United States of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 115th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 163 WASHINGTON, MONDAY, MARCH 6, 2017 No. 38

House of Representatives

The House met at 4 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HARRIS).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
March 6, 2017.

I hereby appoint the Honorable ANDY HARRIS to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

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

PRAYER

Reverend Gene Hemrick, St. Joseph's Catholic Church, Washington, D.C., offered the following prayer:

Lord God, as we approach the season of spring, please bless our Congress and country with fruitful planting resulting in a horn of plenty to nourish us and those who don't have it as well as us.

May our country and Congress continue to share its bountiful food with the starving in this world. Please grace them with the strength needed to shoulder this awesome responsibility.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The SPEAKER 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.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBER TO BOARD OF VISITORS TO THE UNITED STATES MERCHANT MARINE ACADEMY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair announces the Speaker's appointment, pursuant to 46 U.S.C. 51312(b), and the order of the House of January 3, 2017, of the following Member on the part of the House to the Board of Visitors to the United States Merchant Marine Academy:

Mr. SUOZZI, New York

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

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

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 2, 2017.

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

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on March 2, 2017, at 1:07 p.m.:

Appointment:

Senate Delegation to the British-American Interparliamentary Group Conference during the One Hundred Fifteenth Congress.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

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

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 6, 2017.

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

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on March 6, 2017, at 11:51 a.m.:

Appointment:

Senate Delegation to the British-American Interparliamentary Group Conference during the One Hundred Fifteenth Congress.

Senate National Security Working Group for the 115th Congress.

United States Caucus on International Narcotics Control.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

ADJOURNMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the House stands adjourned until noon tomorrow for morning-hour debate.

There was no objection.

Thereupon (at 4 o'clock and 3 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, March 7, 2017, at noon for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

690. A letter from the Acting Under Secretary of Defense, Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics, Department of Defense, transmitting the National Defense Stockpile Fiscal Year 2018 Annual Materials Plan pursuant to Sec. 11(b) of the Strategic and Critical Materials Stock Piling Act, 50 U.S.C. 98h-2(b); to the Committee on Armed Services.

691. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to South Sudan that was

Printed on recycled paper.

declared in Executive Order 13664 of April 3, 2014, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1641(c); Public Law 94-412, Sec. 401(c); (90 Stat. 1257) and 50 U.S.C. 1703(c); Public Law 95-223, Sec 204(c); (91 Stat. 1627); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

692. A letter from the Executive Secretary, Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting the Department's report on progress toward a negotiated solution of the Cyprus question covering the period of October 1, 2016, through November 30, 2016, pursuant to Sec. 620C(c) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, and in accordance with Sec. 1(a)(6) of Executive Order 13313; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

693. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. ACT 21-646, ''At-Risk Tenant Protection Clarifying Temporary Amendment Act of 2016'', pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

694. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. ACT 21-654, ''End Taxation Without Representation Amendment Act of 2016'', pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

695. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. ACT 21-653, ''Risk-Based Capital Amendment Act of 2016'', pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

696. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. ACT 21-652, ''Pesticide Education and Control Amendment Act of 2016'', pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

697. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. ACT 21-651, ''Accountancy Practice Amendment Act of 2016'', pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

698. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. ACT 21-650, ''UDC DREAM Amendment Act of 2016'', pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

699. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. ACT 21-649, ''Continuing Care Retirement Community Exemption Amendment Act of 2016'', pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

700. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. ACT 21-648, ''Active Duty Pay Differential Amendment Act of 2016'', pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

701. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. ACT 21-647, ''Professional Engineers Licensure and Regulation Clarification Amendment Act of 2016'', pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

702. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting D.C. ACT 21-645, ''Four-unit Rental Housing Tenant Grandfathering Amendment Act of 2016'', pursuant to Public Law 93-198, Sec. 602(c)(1); (87 Stat. 814); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

703. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; BAE Systems (Operations) Limited [Docket No.: FAA-2016-9186; Directorate Identifier 2015-NM-160-AD; Amendment 39-18799; AD 2017-04-04] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 2, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

704. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2016-6664; Directorate Identifier 2015-NM-177-AD; Amendment 39-18795; AD 2017-03-04] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 2, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

705. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2016-9305; Directorate Identifier 2016-NM-073-AD; Amendment 39-18804; AD 2017-04-09] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 2, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

706. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2016-9111; Directorate Identifier 2016-NM-132-AD; Amendment 39-18802; AD 2017-04-07] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 2, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

707. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Textron, Aviation Inc. (Type Certificate Previously Held by Cessna Aircraft Company) Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2017-0122; Directorate Identifier 2017-NM-010-AD; Amendment 39-18809; AD 2017-04-14] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 2, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

708. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Empresa Brasileira de Aeronautica S.A. (Embraer) Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2016-9049; Directorate Identifier 2016-NM-039-AD; Amendment 39-18807; AD 2017-04-12] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 2, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

709. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2016-5468; Directorate Identifier 2015-NM-021-AD; Amendment 39-18806; AD 2017-04-11] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 2, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

710. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2016-6426; Directorate Identifier 2016-NM-023-AD; Amendment 39-18791; AD 2017-02-12] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 2, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

711. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Gulfstream Aerospace Corporation Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2016-9191; Directorate Identifier 2016-NM-106-AD; Amendment 39-18796; AD 2017-04-01] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 2, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

712. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc. Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2016-9190; Directorate Identifier 2016-NM-087-AD; Amendment 39-18797; AD 2017-04-02] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 2, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

713. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2016-9066; Directorate Identifier 2014-NM-113-AD; Amendment 39-18800; AD 2017-04-05] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 2, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

714. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0797; Directorate Identifier 2013-NM-007-AD; Amendment 39-18776; AD 2017-01-09] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 2, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

715. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace, Salem, OR [Docket No.: FAA-2016-6984; Airspace Docket No.: 16-ANM-5] received March 2, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

716. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No.: 31118; Amdt. No.: 3733] received March 2, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

717. A letter from the Management and Program Analyst, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No.: 31116; Amdt. No.: 3731] received March 2, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

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 Mrs. RADEWAGEN:

H.R. 1362. A bill to name the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic in Pago Pago, American Samoa, the Faleomavaega Eni Fa'aua'a Hunkin VA Clinic; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. SARBANES (for himself, Mr. WITTMAN, Mr. CONNOLLY, Ms. PINGREE, Ms. DELBENE, and Mr. LYNCH):

H.R. 1363. A bill to amend section 5542 of title 5, United States Code, to provide that any hours worked by Federal firefighters under a qualified trade-of-time arrangement shall be excluded for purposes of determinations relating to overtime pay; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia:

H.R. 1364. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to limit the use of official time for political activity and to exclude certain official time from eligibility as creditable service under CSRS and FERS, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. CORREA (for himself and Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi):

H.R. 1365. A bill to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to require certain acquisition innovation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Ms. VELÁZQUEZ (for herself, Mr. DUFFY, Mr. SERRANO, and Mr. MACARTHUR):

H.R. 1366. 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 Financial Services.

