huge impact on him. After having served during one of the most tumultuous times in American history, Danny chose to dedicate his life to helping the men and women he had fought alongside with. He would often leave home days at a time without saying a word in order to embark on a mission in search of Veterans who had become homeless and were suffering from difficult times. He was considered by many to be a defender of the underdog, and Danny lived up to that title by providing struggling Veterans with food and blankets, paying for a few nights shelter at nearby hotels and referring them to local services for much needed assistance.

Whether he was supporting a friend in need or providing a helping hand to a troubled Veteran, Danny spent all of his life helping people. He was a man of honor and loyalty who always sought to do the right thing. Along with his friends and family whose lives have been impacted through his love and care, it is my honor to commemorate the life of Francis ''Danny'' Malcolm, a father, husband, and a remarkable United States Force Recon Marine.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. KEITH ELLISON

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2017

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, due to other commitments, I missed the following roll call votes. Had I been present, I would have voted as follows: Roll call no. 100, I would have voted yes; Roll call no. 101, I would have voted no; and Roll call no. 102, I would have voted yes.

HONORING 50 YEARS OF EDUCATION BY HERKIMER COMMUNITY COLLEGE

HON. ELISE M. STEFANIK

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2017

Ms. STEFANIK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and recognize the 50th Anniversary of Herkimer Community College in Herkimer, New York.

The college opened its doors in 1967 for over 200 enrolled students, becoming the 29th community college in New York State. Since then, Herkimer Community College has provided over 20,000 alumni with an opportunity to succeed, while also offering immense economic and social benefits to the community it has called home for half a century.

By incentivizing academic, athletic and extra-curricular achievement, Herkimer Community College has helped its students to pursue their goals in exciting and varied careers. The school's success is a testament to its hardworking staff and to the importance of an accessible education.

Congratulations to Herkimer Community College as it celebrates its 50th Anniversary. I want to thank its staff for their vital work and wish them continued success in the future.

TRIBUTE TO CHINA WONG

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2017

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate China Wong for being named a 2017 Forty Under 40 honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, Business Record.

Since 2000, Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of young leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities and their careers. Each year, forty up-and-coming community and business leaders under 40 years of age are selected for this prestigious honor based on a combined criteria of community involvement and success in their chosen career field. The 2017 class of Forty Under 40 honorees will join an impressive roster of 680 past business leaders and growing.

After graduating from Iowa State University, China followed her entrepreneurial passions and opened Salon Spa W in Des Moines in 2005. Since then, the company has grown from three to 32 full time employees, and has been recognized as one of the Top 100 Salons in the U.S. by Elle Magazine, a Top 200 Salon in the U.S. by Salon Today Magazine for seven consecutive years, and was nominated for the prestigious North American Hairstyling Awards in 2014 and 2016. Outside of work, her endeavors focus on environmentalism, entrepreneurship for women and minorities, and helping the homeless.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like China in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize her today for utilizing her talents to better both her community and the great state of Iowa. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating China on receiving this esteemed designation, thanking those at Business Record for their great work, and wishing each member of the 2017 Forty Under 40 class a long and successful career.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE LIFE OF THE HONORABLE MICHELE McQUIGG

HON. BARBARA COMSTOCK

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2017

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the life of my constituent and friend, the Honorable Michele McQuigg, who passed away on February 15, 2017 at the age of 69. Throughout her life, Ms. McQuigg was a respected leader in the community and served as a dedicated public servant for over thirty years. She was not just a great representative for the Commonwealth but also a genuine person who brought honor and integrity to everything she did. Her deep passion for service to Prince William County and Manassas along with her exemplary demeanor and attitude will certainly be missed.

Ms. McQuigg began her career in Virginia politics in 1983 when she ran for Prince William Clerk of the Circuit Court. In 1992 she was elected as the Occoquan District Representative on the Prince William County Board of Supervisors, where she served until 1998. During those years, she garnered an even greater interest in serving Prince William, and she decided to run for the Virginia House of Delegates in the 51st District. After her successful election, she went on to serve in Virginia state house for 9 years where she worked tirelessly to strengthen small businesses, enhance community life, and increase public safety.

From 2008 until her recent passing, Ms. McQuigg served as the Prince William County Clerk of the Court. Among her more impressive actions taken in this role was a project that focused on making court documents and case pleadings available online, for which she scanned 1.3 million pages of legal proceedings. Through a paid subscription service lawyers can now access a vast number of documents online, saving them both time and money. It is projects like this that truly distinguish Ms. McQuigg from other public servants and portray how dedicated, intelligent, and forward-thinking she was.

In addition to her illustrious career as a public servant, Ms. McQuigg worked with various groups and organizations in different capacities, including the Virginia Railway Express (VRE) Operations Board, Lake Ridge-Occoquan-Coles Civic Association, Prince William Republican Committee, Board of Visitors for George Mason University, Occoquan Landing Community Association Board of Directors, READ Community Literacy Council (Co-Founder), and the Prince William Association of REALTORs.