By Mr. WENSTRUP:

H.R. 1367. A bill to improve the authority of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to hire and retain physicians and other employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. BLUMENAUER (for himself, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. BEYER, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. KEATING, Ms. LEE, Ms. SPEIER, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. PETERS, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. WELCH, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. POCAN, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. DEUTCH, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. SCHRADER, Ms. TITUS, Mr. CRIST, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. COHEN, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. QUIGLEY, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. O'HALLERAN, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Ms. JACKSON LEE, and Mr. RASKIN):

H.R. 1368. A bill to require the Secretary of Agriculture to make publicly available certain regulatory records relating to the administration of the Animal Welfare Act and the Horse Protection Act, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for the use of an alternative depreciation system for taxpayers violating rules under the Animal Welfare Act and the Horse Protection Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committees on Agriculture, and 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. COLE:

H.R. 1369. A bill to amend the Indian Health Care Improvement Act to revise and extend that Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committees on Energy and Commerce, Ways and Means, and the Budget, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. MCCAUL:

H.R. 1370. A bill to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to issue Department of Homeland Security-wide guidance and develop training programs as part of the Department of Homeland Security Blue Campaign, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. O'ROURKE:

H.R. 1371. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to disclose to non-Department of Veterans Affairs health care providers certain medical records of veterans who receive health care from such providers; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. PAYNE (for himself and Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi):

H.R. 1372. A bill to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to ensure that the needs of children are considered in homeland security planning, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security, and in addition to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. WOMACK (for himself, Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. WESTERMAN, and Mr. HILL):

H.R. 1373. A bill to prohibit the use of eminent domain in carrying out certain projects; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Ms. MOORE:

H. Res. 171. A resolution expressing support for designation of the week beginning March 5, 2017, as ''School Social Work Week''; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. CICILLINE (for himself and Mr. ROSKAM):

H. Res. 172. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the Government of the Russian Federation, its officials, security services, and any person or entity within the Russian Federation or associated with the Russian Government, should not interfere, seek to influence, or engage in coercion designed to create an outcome in foreign elections; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

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 Mrs. RADEWAGEN:

H.R. 1362.

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

Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. SARBANES:

H.R. 1363.

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

Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution under the General Welfare Clause.

By Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia:

H.R. 1364.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the Constitution states ''To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.''

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the Constitution states ''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. CORREA:

H.R. 1365.

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

(1) The U.S. Constitution including Article 1, Section 8.

By Ms. VELÁZQUEZ:

H.R. 1366.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

The Congress shall have Power . . . to regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.

By Mr. WENSTRUP:

H.R. 1367.

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

Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. BLUMENAUER:

H.R. 1368.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

By Mr. COLE:

H.R. 1369.

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

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. MCCAUL:

H.R. 1370.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 and Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

''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'.

and

''To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes;

By Mr. O'ROURKE:

H.R. 1371.

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. PAYNE:

H.R. 1372.

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

Article I Section 8 Clause 3—Congress has the ability to regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.

By Mr. WOMACK:

H.R. 1373.

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

Clause 3, Section 8, Article I of the Constitution.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

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

H.R. 24: Mr. FORTENBERRY and Mr. RUTHERFORD.

H.R. 98: Ms. TSONGAS.

H.R. 113: Mr. LANCE.

H.R. 367: Ms. TENNEY, Mr. MCCAUL, and Mrs. BLACKBURN.

H.R. 390: Mr. SCHIFF.

H.R. 392: Mr. CURBELO of Florida, Mr. SCHNEIDER, Mr. STIVERS, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, and Mr. YOHO.

H.R. 398: Ms. LOFGREN.

H.R. 421: Ms. MCSALLY.

H.R. 432: Mr. COURTNEY and Mr. HIGGINS of New York.

H.R. 448: Mr. O'HALLERAN.

H.R. 449: Mr. ALLEN and Mr. JOYCE of Ohio.

H.R. 544: Mr. RUTHERFORD.

H.R. 548: Mr. HENSARLING and Mr. FITZPATRICK.

H.R. 608: Mr. CONYERS.

H.R. 662: Mr. FORTENBERRY.

H.R. 674: Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. WITTMAN, and Mr. ROUZER.

H.R. 696: Mr. WELCH.

H.R. 721: Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. MARINO, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. YOUNG of Iowa, Mr. CULBERSON, Mr. EMMER, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, Ms. SÁNCHEZ, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. KILDEE, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. COLLINS of New York, Mr. YODER, Mr. HUIZENGA, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. SCHRADER, Mr. DEFAZIO, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. HURD, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. MOULTON, and Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.

H.R. 741: Mr. HENSARLING.

H.R. 757: Mr. KEATING, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, and Ms. LOFGREN.

H.R. 769: Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina.

H.R. 795: Mr. KINZINGER, Mr. BACON, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. O'HALLERAN, and Mr. TIPTON.

H.R. 804: Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. RICHMOND, and Mr. VEASEY.

H.R. 899: Mr. ABRAHAM.

H.R. 905: Mr. LEWIS of Minnesota.

H.R. 918: Mr. ROYCE of California.

H.R. 1017: Mr. LOWENTHAL, Miss RICE of New York, Mr. GRIJALVA, and Mr. HENSARLING.

H.R. 1101: Mr. FERGUSON.

H.R. 1103: Mrs. DINGELL and Mr. EVANS.

H.R. 1112: Mr. BISHOP of Utah.

H.R. 1121: Mr. THOMAS J. ROONEY of Florida, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. LAHOOD, Mr. JENKINS of West Virginia, and Mr. MAST.

H.R. 1143: Ms. MOORE, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. EVANS, and Mr. GRIJALVA.

H.R. 1146: Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. RASKIN, and Ms. BARRAGÁN.

H.R. 1205: Mr. YARMUTH, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, and Mr. DENT.

H.R. 1246; Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN of Puerto Rico.

H.R. 1259: Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. DAVIDSON, and Mrs. WALORSKI.

H.R. 1284: Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. DEFAZIO, and Mr. GRIJALVA.

H.R. 1299: Ms. SLAUGHTER and Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California.

H.R. 1309: Mr. FITZPATRICK.

H.R. 1310: Mr. GUTIÉRREZ and Ms. GABBARD.

H.R. 1317: Mr. COFFMAN.

H.R. 1322: Mr. KIND, Mrs. DEMINGS, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. SWALWELL of California, and Mr. AL GREEN of Texas.

H.R. 1341: Mr. BUCK, Mr. WALKER, Mr. BRAT, Mr. DEFAZIO, and Ms. SHEA-PORTER.

H.J. Res. 31: Mr. AGUILAR.

H.J. Res. 59: Mr. AMODEI.

H. Con. Res. 16: Ms. JACKSON LEE.

H. Res. 145: Ms. KELLY of Illinois.

United States of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 115th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 163 WASHINGTON, MONDAY, MARCH 6, 2017 No. 38

Senate

The Senate met at 2 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable TODD YOUNG, a Senator from the State of Indiana.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

God of grace and truth, the center of our lives, hallowed be Your Name. Lord, help us to live in a way that will bring glory to You. May people see our passion for You and desire to know You more fully.

Continue to guide our lawmakers. Protect them in their work and lead them away from those things that bring dishonor. Surround them with the shield of Your protection and presence.

O God, support us all the day long, until the shadows lengthen and the evening comes, and the busy world lies hushed and the fever of life is over and our work is done. Then in Your mercy give us a safe lodging and a holy rest and peace at last.

We pray in Your powerful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

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

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

The bill clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, March 6, 2017.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable TODD YOUNG, a Senator from the State of Indiana, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ORRIN G. HATCH,
President pro tempore.

Mr. YOUNG thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

CONGRESSIONAL REVIEW ACT RESOLUTIONS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, regulations aren't issued in a vacuum. They have real economic consequences that can harm the middle class. They can kill jobs, raise prices, depress wages, and lower opportunities. Yet the Obama administration went on a regulatory rampage at a time when we should have been looking to do just the opposite.

On its way out the door, the previous administration continued to push through more of these job-killing, partisan regulations against the advice of Congress, State and local officials, and policy experts. Fortunately, we now have the opportunity to provide relief from some of these costly, duplicative rules using the tools provided by the Congressional Review Act, or CRA.

We only have a short window of opportunity to use these CRA tools, however, which is why we have been working quickly to provide relief. The Senate has already advanced several proposals that repeal harmful regulations. Together with the new administration, we have embarked on what one national paper most recently called ''the most ambitious rollback since Reagan.''

Three CRA resolutions have already become law, and we look forward to passing even more this week. In fact, we will have an opportunity to send the President another resolution as soon as this evening.

The proposal before us would block another duplicative, unnecessary eleventh hour regulation that hurts American businesses. This one is called the ''blacklisting rule.'' Apparently, the last administration thought it would be a good idea to prevent American businesses from earning government contracts based on allegations, not facts. Unsurprisingly, Federal courts have blocked the rule because of its questionable legality. Now we have the opportunity to provide permanent relief.

Of course, we all agree that companies should be held accountable and that workers' rights should be protected. Current law already provides the tools to do just that. But the blacklisting rule isn't really about helping employers or workers. It is about empowering the powerful—like union bosses and entrenched bureaucrats—and it would actually make a system designed to protect workers even less efficient. More important for the American people, it would cost taxpayers hundreds of millions, generate millions of hours of paperwork, and, of course, threaten jobs. So, of course, it is time to move past this regulation.

I want to thank my colleague Senator JOHNSON, chairman of the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, for working with the House to advance this resolution and protect the American people. I look forward to its final passage tonight.

After we take that vote, the Senate will continue working to advance even more regulatory relief measures to help get our country back on track.

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Printed on recycled paper.

REPEALING AND REPLACING OBAMACARE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, another important area where Congress is working to provide relief is ObamaCare.

In election after election, the American people have called for an end to ObamaCare. In the last election, they made their voices clear one more time. They elected a President and a Congress dedicated to bringing relief from this partisan law, and we are determined to do right by our constituents by doing just that.

Nearly 7 years after being signed into law, I continue to hear from Kentuckians who aren't sure how they can continue to manage under ObamaCare's broken promises. Take this Kentuckian from Morehead who wrote to my office earlier this year:

> Prior to Obamacare, I had a manageable monthly healthcare premium that had enough coverage for myself with a reasonable deductible. Since Obamacare has been enforced, or should I say forced upon the American people, my premiums have increased each year significantly.

Now, under ObamaCare, this Kentuckian says keeping his same coverage for 2017 means facing a 300-percent increase in his premiums as compared to the plan he had before the broken law was implemented. ''The general cost of healthcare has skyrocketed,'' he writes, and as a result ''small business owners and [the] working middle class are suffering.''

Unfortunately, his story is like so many others all across the country. Americans were promised that costs would go down. Americans were promised that choice would go up. Americans were promised that they could keep their healthcare plan. None of that was true—not a single one of those things.

Americans need relief. They deserve a new direction. That is why we are taking action to repeal and replace ObamaCare with healthcare solutions that can actually work for the American people.

As our efforts to move beyond ObamaCare continue, Senators came together last week for another important conversation on the way forward when it comes to our Nation's healthcare policies. I also had the opportunity to visit the White House and discuss the ways in which the administration and Congress can continue working together to bring relief from ObamaCare.

The House will keep working this week, as well, to move forward with legislation—under a new President who will actually sign it—that can finally help us pursue smarter healthcare solutions in place of this failed partisan experiment. We know the task before us is daunting, but, of course, it is just as necessary.

So I thank the Speaker for his continued leadership on this issue, along with each of our colleagues who have been working literally around the clock on repeal and replace efforts. Let's keep working this week so that we can bring Americans much needed relief from ObamaCare as soon as possible.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Democratic leader is recognized.

CALLING FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF A SPECIAL PROSECUTOR

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I rise this afternoon on a few matters: first, Russia and the continuing investigation into Russian interference in our election and the ties between the Trump campaign, transition team, and Russia.

The events of this weekend, which included another troubling, baseless tweet from the President, highlight and, in fact, strengthen the argument for a special prosecutor to conduct the investigation. And the American people agree. A CNN/ORC poll this morning showed that about two-thirds of Americans think a special prosecutor should conduct the investigation—67 percent of the Independents and even 43 percent of the Republicans. The trend line suggests these numbers will continue to grow.

So my Republican colleagues should understand that what they know in their hearts is the right thing to do. Do a strong, impartial investigation and get to the bottom of this. That is where the American people want them to go. The American people disagree with President Trump and want a thorough and impartial investigation—even 43 percent of Republicans. They are right.

A special prosecutor is the best way to ensure that an investigation proceeds impartially for several reasons.

First, by Department of Justice guidelines that are set up for this purpose, a special counsel is not subject to day-to-day supervision by the Attorney General—now recused—or anyone else at the Justice Department. That means the special prosecutor would have much greater latitude in whom he can subpoena, which questions he can ask, and how to conduct the investigation. Second, the prosecutor can only be removed for good cause, such as misconduct, not to quash the investigation. So there is an insularity there. He or she is protected if they are moving forward on the investigation. Third, there is built in congressional oversight. Congress is notified whenever a special counsel is appointed, removed, or finished with the investigation. Last, the special counsel has the independence to prosecute not only the subject of an investigation but anyone who attempts to interfere.

This is the right way to go. Let me quote Attorney General Jeff Sessions on this issue. Here is what he once said: ''The appropriate response when the subject matter is public and it arises in a highly-charged political atmosphere is for the Attorney General to appoint a Special Counsel of great public stature and indisputable independence to assure the public the matter will be handled without partisanship.''

If there were ever a case that fit exactly what then-Senator, now-Attorney General Sessions called for, this is it.

This week, the Senate Judiciary Committee is going to have a hearing on the nomination of Mr. Rosenstein to serve as the Deputy Attorney General. During that hearing, Mr. Rosenstein should commit to naming a special prosecutor to look into the Trump campaign's ties to Russia. Mr. Rosenstein, by reputation, is a fair man. He is a career prosecutor. Now that the Attorney General has recused himself, Mr. Rosenstein, pending confirmation, will have the duty to appoint a special prosecutor. If he will not appoint a special prosecutor, he will need a darn good reason. It is hard for me to see one right now.

Whether Mr. Rosenstein will appoint a special prosecutor will be front and center tomorrow at the Judiciary Committee's hearing and far and away the most important question he needs to answer. As I mentioned last week, if, pending confirmation, Mr. Rosensetin delays or refuses to appoint a special prosecutor, Congress should consider reviving a narrower version of the independent counsel law.

Also, we should make sure, certain, that the investigation has not been interfered with thus far. I sent a letter today to the inspector general of the Department of Justice, Michael Horowitz, which was made public today, urging him to open an immediate investigation to determine if anyone has interfered with this investigation up to now, either attempting to influence the direction of the investigation or those conducting it.

The Attorney General should have recused himself on day one. I asked him to do it almost 3 weeks ago, on February 14. We need to know if he or anyone else has meddled in this investigation in any way. His misleading statements to the Judiciary Committee about his meetings with the Russian Ambassador only add suspicion.

Attorney General Sessions has been in charge of this investigation for 3 weeks. We need to know if he or anyone else did anything in that time to

hinder the investigation because it is absolutely critical that we protect the integrity of this investigation. That means ensuring that it is completely independent going forward and that nothing has already occurred that could compromise it. The good news is, the inspector general can take this investigation on his own and go forward with what we asked for in the letter on his own. I would urge him to do so.