Ms. McQuigg was someone who we all aspire to exemplify. She will be remembered for her truly kind heart, her dedication to our great Commonwealth, and for her friendship to many. She is survived by her husband Clancy McQuigg; her sister Suzanne Berge; her daughters Heather Lukes and Katie Schneider; and her five grandchildren Robert Schneider, Colleen Schneider, Emily Schneider, Shelby Lukes and Luke Schneider.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you to join me and countless others as we recognize the many contributions of the Honorable Michele McQuigg. The impact she has had on the Commonwealth of Virginia and to our country will never be forgotten, and I wish her family the best.

INTRODUCTION OF THE WASHINGTON, D.C. ADMISSION ACT

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2017

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Washington, D.C. Admission Act with 115 original cosponsors, a record number. This is the most important bill I introduce each Congress, and it is especially meaningful this time in light of the historic results of the District of Columbia's statehood referendum last November. District voters overwhelmingly voted in favor of the referendum, which advises the D.C. Council to petition Congress for statehood. Residents are more energized than ever before to continue this momentum for statehood, equality, and self-determination. District residents have always been citizens of the United States but remain the only federal income taxpaying Americans who do not have full and equal citizenship rights. The denial of local control of local matters and of equal representation in the Congress of the United States can be remedied only by statehood.

Therefore, I am introducing the Washington, D.C. Admission Act to create a state from essentially the eight home-town wards of the District of Columbia. This 51st state, of course, would have no jurisdiction over the federal territory or enclave that now consists of the Washington that Members of Congress and visitors associate with the capital of our country. The U.S. Capitol Complex, the principal federal monuments, federal buildings and grounds, the National Mall, the White House, and other federal property here would remain under federal jurisdiction. Our bill provides that the State of Washington, D.C. would be equal to the other fifty states in all respects, as is always required, and that the residents of Washington, D.C. would have all the rights of citizenship as taxpaying American citizens, including two senators and, initially, one House member. The District of Columbia recognizes that it can enter the Union only on an equal basis and is prepared to do so.

A substantially similar version of the Washington DC. Admission Act was the first bill I introduced after I was first sworn in as a Member of Congress in the 102nd Congress in 1991. Our first try for statehood received significant support in the House. In 1993, we got the first and only vote on statehood for the District, with nearly 60 percent of Democrats and one Republican voting for the bill. The Senate held a hearing on various approaches to representation, but the committee of jurisdiction did not proceed further. In the 113th Congress, our statehood bill got unprecedented momentum with the Senate's first-ever

hearing on statehood, which was the first congressional hearing held on statehood in more than 20 years. The House held its hearing on statehood in 1993, and obtained a record number of cosponsors in the House and Senate, including then-Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, as well as the other top three Democratic leaders in the Senate. In addition, President Obama endorsed D.C. statehood in a public forum before the statehood hearing was held.

Statehood is the only alternative for the citizens of the District of Columbia. To be content with less than statehood is to concede the equality of citizenship that is the birthright of our residents as citizens of the United States. That is a concession no American citizen has ever made, and one D.C. residents will not make as they approach the 216th year in their fight for equal treatment in their country. This bill reaffirms our determination to obtain each and every right enjoyed by citizens of the United States, by becoming the 51st State in the Union.

INTRODUCTION OF THE STATE, TRIBAL, AND LOCAL SPECIES TRANSPARENCY AND RECOVERY ACT

HON. DAN NEWHOUSE

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2017

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce legislation to rightly include state and local entities in federal decision-making and determinations that could potentially have profound impacts on states, municipalities, and local stakeholders. Federal agencies like the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) are currently not required to share the underlying data used in listing decisions made under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA) with the states or local entities that would be impacted by such listing decisions. The State, Tribal, and Local Species Transparency and Recovery Act will amend the ESA to simply require that federal agencies disclose all data used to promulgate a potential or final listing determination to the states affected by federal regulatory actions. Local entities deserve to have input on matters with potentially significant impacts on their communities. This bill is a simple, straightforward step to ensuring that input is offered and given due consideration.

The legislation gives local stakeholders the opportunity to verify, dispute, or complement the information federal agencies use in an ESA listings. Far too often, states' data and species recovery plans are effectively ignored by federal agencies, even after earnest and costly efforts have been made to develop comprehensive and effective plans at the state and local levels. Regardless of these efforts, there is currently no guarantee that federal agencies will consider these plans nor the often superior data developed by local entities. By providing states, tribes, and localities the data used to promulgate these proposed listings, an opportunity arises for local stakeholders to get involved, and have their voices heard.

Federal agencies too often overlook local conservation plans developed to ensure the protection of native species. These local efforts should not be disregarded. Local stakeholders deserve to have input in these federal decisions, and also deserve to know whether their hard work is taken into consideration long before the end result of a federal listing decision is made public.

By involving local entities and the firsthand information developed on the ground by the groups, stakeholders, and communities who know these matters best, federal decisions will be more transparent, accountable, and comprehensive. I encourage my colleagues to join me in supporting the State, Tribal, and Local Species Transparency and Recovery Act to support greater involvement and assurances for local entities in federal agency decision-making.

TRIBUTE TO CHASE YOUNG

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2017

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Chase Young for being named a 2017 Forty Under 40 honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, Business Record.