TRAVEL BAN

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, the second issue I would like to discuss is the travel ban, the recently issued Executive order on immigrants and refugees. Now that we have the details, it is clear that while the administration has made some very minor changes, it has done nothing to alter the core thrust of the order, which I believe is terribly misguided and does nothing to address the core concerns of the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, which ruled the original order was potentially unconstitutional.

Moreover, we know that the administration delayed its announcement and implementation so President Trump could bask in the aftermath of his joint address. That should be all the proof Americans need to know that this Executive order has everything to do with optics and nothing to do with national security. If national security were at stake, it should not have been delayed a single day.

The truth is, there is very little new or improved about this Executive order. It is barely a fresh coat of paint on the same car that doesn't drive. It is still a travel ban. It is still a refugee ban. It still makes us less safe, not safer, according to not just me but to Republicans like Senator MCCAIN. It still attempts to turn innocent immigrants and refugees into scapegoats and still does not do the things that would actually make us safer, like going after lone wolves and closing the loopholes in the Visa Waiver Program.

The new Executive order is still mean-spirited, misguided, and, in my judgment, goes against what America is all about, being a country that accepts and cherishes immigrants, not disdains them. I fully expect the President's new Executive order will have the same uphill climb in the courts that the previous version had.

AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, finally, on the Affordable Care Act. My Republican friends have repeated the mantra for 7 years, ''Repeal and replace, repeal and replace.'' It turns out, during those 7 years, they never came up with a coherent plan to replace the Affordable Care Act. It was all slogans, no policy.

Now they are scrambling to come up with something. The problem is, every draft, every leaked detail or outline or list of principles we have seen is tied together by one common thread: It will raise costs on average Americans and cut back on their benefits. Average Americans, under the Republican plan, will pay more and get less.

No wonder they are hiding the plan somewhere in a basement room, even as they are scheduling markups on the bill for a week from now. They don't want the folks to see it until the very last minute; just rush it through. I don't blame them. It is going to be very hard for Republicans to be proud of this plan, which hurts average Americans, raising their costs and taking away benefits.

It is the absolute height of hypocrisy to be hiding this plan. My Republican colleagues complained bitterly, day after day, week after week, month after month, about not having enough time to read the Affordable Care Act when it was being debated. At the time, my friend, the distinguished majority leader, said:

> Americans want us to slow down, and Congress is putting its foot on the accelerator. Americans want to know what this bill would mean for them, and Congress won't let them read it before a vote . . . [on a] piece of legislation that will affect one of the most significant aspects of their lives. Americans [he continued] have concerns about what they're hearing, and they are being told to shut up, sit down, and take the health care we give you.

By keeping their replacement bill under lock and key, only a week before potentially voting on it, the Republicans are engaging in enormous hypocrisy—exactly what the majority leader complained about only a few years ago. Their mantra in past years was always ''read the bill.'' Now they will not even let us glance at it. Why are they hiding it? I think I know why. They are not very proud of it. They know it is not going to work.

They are being pushed blindly forward by their ideologues and their incessant campaign promises. The American people ought to know how Republicans plan to drastically reshape this Nation's health care policy. I suspect Americans will not like it much. I suspect it will raise costs and cut benefits. I suspect far fewer Americans will get coverage. I suspect their plan will put the insurance companies back in charge.

Whatever it does or doesn't do, the American people and their representatives in Congress, after 7 long years of slogans, ought to know the true face of ''replace.''

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

DISAPPROVING A RULE SUBMITTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE, THE GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION, AND THE NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.J. Res. 37, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

> A joint resolution (H.J. Res. 37) disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of Defense, the General Services Administration, and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration relating to the Federal Acquisition Regulation.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the time until 6 p.m. will be equally divided in the usual form.

The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I am pleased to be here with a number of my colleagues to oppose H.J. Res. 37. As it has just been announced, we will vote on it later today. I am glad to be joined by so many of my colleagues to fight against efforts to limit the application of the Fair Pay and Safe Workplaces Executive order.

As a member of the Armed Services Committee, I fought to ensure that harmful provisions in the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2017 seeking to limit the applicability of this Executive order to DOD were stripped from the final bill signed into law in December, and I continue to feel strongly that we must do everything possible to defend American workers. That is what this issue concerns.

In 2014, President Obama issued a critical Executive order, the Fair Pay and Safe Workplaces Executive order. Then, last summer, after thorough analysis and due diligence by the Department of Defense and several other agencies, he implemented what is known as the fair pay and safe workplaces rule. That rule requires companies doing business with the Federal Government to disclose when they violate any of 14 laws. The list of laws include some that are very familiar to all of us, like the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Family and Medical Leave Act, and the Civil Rights Act. This list includes some other laws that may be somewhat more obscure, but those laws have been around for decades. They are well known in the workplace, and they are designed to protect

veterans, women, and people with disabilities from harmful, debilitating discrimination.

There is no requirement that companies disclose trivial allegations; rather, the rule requires disclosures of violations that rise to a determination by a court or administrative body of an actual violation or serious pending administrative proceeding by an agency. Companies would know of such violations.

Most companies play by the rules; all they need to do is check a box confirming they are in compliance. For those companies with compliance issues, the contracting agency would take information about those violations into consideration in the procurement process, and the contracting agency would then try to work with the company to make sure that it comes into compliance with the law. This Executive order is not about exclusion or about blackballing; in fact, it is about including and working with companies to bring them into compliance so they obey the law, knowing what the rules are, and wanting everybody to play by the same rules—not having an unfair advantage.

This rule is not about blackballing or blacklisting companies. It is about ensuring that, if they want to do business with the Federal Government, they follow the law and provide a safe and equitable workplace, protecting American workers—veterans, women, and people with disabilities—who may be victims of harmful, debilitating discrimination.

The rule is an effort to make Federal resources go to companies that are complying with the law or that are coming into compliance with Federal law. The reason behind it is to protect American workers, but it is also about creating a level playing field for all contractors and making sure there is a relationship of trust with contractors because we need partners who can be trusted to carry out the Federal Government's important work, especially in the area of building our defense weapons.

Companies that violate the law are creating an unlevel playing field, forcing law-abiding companies into unfair competition, potentially raising their costs. They skirt the law, saving dollars, presenting low-ball offers, based on noncompliance, cutting corners by, in effect, ducking their legal obligations. If they are hired, they are also at risk of providing poor performance because a company that violates the law and disregards its obligation is much more likely to disregard its moral as well as its legal duties in complying with the contract.

It is not just about saving dollars. It is about workers. Every year, tens of thousands of American workers are denied overtime wages, they are unlawfully victims of discrimination in hiring and pay, they have their health and safety put at risk by Federal contractors when they do cut corners, or they are denied basic workplace protections. That is another reason we need this rule, this Executive order, protecting workers and creating a level playing field.

Some have called the fair pay rule one of the most important advances for workers in years, and it is. According to one assessment, one in five Americans are employed by companies that do business with the Federal Government. Ensuring that those one in five workers are protected helps countless Americans. It helps them in those workplaces, and it also sets a model for workplaces elsewhere.

It is basic, simple transparency that enables the American people to know who executive agencies task with the work, using taxpayer dollars. So requiring companies to disclose—and this rule is about disclosure—compliance records is something that many States, including Connecticut, already have in place through responsible bidder programs that use self-reporting to improve contractor quality by identifying companies with records of violating workplace laws, among other things.

President Trump was rightly praised by many of my colleagues in calling for a ''level playing field'' for businesses in his speech before us, in Congress, last week, and he has been lauded for saying we need to deliver ''better wages for Americans.'' Yet here we are, just weeks into the administration and this new Congress, and we are seeing what the real priorities unfortunately are. Once we put aside the rhetoric, actions are what matter, and these actions truly demoralize and destroy law-abiding companies' chances to compete fairly, and they decimate rights of workers to safe and fair workplaces.

I am troubled that rolling back this Executive order which I fought to achieve in the NDAA is so high a priority for the new administration and my colleagues here. Many organizations opposed this effort, and I am proud to join them in trying to forestall this rollback—the Easterseals organization, Paralyzed Veterans of America, VetsFirst, Vietnam Veterans of America, and many others who rightly fear that this course of action will do damaging injustice to our veterans and constituents with disabilities. It will also do potential damage to countless other workers involved in doing the people's work, such as performing contracts for the Federal Government funded with taxpayer dollars—our dollars—that can be used in discriminatory and unfair ways if this resolution is approved.

I urge my colleagues to vote against H.J. Res. 37 later today and protect the fair pay and safe workplaces rule. For the sake of our constituents—women, veterans, workers with disabilities, and businesses of America—we must reject this assault on fairness and common sense.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING TAX CREDIT

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I come to the floor this afternoon to talk about the affordable housing crisis in the United States of America and to talk about the reintroduction of legislation from last Congress that is going to be reintroduced by me, Senator HATCH, Senator WYDEN, Senator HELLER, Senator SCHUMER, Senator MURKOWSKI, and the Acting President pro tempore—Senator YOUNG—and several other of our colleagues.

The reason we are introducing this important legislation is to say that we need to increase the tax credit for affordable housing in the United States. We are saying this because we know from reports and statistics that we have a housing crisis in the United States of America, and unless we increase the affordable housing tax credit, we are not going to see much more new supply. That is because 90 percent of the affordable housing that is built in the United States of America is built with a tax credit.

Today, we are also releasing a report that is showing that the demand for affordable housing is exploding and construction is definitely not keeping pace. We are showing that seniors and veterans are at a greater risk for homelessness and that about a 60-percent increase in the need for affordable housing is being driven by Americans who are paying more than 50 percent of their income in rent, making it an unaffordable situation.

We are introducing this important legislation that, we hope, will build 400,000 additional affordable housing units across the United States and that will also help create additional jobs.

This is an issue that we are sending to the Finance Committee before, and I would hope my colleagues on the Finance Committee would take swift action. I say that because the report found three key factors. One is an increase of 9 million renters since 2005. That is a huge increase since 2005. How did we get there?

Over 7 million Americans lost their homes due to foreclosure in the economic crisis. As a result, home ownership rates have been at their lowest levels since the mid-1960s. Over the last 10 years, we have seen the largest gain in the number of renters in any 10-year period of time on record. That is right. We increased the number of renters in this last 10-year period of time more than at any other time on the books.

It kind of makes sense if you think about it. If the economic crisis caused you to downsize, and you were in a home and you could no longer afford it,

you would put pressure on the rental market. For those already in the rental market, it pushed many of them out of market-based rates and into solutions that were less affordable. As we all know, in major cities and urban areas across our country, it caused an actual homelessness crisis, as well, as many people could no longer even afford basic rent.

The affordable housing crisis is exploding all over the country, and we face pressures from all sides. Demand for rental housing has increased by 21 percent, but we are building units at the lowest rate since 1970. It does not take more than basic economics to see that, with demand so high and supply so low, we need to do something if we are going to make a dent in this problem. If we do not increase the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit, then, by the year 2025, we are going to have 15 million Americans who are spending more than half of their income on rent, and this is truly unacceptable.

Our report shows that in the last decade the total number of Americans who have faced this extreme housing problem—that is, paying more than half of their incomes in rent—ballooned by 60-percent, and that has put a lot of pressure on many of our States. For my home State, the affordability crisis is actually getting worse than the national average. Since 2000, median rents have risen by 7.6 percent, which is 2.5 percent higher than in the rest of the country. As I said, it is all of those people coming from the foreclosure market into the rental market. On average, there is about a 3.5-percent increase in rents across the United States. In addition, there are 16 percent fewer affordable rental homes available in Washington State compared to the U.S. average. Overall, 400,000 Washingtonians are paying more than half of their monthly incomes in rent.

We saw these numbers, and we saw specifically how seniors and veterans and homelessness are also driving the increase in demand. Senior unaffordability, which is the term given to people who are paying more than half of their incomes in rent, rose by 30 percent. With the veteran unaffordability, which is the number of the veterans who are returning and being part of the housing market, we will see an increase of over 500,000 veterans who need affordable housing.

I think the Acting President pro tempore knows well that in his home State there are people who are trying to provide solutions in small towns and urban areas for our veterans so that they can have affordable places to live. The report also shows that doing nothing is going to continue to exacerbate the problem. We will see another 25-percent increase in unaffordability. That is just unacceptable.

To help solve the problem of affordable housing, my colleague, the chairman of the Finance Committee, and I are reintroducing the bipartisan Affordable Housing Credit Improvement Act to strengthen and expand the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit.

Under this provision, the expanded tax credit would help create and preserve 1.3 million affordable homes over a 10-year period of time, which would be an increase of 400,000 new units nationwide. According to the National Association of Home Builders, annual LIHTC development—this is the overall appropriation—supports approximately 95,700 jobs and $9.1 billion in wages. Investing in the low-income housing tax credit, which gives our citizens more affordable housing, is good for them, but it is also good for our economy. Enacting the proposal would create an additional 450,000 jobs over the next 10 years and would support the construction of these important units.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a letter from the National Association of Home Builders that talks about the economic benefit of the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit and this particular proposal, with their estimates of increased Federal revenue of $11.4 billion, State and local revenue of $5.6 billion, and a total of 452,000 jobs being created in that 10-year period of time.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF HOME BUILDERS,
Washington, DC, November 11, 2016.

Hon. MARIA CANTWELL,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR CANTWELL: As requested by your staff, the Economics Group of the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) has provided the economic impacts of multifamily construction as part of a review of S. 3237, the Affordable Housing Credit Improvement Act of 2016.

Our estimate relies on both internal NAHB data as well as data provided to us by external sources. Estimates of per-unit revenue and employment impacts have been calculated using NAHB's home building and remodeling economic impact model.

INCREASE IN TAX REVENUE PER MULTIFAMILY RENTAL UNIT BUILT

[In 2014 dollars]

Federal	28,375
State and Local	14,008
Total	42,383

To complete the estimate, NAHB used the existing estimate that enacting S. 3237 would result in 400,000 additional low-income housing tax credit (LIHTC) units developed over ten years.

In total, NAHB estimates that the new 400,000 units would result in 452,000 jobs as well as a gross increase in federal revenues of $11.4 billion, and state and local revenues of $5.6 billion, over ten years.

TEN-YEAR EFFECTS

[Revenue expressed in 2014 dollars]

Federal Revenue	11.4 billion
State and Local Revenue	5.6 billion
Jobs	452,000

I hope this information is useful for you. For additional information, please contact David Logan, Director of Tax Policy Analysis at DLogan@nahb.org or 202.266.8448.

Sincerely,

ROBERT DIETZ, PH.D.,
Chief Economist, National Association of Home Builders.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I enter that into the RECORD because it is so important for our colleagues not to get stymied over the next several months, as we discuss proposals for economic development and for infrastructure across the United States, and not take action on this issue because we do not know how we can afford it. What we cannot afford is the rising number of Americans who no longer can afford rent or home ownership. What we need to do is to make sure that there is a roof over their heads and that they can be productive parts of our economy.

Since its creation over the last 30 years, this tax credit has financed nearly 2.9 million homes across the United States, leveraging more than $100 billion in private sector investment. That is what I like most—a little bit of the tax credit going a long way to leverage the private sector into making investments in affordable housing. Between 1986 and 2013, more than 13 million people have lived in homes that have been financed by this tax credit.