Since 2000, Business Record has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of young leaders in the Greater Des Moines Area that are making an impact in their communities and their careers. Each year, forty up-and-corning community and business leaders under 40 years of age are selected for this prestigious honor based on a combined criteria of community involvement and success in their chosen career field. The 2017 class of Forty Under 40 honorees will join an impressive roster of 680 past business leaders and growing.

Chase is the director of the Education Leadership Initiative at the United Way of Central Iowa. In this role, Chase interacts with the over 800 members who donate $1,000 or more every year to support middle school students to succeed in the goal of graduating. He also helps facilitate the investment, special events, and volunteer and campaign committees. Chase also coached football at Des Moines North High School, helping to organize parents and the Johnston Rotary Club to serve a pasta dinner the day before every game. Chase is married with two children, and enjoys hunting, fishing, hiking, and snow skiing.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Chase in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize him today for utilizing his talents to better both his community and the great state of Iowa. I ask that my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives join me in congratulating Chase on receiving this esteemed designation, thanking those at Business Record for their great work, and wishing each member of the 2017 Forty Under 40 class a long and successful career.

IN RECOGNITION OF KAREN RUSSELL

HON. BARBARA COMSTOCK

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2017

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize and thank an extraordinary leader, Karen Russell, for the incredible impact she has had on individuals, families and communities in the 10th Congressional District of Virginia.

Every Citizen Has Opportunities, Inc., or ECHO, for short, is dedicated to empower individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities to achieve their optimal level of personal, social and economic success. ECHO accomplishes this by providing comprehensive vocational assessments, supported employment, extended employment services, medically fragile day support and training in work skills and socialization.

In 1975, ECHO opened its doors offering services to 8 adults and 41 years later, the non-profit's accomplishments are extraordinary. It has served more than 550 individuals and currently has contractual arrangements with 14 business partners at 17 worksites. ECHO also has 30 community partners and 15 community volunteers.

One person whose extraordinary leadership was essential to ECHO's success was Marketing Manager, Karen Russell, who retired on December 1st, 2016, after nearly 40 years in that critically important role. A native of Lovettsville, in Loudoun County, Karen started as ECHO's Secretary, Bookkeeper and Transportation Manager in 1977.

Karen Russell's marketing success has been derived from her belief in the dignity and worth of every individual and her passionate appeal to prospective employers, on behalf of ECHO participants. Karen has taken great pride in the accomplishments of this skilled and reliable workforce of 140 persons with disabilities, as they fulfill their responsibilities to commercial and government customers every day. Her tireless efforts advocating for ECHO participants has resulted in a profound change in public perceptions. Society has come to realize that people with intellectual and developmental disabilities are actively contributing members of the community who, when they are given a chance to work, have a profound impact on the effectiveness and morale of individual businesses and government agencies.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and our colleagues join me in recognizing and thanking Karen Russell, the Marketing Manager at ECHO, for her tireless and passionate advocacy on behalf of those with disabilities and her exemplary leadership of an organization that has been highly successful in empowering them to overcome barriers to employment and in achieving their optimal levels of personal, social and economic success.

INTRODUCTION OF THE 21ST CENTURY ENDANGERED SPECIES TRANSPARENCY ACT

HON. DAN NEWHOUSE

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 1, 2017

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce legislation to bring more transparency in federal decision-making to the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA). Under existing law, federal agencies are not required to make publicly available the information and other data acquired from studies for proposed ESA listing determinations. These agencies are not required to submit a reference list of the studies used in the proposed regulation listing that is published in the Federal Register, nor are they required to provide complete citations to studies for any proposed ESA listings. The 21st Century Endangered Species Transparency Act simply requires the data collected and utilized by federal agencies for ESA listing decisions to be made publicly available on the Internet. This is a straightforward, transparent update that will bring this outdated law into the 2lst Century.

The ESA became law long before our modern day technological advances, which have provided instant access to information and data online. Providing the factual data behind listing decisions will further the cause of open, transparent, and accountable government. Independent analysis and verification of underlying data used for these decisions will only strengthen the fundamental purpose of the ESA, to keep our native plants and animals from the danger of extinction, while ensuring listing decisions are based on sound science. By making this simple change to the ESA, we can ensure federal agencies are relying solely upon the best available scientific and commercial data, and not on unpublished studies or opinions.

This legislation also includes important protections for matters of privacy. The bill requires the scientific and commercial data used for the basis of proposed listings to be made publicly available, so long as it protects state data privacy laws and importantly, the rights to privacy for individuals and property owners.

With today's advanced access to instant information at the tip of your fingers, all citizens have the right to the information federal agencies use to propose rules and regulations. This bill will further advance transparency in agency rulemakings and listing determinations, and is a simple, straightforward update to the existing law. I ask my colleagues to join me in supporting the 21st Century Endangered Species Transparency Act.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 998, SEARCHING FOR AND CUTTING REGULATIONS THAT ARE UNNECESSARILY BURDENSOME ACT, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.J. RES. 83, DISAPPROVING THE RULE SUBMITTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR RELATING TO ''CLARIFICATION OF EMPLOYER'S CONTINUING OBLIGATION TO MAKE AND MAINTAIN AN ACCURATE RECORD OF EACH RECORDABLE INJURY AND ILLNESS''

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 28, 2017

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to the rule for H.R. 998, the ''Searching for and Cutting Regulations that are Unnecessarily Burdensome Act of 2017,'' or ''SCRUB Act,'' and the underlying bill.

I oppose the rule and the underlying bill because it hampers the ability of federal agencies to act in times of imminent need to protect citizens.

The SCRUB Act seeks to establish a Retrospective Regulatory Review Commission to identify and recommend to Congress existing Federal regulations that can be repealed to reduce unnecessary regulatory costs to the U.S. economy.

As such, this bill purports to reduce bureaucracy by establishing a new ''regulatory review'' commission charged with identifying duplicative, redundant, or so-called ''obsolete'' regulations to repeal.

Specifically, H.R. 1155 would establish a commission with unlimited subpoena power consisting of unelected, appointed members to review existing agency rules and make recommendations to Congress for an up or down vote on rules to be eliminated.

The scope of this review would be virtually unlimited leaving no rule or regulation safe, and Congress would be prohibited from debating the individual repeal recommendations but would instead be forced to consider the commission's rule recommendations in a single package.

Under the legislation as currently drafted, agencies would be required to follow a ''cut-go'' process—prohibiting a new rule from being issued until an existing rule of equal or greater ''cost'' according to the commission is repealed—thereby undermining the ability of agencies to quickly respond to imminent threats to public health and safety.

Mr. Speaker, the SCRUB Act—and the creation of this $30 million regulatory commission—is problematic because it would operate with little meaningful oversight, transparency, or public accountability to ensure that its recommendations do not subvert the public interest and safety.

For instance, the SCRUB Act would prohibit any regulatory agency from issuing any new rule or informal statement, including non-legislative and procedural rules, even in the case of an emergency or imminent harm to public health, until the agency first offsets the costs of the new rule or guidance by eliminating an existing rule identified by the Commission.

This regulatory ''cut-go'' process would force agencies to prioritize between existing protections and responding to new threats to our health and safety.

Such a sweeping requirement would endanger the lives of Americans by creating unnecessary delays in the Federal rulemaking process and creating additional burdens and implementation problems that will only divert critical agency resources and diminish agencies' ability to protect and inform the public in times of imminent danger and need.

For instance, if an agency needed to respond to an imminent hazard to the public or environment, it would have to either rescind an existing rule that is identified by the Commission's arbitrary and cost-centric process or choose not to act.

That is why I offered an amendment that would have exempted from the SCRUB Act any rule relating to the prevention of cyber-attacks intended to interfere with elections for public office.

Regrettably, the Rules Committee did not make this salutary amendment in order, which is another reason I cannot support the legislation.

The Jackson Lee Amendment would protect American citizens by ensuring that our federal agencies are not unnecessarily burdened with regulatory mandates that would jeopardize the ability of federal agencies to ensure the integrity of our electoral processes, prevent cyber terrorism, and enhance the security and integrity of cybernetworks and systems.

Now is not the time to undermine or impede the ability of DHS, DOJ, and other federal agencies to combat growing threats and active acts of cyber terrorism.

For these reasons, I strongly oppose the rule for H.R. 998, and urge all Members to join me in voting against this irresponsible and unwise legislation.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, March 2, 2017 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

MARCH 7

10 a.m.

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Rod J. Rosenstein, of Maryland, to be Deputy Attorney General,

and Rachel L. Brand, of Iowa, to be Associate Attorney General, both of the Department of Justice.

SD–226

2:15 p.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs

To hold hearings to examine a broader understanding of Russia's policies and intentions toward specific countries in Europe.

SD–192

MARCH 8

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the nomination of Elaine C. Duke, of Virginia, to be Deputy Secretary of Homeland Security.

SD–342

10 a.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies

To hold hearings to examine investing in America, focusing on funding our nation's transportation infrastructure needs.

SD–192

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

To hold an oversight hearing to examine the Federal Communications Commission.

SH–216

Committee on Environment and Public Works

To hold hearings to examine an original bill entitled, ''Nuclear Energy Innovation and Modernization Act''.

SD–406

10:30 a.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies

To hold hearings to examine saving lives through medical research.

SD–138

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Armed Services

Subcommittee on Strategic Forces

To hold hearings to examine the global nuclear weapons environment.

SR–222

Committee on Indian Affairs

To hold an oversight hearing to examine Indian affairs priorities for the Trump Administration.

SD–628

MARCH 9

10 a.m.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs

To hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of multiple veterans service organizations.

SD–G50

MARCH 22

10 a.m.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs

To hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of multiple veterans service organizations.

SD–G50

Daily Digest

HIGHLIGHTS

See Résumé of Congressional Activity.

Senate confirmed the nomination of Ryan Zinke, of Montana, to be Secretary of the Interior.