I hope my colleagues will take a look at this legislation that we are introducing today and help us support it. The crisis is real across America. Our report shows the crisis is only going to be exacerbated because of demographics and demand. The best way out of this problem is for us to make an investment that only we can make, as 90 percent of the affordable homes are built with the tax credit. Without increasing the tax credit by 50 percent, we are just writing our own statistics for a very, very dire situation across the United States of America.

I see communities in my State that look like and reflect pictures that I have seen from the Great Depression. I know the recession hit us hard, but we have to climb out of this homelessness problem by making an investment in the affordable housing tax credit. It is a bipartisan success. I hope we can make its expansion a bipartisan solution that we all can get behind.

I thank the Acting President pro tempore.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. ERNST). Without objection, it is so ordered.

OPIOID EPIDEMIC

Mr. PORTMAN. Madam President, this is the 32nd time I have come to the

floor in the last year to talk about an issue that unfortunately is getting worse—not better—and that is the epidemic of opioids; that would be heroin, prescription drugs, and now, more recently, synthetic heroin, also known as fentanyl or U–4 or carfentanil.

Every single day we are now losing 144 Americans to drug overdoses. Think about that, every single day, 144 people. By the way, that means, during the time it takes to give these remarks, which will be about 12 minutes, on average, we are losing another American to this opioid epidemic.

It is an issue that is now so serious that it has overtaken car accidents or even homicides from gun violence as the No. 1 accidental cause of death in our country.

It is easy to get discouraged because we see these statistics. We hear about the overdoses. We hear about the deaths. We hear about the difficulty for people to get out of the grips of this addiction. The relapse rate is high. It is an issue that is affecting every single community in this Chamber. By the way, it is affecting our inner cities, it is affecting our suburbs, it is affecting our rural areas and every group of Americans out there. No one is immune from this, and it knows no ZIP Code.

Yet today I want to talk a little about some of the reasons for hope and some of the models of success out there because this Congress, to its credit in the last year, has actually gotten much more serious about this issue. We passed two pieces of legislation to help; particularly, to provide better prevention and education to keep people from getting into the funnel of addiction and then, second, to help in terms of providing the resources: the treatment, the recovery. The longer term recovery, in particular, it is the first time Congress has stepped up on that.

We also need to do a better job ensuring that our law enforcement and our other first responders have what they need to save lives and to be able to reverse the effects of overdoses through this miracle drug called naloxone or Narcan. It is part of the legislation that has not just been passed but is beginning to be implemented.

Fortunately, in my own State of Ohio—although we have one of the worst addiction problems in the country—we also have a lot of really compassionate people who have stepped forward and are taking advantage of these resources, including not only resources from Washington now but also from State and local governments and from so many nonprofits out there. They are taking advantage of that to provide better treatment, better recovery, and better prevention. As a result, they are saving lives.

On Saturday, I visited a group called Clean Acres in Wilmington, OH. It is a farm that provides recovery housing for men. These are men who are struggling with addiction. They work on the farm. They provide each other support, and it has been very successful for a lot of them.

I met a guy named Dan, who told me how Clean Acres is helping him get his life back. For over a decade, he was a heroin addict. He shot up every morning until one day, he was actually at work, and he passed out. He was digging a ditch, and he passed out.

He was rushed to the hospital. The doctors discovered he had a very serious infection related to his intravenous drug use. He required emergency, lifesaving surgery right then.

The doctors told him he might not wake up. He did wake up after that surgery, and there before him were his three kids. He hadn't seen them in 5 years because—in so many cases you hear this and as Dan said this—the drugs became everything. He said, not his family, not his relationships, not his friends, not his work—the drugs became everything. These three kids had come to his bedside because they thought it might have been his deathbed, he said.

He saw these three kids, whom he hadn't seen in 5 years. He said that even after having experienced this near-death operation and having his three kids there, the first thought that came to his mind was: Where can I get another hit? Where can I get another hit? But then, in the situation he was in, he prayed, and he said his prayer was: ''Lord, help me get out of here.'' ''Help me get out of here,'' meaning, ''help me get out of this situation.''

He made a decision. He was going to try treatment again. He had tried treatment before. So many recovering addicts and addicts I talk to around my State have been in and out of treatment programs, detox treatment. It hasn't worked.

He decided this time he was not just going to get into treatment, but he was going to try something different, which was not to go back to the old neighborhood, not to go back to his old friends, but instead to try longer term recovery. That is how he ended up at Clean Acres. That is this farm where he and other men live together. They work, but they support each other to try to keep their lives on track after their treatment is over. It doesn't provide the treatment, but it does provide them with the meetings they need to be able to have that support around them in order to keep clean.

As one of the men at Clean Acres told me, it is hard to go through treatment. It is much harder to stay clean after treatment.

So Dan is healing himself. He is working at the farm. He plans to go into construction. He has big plans now. That is the hope. That is the opportunity for people to get their lives back on track whom I see every day when I talk to the people in my home State of Ohio.

Last week, I was also at Racing for Recovery, outside of Toledo, OH. I met with Todd Crandell. He has been in recovery from addiction for about 20 years. He is now giving back in a huge way.

I met with parents who had lost children to addiction. They come to Todd's organization, Racing for Recovery. They find support there, and they help other parents to work through this.

I met law enforcement officers there who are working with this recovery facility to try to ensure that the people whom they are locking up aren't going to just get right back into the revolving door again, back in and out of prison, back committing crimes. The No. 1 cause of crime in the State of Ohio is this addiction; people who, again, put the drug first ahead of everything, including their own sense and their own conscience, their own sense of what is moral and right, and instead they are committing burglaries and fraud and shoplifting—anything they can do to get the funds they need to continue their addiction.

I met Jessica at Racing for Recovery. She has been clean for 9 months. Before she sought help, she overdosed for 3 days in a row. She said her life was saved by the police; specifically, a program by the Lucas County Police Department called the Drug Abuse Response Team, DART. I am really impressed with DART and what they are doing. It is now being copied in other communities around Ohio and around the country. DART is being proactive. They got her engaged in treatment and recovery. She is now in sober housing. Todd, Jessica, and others there told me this: Look, you have to have this longer term recovery because that is what works.

A couple of weeks ago, during the State work period, I held a roundtable discussion in Fremont, OH, where I met Matt Bell. Matt is an amazing guy—a charismatic, young guy. He said that for him the gateway drug was marijuana and alcohol in high school. He ended up overdosing on heroin three times. He was convicted of 13 felonies, and he went to detox 28 times. Now he is clean and preventing new addictions from taking place by working nonstop to raise public awareness about the dangers of drug use. He goes around to the schools, and he doesn't just talk to kids who are juniors and seniors. He talks to middle schoolers because he knows he has to go younger and younger to get kids to think about their own futures, about the fact that addiction can happen in one use sometimes, and it is something that can ruin their lives. Thank God for Todd and thank God for Matt, because guys like that are out there every day giving back and they are saving lives.

So I want to thank all these compassionate people I have met—Clean Acres, Racing for Recovery, the Lucas County DART team, and Team Recovery. They are doing the hard work. They are in the trenches trying to actually turn the tide on this growing addiction problem we have. Again, I want to tell them that help is on the way.

Last year Congress did pass the 21st Century Cures Act and authorized

funding for States—$500 million this year and $500 million for next year—to fight this epidemic. Another step we took, which I think was probably the biggest step we have taken in a couple of decades in this area, was the passage of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, or the CARA Act. Those who know about CARA know that it is a new approach on treatment, recovery, and prevention. If you don't know about it, look it up and check it out. Be sure that the groups in your town, wherever you live, know about the fact that they can apply for grant money to be able to help on these recovery services that I am talking about, many of which do not have the funding to be able to be successful without the increases in rehab. Be sure they know about the fact that if you have a fire department in your community that is strapped for cash and cannot afford the Narcan to provide the Narcan treatments, there is an opportunity to apply for grants there, too, to be able to save lives from overdoses. Narcan is not the answer. The answer is to get into treatment. But Narcan is saving lives, and, therefore, it is necessary today. So let people know that is around and is available now.

Sadly, the situation is not getting better, even with these new efforts that are finally being implemented by the new administration. They started at the end of the Obama administration with a couple of programs, and now we have a couple more programs coming on line. Within the next few months, we expect the rest of the programs to be fully implemented. They are absolutely necessary, but they are pushing up against something new, which is, I hate to say, even more dangerous than heroin, and that is this synthetic heroin that is coming into our communities. It is like a poison coming into our communities by the U.S. mail system, if you can believe it.

The experts tell us that most of this fentanyl or carfentanil is being made in laboratories overseas, mostly in China, and it has been coming through the mail system. Why? Because the traffickers don't want to use other private carriers—UPS or FedEx or others—because they require that there be advanced digital information on where the package is from, what is in it, and where it is going. Guess what. We don't require that in the mail system. So the bad guys choose to send it through the mail system instead. That certainly is something the Federal Government should address.

So we have introduced legislation called the STOP Act. It is very simple. It says that if you want to send something to the United States of America, it has to say where it is from—what place in China—what is in the package, where it is going, and it can only go to the place they say it is going. That gives our law enforcement a new tool they are desperate to have because they are not able to look at millions of packages. But they can look at hundreds and this helps them to ferret out those packages that look most suspicious.

By the way, this new stuff, fentanyl and carfentanil, is incredibly powerful and incredibly dangerous. It is believed to be 30 to 50 times more powerful than heroin. Think about that. I was in Dayton, OH, a week before last and was meeting with the law enforcement task force there. They told me the sad story about a little girl, 14 years old, who was told by her friends: You ought to snort this stuff; it is called heroin. She did. It was fentanyl, and she dropped dead. She overdosed and died immediately because it was so powerful. Even a few flakes of it, they say, can kill you.

According to the Cleveland medical examiner of Cleveland, OH, this past month of February, which is the shortest month in the year, was also the deadliest month in Northeast Ohio for fentanyl and heroin. In other words, what they are seeing is not just more overdoses but more deaths because of fentanyl being mixed with heroin or sometimes fentanyl in its pure form. In just 28 days this February, 60 Clevelanders died from overdoses in one month. This is one city in America. There are another seven cases that are undergoing tests, but they are suspected to be the result of heroin and fentanyl overdoses.

What is driving the growth of this epidemic is the increasing use of fentanyl. Drug traffickers are lacing other drugs with it. I was told by the DART task force in Toledo that they are actually putting fentanyl in marijuana now, and people are showing up in the emergency room and overdosing on marijuana because it is sprinkled with fentanyl. It is more addictive. So the traffickers like it. It is more deadly. So we need to fight back. The Drug Enforcement Administration says it takes 2 milligrams of fentanyl to kill you. That is about the same as a pinch of salt. Many heroin users don't realize that the heroin they buy on the street may contain these new incredibly powerful synthetic drugs. So part of the message has to be what one father told me, which is: You are playing Russian roulette every time you use these drugs because you don't know what is in it. If there is fentanyl in it, there is a good chance you won't just overdose, but you will end up as one of these statistics we talked about earlier.

In Lorain, OH, last Monday, a 29-year-old man drove off the road and nearly hit a tree. When police arrived they found him unconscious from an overdose, with a baby in the backseat—a baby in the backseat. It took several doses of this Narcan and naloxone to reverse the effects of the overdose. Ordinarily, it would take only one dose, but with fentanyl-laced heroin it takes more. When police went to his home, a child answered the door and said: Mommy is sleeping, and we can't wake her up. Again, this is the guy that overdosed in the car. They take the kid home and another kid says: Mommy won't wake up. They find out the mother is also unconscious from a heroin overdose that she had in front of her four children. According to police, the couple thought they were using heroin, but tests confirm that it was laced with fentanyl.

This is an opportunity for us in the Congress to pass legislation that will help to be able to stop some of this poison from coming into our communities. At a minimum, it will raise the price, because some of this fentanyl, I am told, is less expensive than even the things that are less powerful, like heroin.

Fentanyl took the life of Erin Jarvis of Troy, OH. Erin was a prom queen. Erin was very popular. She was active in student government. She was captain of her soccer team. She got good grades. She got into Ohio University, a great school.

She had multiple knee injuries from playing soccer, which required surgery. She was prescribed Percocet. She became addicted. At Ohio University, her friend introduced her to a drug that was stronger and cheaper and easier to get. Of course, that was heroin. This story I have heard so many times. There is the overprescribing, sometimes because of an accident and an injury, and, then, somebody becomes addicted and turns to heroin because it is cheaper and easier to get. Erin began disappearing for days at a time, stealing from her family. Her mom Kelly started missing jewelry, credit cards, and even a TV set. When her sister got her wisdom teeth taken out, she stole her sister's Percocet. By the way, she never should have gotten Percocet for her wisdom teeth, in my view.

Erin finally got help. She went to rehab. She decided she wanted to become a nurse and help others struggling with addiction. After receiving treatment, she moved back in with her mom. But she relapsed, and she died. She died at the age of 24 with this promising life ahead of her. Her last words to her mom were these: I love you. The next day Kelly watched her daughter get taken out of their home in a body bag.

Tests showed that Erin died of an overdose of heroin laced with fentanyl. According to the coroner, she hadn't used the full injection. There was a lot left in the needle. He said: I suspect that what was in that syringe was not what she thought it was—exactly.

Families who have loved ones struggling with addiction are worried about the poison pouring into the streets, and you can see why. As deadly as heroin is, this stuff is even worse.

To keep this poison off the streets, Senator KLOBUCHAR, Senator RUBIO, Senator HASSAN, and I have introduced bipartisan legislation, the Synthetic Trafficking and Overdose Prevention Act, or the STOP Act, which would require the Postal Service to require this simple information that would give our law enforcement the ability to target these packages of fentanyl.

Based on expert testimony in hearings we have had hearings before the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, it would make it easier for them to detect those packages. That is what law enforcement is asking for. We should provide it to them. There is a bill in the House that is identical to ours, introduced by Congressman PAT TIBERI of Ohio and Congressman RICHARD NEAL of Massachusetts.

This is not the silver bullet, as I said. It is not the solution. No one has that silver bullet, but it would take away a key tool of drug traffickers and restrict the supply of these drugs, raising their price and making it harder to get. With the threat of this synthetic heroin and this poison coming into our communities every day, we need to act and act now.

So I would urge my colleagues to let their constituents know about the help that is on the way. Tell them about what is going on with the Cures Act and CARA legislation. Put it on your website so they know they can get help with treatment and recovery that was not previously out there. Our law enforcement, first responders, and firefighters can get the help they need to be able to get the training and have the funds for Narcan to save lives. We can do much better in terms of prevention and education. Some of this grant money is directed toward letting people know the connection between prescription drugs and heroin and between fentanyl and heroin.