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S1509–S1544

Measures Introduced: Eleven bills and four resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 478–488, and S. Res. 74–77. **Page S1540**

Measures Passed:

Nebraska 150th Anniversary: Senate agreed to S. Res. 74, congratulating the State of Nebraska on the 150th anniversary of the admission of that State into the United States. **Pages S1521–23**

Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week: Senate agreed to S. Res. 77, supporting the goals and ideals of Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week. **Page S1543**

Appointments:

Senate Delegation to the British-American Interparliamentary Group Conference: The Chair, on behalf of the President pro tempore, and upon the recommendation of the Democratic Leader, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2761, appointed the following Senator as Vice Chairman of the Senate Delegation to the British-American Interparliamentary Group Conference during the 115th Congress: Senator Leahy. **Page S1543**

Carson Nomination—Agreement: Senate resumed consideration of the nomination of Benjamin S. Carson, Sr., of Florida, to be Secretary of Housing and Urban Development. **Page S1513**

During consideration of this nomination today, Senate also took the following action:

By 62 yeas to 37 nays (Vote No. 76), Senate agreed to the motion to close further debate on the nomination. **Page S1513**

A unanimous-consent-time agreement was reached providing for further consideration of the nomination at approximately 9:30 a.m., on Thursday, March 2, 2017; that following leader remarks, there be 20 minutes of debate, equally divided, prior to the vote on confirmation of the nomination, followed by up to 10 minutes of debate, equally divided, prior to the vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the nomination of James Richard Perry, of Texas, to be Secretary of Energy, and if cloture is invoked on the nomination of James Richard Perry, time be counted as if invoked at 7 a.m., on Thursday, March 2, 2017. **Pages S1543–44**

Nomination Confirmed: Senate confirmed the following nomination:

By 68 yeas to 31 nays (Vote No. EX. 75), Ryan Zinke, of Montana, to be Secretary of the Interior. **Pages S1511–13, S1544**

Nominations Received: Senate received the following nominations:

Danny C. Reeves, of Kentucky, to be a Member of the United States Sentencing Commission for a term expiring October 31, 2019.

Charles R. Breyer, of California, to be a Member of the United States Sentencing Commission for a term expiring October 31, 2021. **Page S1544**

Messages from the House: **Page S1539**

Executive Communications: **Pages S1539–40**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages S1540–41**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Pages S1541–43**

Additional Statements: **Pages S1538–39**

Authorities for Committees to Meet: **Page S1543**

Record Votes: Two record votes were taken today. (Total—76) **Page S1513**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 4:34 p.m., until 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, March 2, 2017. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Majority Leader in today's Record on page S1544.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

GLOBAL COUNTERTERRORISM

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities received a closed briefing on global counterterrorism from Christopher P. Maier, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Special Operations and Combating Terrorism, and Major General Albert M. Elton II, USAF, Deputy Director for Special Operations and Counterterrorism, J–37, Joint Staff, both of the Department of Defense.

INFRASTRUCTURE ACCESS FOR COMMUNITIES

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: Committee concluded a hearing to examine improving access to infrastructure for communities across the country, after receiving testimony from South Dakota Governor Dennis Daugaard, Pierre; Carlos M. Braceras, Utah Department of Transportation, Salt Lake City, on behalf of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials; Mayor Philip Levine, Miami Beach, Florida; and Shirley Bloomfield, NTCA–The Rural Broadband Association, Arlington, Virginia.

FLOOD CONTROL INFRASTRUCTURE

Committee on Environment and Public Works: Committee concluded a hearing to examine flood control infrastructure, focusing on safety questions raised by current events, after receiving testimony from Lieutenant General Todd T. Semonite, Commanding General and Chief of Engineers, Army Corps of Engineers, Department of Defense; Terrence D. Wolf, Washakie County Board of County Commissioners, Worland, Wyoming; Mayor Ron Corbett, Cedar Rapids, Iowa; John Laird, California Natural Resources Agency Secretary, Sacramento; and Larry A. Larson, Association of State Floodplain Managers, Madison, Wisconsin.

NOMINATION

Committee on Finance: Committee began consideration of the nomination of Seema Verma, of Indiana, to be Administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, but did not complete action thereon, and recessed subject to the call of the chair.

BORDER INSECURITY AND IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the effects of border insecurity and immigration enforcement on American communities, after receiving testimony from Eric J. Severson, Waukesha County Sheriff, Waukesha, Wisconsin; Ryan Rectenwald, Grant County Sheriff's Office, Ephrata, Washington; and Julie Nordman, Wentzville, Missouri.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on the Judiciary: Committee adopted its rules of procedure for the 115th Congress.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 34 public bills, H.R. 1265–1298; and 7 resolutions, H.J. Res. 84–85; H. Con. Res. 32; and H. Res. 160–163 were introduced. **Pages H1461–65**

Additional Cosponsors: **Page H1465**

Reports Filed: There were no reports filed today.

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Rothfus to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. **Page H1395**

Recess: The House recessed at 10:48 a.m. and reconvened at 12 noon. **Page H1400**

Member Resignation: Read a letter from Representative Zinke, wherein he resigned as the Representative from Montana, effective immediately. **Page H1400**

Whole Number of the House: The Chair announced to the House that, in light of the resignation of the gentleman from Montana, Mr. Zinke, the whole number of the House is 430. **Pages H1400–01**

Searching for and Cutting Regulations that are Unnecessarily Burdensome Act: The House passed H.R. 998, to provide for the establishment of a process for the review of rules and sets of rules, by a recorded vote of 240 ayes to 185 noes, Roll No. 114. Consideration began yesterday, February 28th. **Pages H1408, H1419**

Rejected the Raskin motion to recommit the bill to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with an amendment, by a recorded vote of 190 ayes to 235 noes, Roll No. 113. **Pages H1418–19**

Rejected:

Bonamici amendment (No. 9 printed in H. Rept. 115–20) that sought to exempt any rule or set of rules relating to Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 from the provisions of this Act; **Pages H1410–11**

Bonamici amendment (No. 8 printed in H. Rept. 115–20) that sought to exempt any rule or set of rules prescribed by the Secretary of Education and relating to consumer protections for student loan borrowers from the provisions of this Act (by a recorded vote of 191 ayes to 235 noes, Roll No. 109); **Pages H1408–10, H1414–15**

Raskin amendment (No. 10 printed in H. Rept. 115–20) that sought to exempt rules relating to the enforcement of the Clean Air Act from the provisions of H.R. 998 (by a recorded vote of 189 ayes to 231 noes, Roll No. 110); **Pages H1411–12, H1415**

Moore amendment (No. 11 printed in H. Rept. 115–20) that sought to exempt rules affecting or impacting the special government to government relationship between the federal government and tribal communities or affecting tribal sovereignty or self-determination (by a recorded vote of 197 ayes to 229 noes, Roll No. 111); and **Pages H1412–13, H1415–16**

Cummings amendment (No. 12 printed in H. Rept. 115–20) that sought to exempt any rule relating to protections for whistleblowers or penalties for retaliation against whistleblowers (by a recorded vote of 194 ayes to 231 noes, Roll No. 112). **Pages H1413–14, H1416–17**

H. Res. 150, the rule providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 998) and the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 83) was agreed to yesterday, February 28th.

Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs Insight, Reform, and Accountability Act: The House passed H.R. 1009, to amend title 44, United States Code, to require the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs to review regulations, by a yea-and-nay vote of 241 yeas to 184 nays, Roll No. 120. **Pages H1430–47**

Rejected Cartwright the motion to recommit the bill to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with an amendment, by a recorded vote of 193 ayes to 234 noes, Roll No. 119. **Page H1446**

Pursuant to the Rule, an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 115–4 shall be considered as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule. **Page H1435**

Agreed to:

Mitchell amendment (No. 1 printed in part B of H. Rept. 115–21) that makes technical changes to H.R. 1009 to ensure consistency in dates and terms, require OIRA to review significant guidance, and prohibit the authorization of additional funds; **Pages H1438–39**

Buck amendment (No. 2 printed in part B of H. Rept. 115–21) that ensures that federal agencies engage their partners in state, local, and tribal government throughout the regulatory process; **Pages H1439–40**

Meadows amendment (No. 4 printed in part B of H. Rept. 115–21) that requires OIRA to keep a log of the ''consultation''—which is any communication that occurs about a specific regulation before the regulation is submitted for review—for each regulation and to publish a list of all the consultations when the regulation is published in the Federal Register; **Pages H1441–42**

Chaffetz amendment (No. 5 printed in part B of H. Rept. 115–21) that requires OIRA to maintain records on each significant regulatory action reviewed such that it is easily accessible to provide to Congress upon request; and **Page H1442**

Young (IA) amendment (No. 3 printed in part B of H. Rept. 115–21) that requires each agency to describe steps taken to determine a new rule or regulation is not duplicative or conflicting with any existing or planned regulatory action and to require agencies to maintain a list of active regulatory actions on website (by a recorded vote of 265 ayes to 158 noes, Roll No. 117). **Pages H1440–41, H1443–44**

Rejected:

Connolly amendment (No. 6 printed in part B of H. Rept. 115–21) that sought to exempt independent agencies from the legislation (by a recorded vote of 188 ayes to 234 noes, Roll No. 118). **Pages H1442–43, H1444–45**

H. Res. 156, the rule providing for consideration of the bills (H.R. 1004) and (H.R. 1009) was agreed to by a recorded vote of 234 ayes to 180 noes, Roll No. 116, after the previous question was ordered by a yea-and-nay vote of 233 yeas to 189 nays, Roll No. 115. **Pages H1403–04, H1419–21**

Disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of Labor relating to ''Clarification of Employer's Continuing Obligation to Make and Maintain an Accurate Record of Each Recordable Injury and Illness'': The House passed H.J. Res. 83, disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of Labor relating to ''Clarification of Employer's Continuing Obligation to Make and Maintain an Accurate Record of Each Recordable Injury

and Illness'', by a recorded vote of 231 ayes to 191 noes, Roll No. 121. **Pages H1421–30**

H. Res. 150, the rule providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 998) and the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 83) was agreed to yesterday, February 28th.

Meeting Hour: Agreed by unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 9 a.m. tomorrow, March 2. **Page H1447**

Congressional-Executive Commission on the People's Republic of China—Appointment: The Chair announced the Speaker's appointment of the following Members on the part of the House to the Congressional-Executive Commission on the People's Republic of China: Representatives Walz and Kaptur. **Page H1448**

Canada-United States Interparliamentary Group—Appointment: The Chair announced the Speaker's appointment of the following Members on the part of the House to the Canada-United States Interparliamentary Group: Representatives Higgins, Slaughter, Meeks, Larsen (WA), and DeFazio. **Page H1448**

Advisory Committee on the Records of Congress—Appointment: Read a letter from Representative Pelosi, Minority Leader, in which she appointed the following individual on the part of the House to the Advisory Committee on the Records of Congress: Mr. John A. Lawrence of Washington, DC. **Page H1448**

Quorum Calls—Votes: Two yea-and-nay votes and eleven recorded votes developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H1414–15, H1415, H1415–16, H1416–17, H1418–19, H1419, H1419–20, H1420–21, H1443–44, H1444–45, H1446, H1446–47, H1447. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 8:37 p.m.

Committee Meetings

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURE

Committee on Agriculture: Full Committee held a markup on the budget views and estimates letter of the Committee on Agriculture for the agencies and programs under the jurisdiction of the Committee for fiscal year 2018. The committee adopted its views and estimates letter for the agencies and programs under the jurisdiction of the committee for fiscal year 2018.

MEMBERS' DAY

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Homeland Security held a hearing entitled ''Members' Day''. Testimony was heard from Representatives Barr, Dunn, Gosar, Jackson Lee, Polis, and Schneider.

MEMBERS' DAY

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education held a hearing entitled ''Members' Day''. Testimony was heard from Representatives Delaney, Faso, Fitzpatrick, Hanabusa, Jackson Lee, Jenkins of Kansas, Kelly of Pennsylvania, Kelly of Illinois, Kuster of New Hampshire, Langevin, Long, MacArthur, Murphy of Pennsylvania, Panetta, Polis, Price of North Carolina, and Thompson of Pennsylvania.

CYBER WARFARE IN THE 21ST CENTURY: THREATS, CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Committee on Armed Services: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Cyber Warfare in the 21st Century: Threats, Challenges and Opportunities''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

U.S. GROUND FORCE CAPABILITY AND MODERNIZATION CHALLENGES IN EASTERN EUROPE

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Tactical Air and Land Forces held a hearing entitled ''U.S. Ground Force Capability and Modernization Challenges in Eastern Europe''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS TO IMPROVE HEALTH CARE COVERAGE AND PROVIDE LOWER COSTS FOR FAMILIES

Committee on Education and the Workforce: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Legislative Proposals to Improve Health Care Coverage and Provide Lower Costs for Families''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

LEGISLATIVE MEASURE

Committee on the Judiciary: Full Committee held a hearing on Section 702 of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act. Testimony was heard from Brad Brooker, Acting General Counsel, Office of the Director of National Intelligence; Paul Morris, Deputy General Counsel for Operations, National Security Agency; Stephen Vanech, Deputy Chief, Office of Counterterrorism, National Security Agency; Stuart Evans, Deputy Assistant Attorney General, National Security Division, Department of Justice; and Grant Mendenhall, Acting Assistant Director, Counterterrorism Division, Federal Bureau of Investigation; and public witnesses. A portion of this hearing was closed.

MODERNIZING WESTERN WATER AND POWER INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Committee on Natural Resources: Subcommittee on Water, Power and Oceans held a hearing entitled ''Modernizing Western Water and Power Infrastructure in the 21st Century''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

EXAMINING ENVIRONMENTAL BARRIERS TO INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Subcommittee on the Interior, Energy and Environment; and Subcommittee on Intergovernmental Affairs, held a joint hearing entitled ''Examining Environmental Barriers to Infrastructure Development''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

VA: PATH TO REFORM

Committee on Oversight And Government Reform: Subcommittee on National Security held a hearing entitled ''VA: Path to Reform''. Testimony was heard from the following Department of Veterans Affairs officials: Pamela Mitchell, Acting Assistant Secretary, Office of Human Resources and Administration; Nick Dahl, Deputy Assistant Inspector General for Audits and Evaluations, Office of Inspector General; and Irene Barnett, Director of the Bedford Office for Audits and Evaluations, Office of Inspector General.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURE

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology: Full Committee held a markup on H.R. 1224, the ''NIST Cybersecurity Framework, Assessment, and Auditing Act of 2017''. H.R. 1224 was ordered reported, as amended.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURE

Committee on Small Business: Full Committee held a markup on the committee's budget views and estimates for Fiscal Year 2018. The committee adopted its budget views and estimates for Fiscal Year 2018.

BUILDING A 21ST CENTURY INFRASTRUCTURE FOR AMERICA: STATE OF AMERICAN AIRPORTS

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure: Subcommittee on Aviation held a hearing entitled ''Building a 21st Century Infrastructure for America: State of American Airports''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

Joint Meetings

THE AMERICAN LEGION LEGISLATIVE PRESENTATION

Joint Hearing: Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs concluded a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of The American Legion, after receiving testimony from Charles E. Schmidt, The American Legion, Hines, Oregon.

VFW LEGISLATIVE PRESENTATION

Joint Hearing: Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs concluded a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, after receiving testimony from Brian Duffy, Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, Louisville, Kentucky.

NEW PUBLIC LAWS

(For last listing of Public Laws, see DAILY DIGEST, *p. D181)*

H.R. 255, to authorize the National Science Foundation to support entrepreneurial programs for women. Signed on February 28, 2017. (Public Law 115–6)

H.R. 321, to inspire women to enter the aerospace field, including science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, through mentorship and outreach. Signed on February 28, 2017. (Public Law 115–7)

H.J. Res. 40, providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Social Security Administration relating to Implementation of the NICS Improvement Amendments Act of 2007. Signed on February 28, 2017. (Public Law 115–8)

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR THURSDAY, MARCH 2, 2017

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on Armed Services: to hold hearings to examine cyber strategy and policy, 9:30 a.m., SH–216.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: Subcommittee on Communications, Technology, Innovation, and the Internet, to hold hearings to examine the value of spectrum to the U.S. economy, 9:30 a.m., SD–G50.

Committee on Finance: business meeting to consider the nomination of Seema Verma, of Indiana, to be Administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, Time to be announced, Room to be announced.

Committee on Foreign Relations: to hold hearings to examine Venezuela, focusing on options for U.S. policy, 10:30 a.m., SD–419.

Select Committee on Intelligence: to hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters, 2 p.m., SH–219.

House

Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee on Military Personnel, hearing entitled ''Overview of Military Review Board Agencies'', 10:30 a.m., 2118 Rayburn.

Committee on the Budget, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Members' Day'', 10 a.m., 1334 Longworth.

Committee on Energy and Commerce, Subcommittee on Health, hearing entitled ''Examining FDA's Generic Drug and Biosimilar User Fee Programs'', 10 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on the Constitution and Civil Justice, hearing entitled ''Oversight of the Judgment Fund'', 9 a.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Transparency at TSA'', 10 a.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Committee on Small Business, Subcommittee on Contracting and Workforce, hearing entitled ''Learning from History: Ideas to Strengthen and Modernize the HUBZone Program'', 10 a.m., 2360 Rayburn.

Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, Full Committee, business meeting on the committee's views and estimates, HVC–304. This meeting will be closed.

Résumé of Congressional Activity

FIRST SESSION OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIFTEENTH CONGRESS

The first table gives a comprehensive résumé of all legislative business transacted by the Senate and House. The second table accounts for all nominations submitted to the Senate by the President for Senate confirmation.

DATA ON LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITY

January 3 through February 28, 2017

	Senate	*House*	*Total*
Days in session	33	31	..
Time in session	252 hrs., 58′	151 hrs., 48′	..
Congressional Record:			
Pages of proceedings	1,507	1,394	..
Extensions of Remarks	..	251	..
Public bills enacted into law	1	7	8
Private bills enacted into law	..	..	..
Bills in conference	..	..	..
Measures passed, total	43	145	188
Senate bills	3	1	..
House bills	5	84	..
Senate joint resolutions	..	..	..
House joint resolutions	3	14	..
Senate concurrent resolutions	3	3	..
House concurrent resolutions	2	3	..
Simple resolutions	27	40	..
Measures reported, total	*24	21	45
Senate bills	3	..	..
House bills	2	7	..
Senate joint resolutions	..	..	..
House joint resolutions	..	..	..
Senate concurrent resolutions	..	..	..
House concurrent resolutions	..	..	..
Simple resolutions	19	14	..
Special reports	1	1	..
Conference reports	..	..	..
Measures pending on calendar	4	7	..
Measures introduced, total	571	1,537	2,108
Bills	467	1,264	..
Joint resolutions	25	83	..
Concurrent resolutions	6	31	..
Simple resolutions	73	159	..
Quorum calls	3	1	..
Yea-and-nay votes	74	51	..
Recorded votes	..	56	..
Bills vetoed	..	..	..
Vetoes overridden	..	..	..

*These figures include all measures reported, even if there was no accompanying report. A total of 3 written reports have been filed in the Senate, 22 reports have been filed in the House.

DISPOSITION OF EXECUTIVE NOMINATIONS

January 3 through February 28, 2017

Civilian nominations, totaling 59, disposed of as follows:

Confirmed	16
Unconfirmed	20
Withdrawn	23

Army nominations, totaling 2, disposed of as follows:

Confirmed	2

Navy nominations, totaling 1, disposed of as follows:

Confirmed	1

Summary

Total nominations carried over from the First Session	0
Total nominations received this Session	62
Total confirmed	19
Total unconfirmed	20
Total withdrawn	23
Total returned to the White House	0

Next Meeting of the SENATE

9:30 a.m., Thursday, March 2

Senate Chamber

Program for Thursday: Senate will continue consideration of the nomination of Benjamin S. Carson, Sr., of Florida, to be Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, and vote on confirmation of the nomination at approximately 10 a.m.

Following disposition of the nomination of Benjamin S. Carson, Sr., Senate will vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the nomination of James Richard Perry, of Texas, to be Secretary of Energy.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

9 a.m., Thursday, March 2

House Chamber

Program for Thursday: Consideration of H.R. 1004—Regulatory Integrity Act of 2017.

Extensions of Remarks, as inserted in this issue

HOUSE

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