Finally, to my colleagues, please join us in pushing back against these new poisons coming into our communities by cosponsoring the STOP Act and by requiring that this basic information be provided. With more cosponsors, I think our leadership will be much more likely to take this to the floor. Once it gets to the floor, it can be passed because people know that in their communities all over this country this epidemic must be stopped.

Thank you, Madam President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Ms. WARREN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 15 minutes.

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

Ms. WARREN. Madam President, the 115th Congress has now been in session for 2 months. Republicans control the House of Representatives, the Senate, and the White House. So what have they done so far with that power? Have they passed legislation to create jobs or increase wages for middle-class families? No. Have they proposed any plan to put Americans back to work fixing our roads, bridges, and other crumbling infrastructure? No. Have they done anything at all to help seniors who are struggling with high drug prices and other expenses? Not even close.

During his campaign, President Trump said over and over that he would stand up for workers. But so far, Republicans haven't voted on a single piece of legislation to help working families put food on the table, send their kids to college, or save a little money for retirement. No, they haven't helped families, but they have been busy.

With no hearings and barely any debate, Republicans have found a new tool, one that has been used successfully only once before in history, under the Congressional Review Act. They have used it to kill basic protections for workers. No wonder they haven't wanted any headlines about the actual work they are getting done.

Senate Republicans want to repeal the Fair Pay and Safe Workplaces Executive order. So instead of creating jobs or raising wages, they are trying to make it easier for companies that get big-time, taxpayer-funded government contracts to steal wages from their employees and injure their workers without admitting responsibility.

The American people spend around $500 billion every year on private companies that provide goods and services to the government. Those companies do everything from building battleships and fighter jets to serving snacks at national parks. It is big business. It is estimated that as many as one in five American workers works for a company with at least one Federal contract.

With so much taxpayer money on the line, it really matters that contractors are using it responsibly. While many contractors are good employers, others cut corners on safety or squeeze their workers on wages and benefits just to keep their corporate profits going up, and they break Federal labor laws to do so. Here are just two examples.

VT Halter Marine is a company that builds ships for the Navy. They have received $680 million in Federal contracts since 2009—taxpayer dollars that were supposed to be used to create good, safe jobs. Instead, VT Halter took a lot of shortcuts on worker safety, and now they have killed or injured multiple workers at their shipyards in Mississippi.

In 2012, a worker died after the lid of a 20-pound cast iron pot containing abrasive ship-cleaning liquid came loose and sheared away his face. Investigations showed that VT Halter had ignored safety requirements to show employees how to safely handle these pots.

In 2014, a crane collapsed at VT Halter, injuring five workers, including a crane operator, who lost part of his skull, is now blind, and requires 24-hour nursing care. That employee had repeatedly told his supervisors that the sensors on his crane were broken, but VT Halter kept him working, and now he is blind and needs full-time nursing care.

The list goes on and on. Each time, VT Halter ignored the law, workers got hurt or killed, and the company got a slap on the wrist and another top-dollar defense contract courtesy of the American taxpayer.

Contractors that cannot meet basic safety standards should not get a single dollar of taxpayer money, and the Fair Pay and Safe Workplaces Executive order was the first step in making sure that this was the case.

Other Federal contractors have found other ways to take advantage of their workers and to boost profits. Federal contractors have been caught stealing wages from hundreds of thousands of workers. Right here in the Senate, the men and women who prepare the food in the cafeteria have had their wages stolen by the contractor that employs them. The Department of Labor just found out that hundreds of these hard-working employees together were owed more than $1 million in back wages. This case was right under our noses. There are countless more all across the country where the very companies that receive taxpayer money from the government are taking shortcuts, breaking the law, cheating their employees out of hard-earned wages, and driving working families into poverty.

Republicans in the House of Representatives have called this rule ''a solution in search of a problem,'' saying it would ''only hurt workers and small businesses,'' as if the deaths of those working for Federal contractors or the thefts of their wages was just business as usual and they didn't care. That position is parroted by the chamber of commerce, which calls the rule ''burdensome'' and ''unwarranted.''

My Republican colleagues and their buddies in the giant corporations that rely on huge Federal contracts to keep profits high want the American people to believe that by making it easier for companies that mistreat their workers to profit off of taxpayer dollars, somehow they are helping workers. That is just nuts.

Here is what the rule does: When a company wants a contract from the government that is worth more than $500,000, it has to disclose any judgments against it for violating labor laws for the preceding 3 years. The order also asks the Secretary of Labor to work with other agencies to come up with standards for assessing whether labor violations are serious, repeated, or willful.

If you are a company that does right by your workers, this rule will not affect you—not one bit. If you pay your workers fairly and keep them safe on the job, you won't even notice the new rule. It also does not stop companies from getting contracts if they have had just a few violations but have taken steps to remedy the problem, and it does not add one bit to the burden on smaller companies that bid on smaller contracts—again, not one bit.

So who gets hit by this rule? Who is it who is complaining? Who are the Republicans trying to protect? Massive corporations that repeatedly cut corners that put their employees' lives at risk or that steal their wages. This rule keeps the big corporations that are the biggest labor violators from getting the biggest contracts.

Once again, this debate is about whom Congress actually works for. Does Washington work for the taxpayers, who want to see their hard-earned money spent responsibly? Do we work for the hard-working Americans, who want to be paid what they are promised and not have to put their lives at risk for a paycheck? Do we work for giant contractors that rake in enormous tax dollars and cannot even follow basic safety rules for American workers?

I came to Washington to stand with the men and women who go to work every day to build roads and bridges, to help communities recover from natural disasters, and to provide healthcare to our veterans. I think that is what we are here for. But the Republican majority wants to stand up for giant corporations that put workers at risk. They want to stand up against good, safe, well-paying jobs. That is their priority in the new Congress. If they succeed, it will be the American taxpayers and the American workers who quite literally pay the price.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MORAN). The Senator from Hawaii.

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, yesterday the New York Times published a story about the nearly 100 Federal protections this administration has attacked. The article highlighted a few of the outcomes of these attacks. For example, telecommunication companies are no longer required to take reasonable measures to protect the Social Security numbers of their customers, and people with severe, disabling mental health issues are now able to buy guns—but do not worry because refugees from war-torn countries like Sudan won't be coming into our country anytime soon. Today, in about an hour, Republicans are going after yet another protection. This time, it is one that protects Americans who work for Federal contractors.

Up until a few years ago, companies that cut corners and saved money by treating their employees badly held a competitive advantage over law-abiding companies in competing for Federal contracts, so President Obama put a policy in place to take away that advantage. In 2015, he put a new protection in place so that the companies that had histories of unsafe working conditions would have to report those histories when they applied for Federal contracts. The idea here is pretty simple: If you want to work for the Federal Government, you need to follow the law, and if you do not, the government has a right to know so that the companies that cut corners do not have a competitive advantage by being able to bid more cheaply over those who play by the rules.

Republicans often claim to be in favor of leveling the playing field for businesses. After all, that was the rationale that was used last month when they voted so that coal companies were no longer responsible for cleaning up their own messes and oil companies could hide payments to foreign governments. Both of those actions were taken in the supposed spirit of caring about the ability of companies to compete. Business competition was placed above the rights of communities to clean air and clean water or the right of American consumers to know they are not supporting a dictator when they fill up at the fuel tank.

But now, when it comes to safe workplaces and pay discrimination, suddenly, having companies compete on a level playing field is not the priority. This just does not make sense to me. This policy was good for workers, good for taxpayers, and good for companies that play by the rules. We should all agree that companies that have good safety and wage records should not be placed at a competitive disadvantage, but the Republicans are giving Federal contractors a green light for pay discrimination and unsafe working conditions. That is the only signal we send by taking away this policy from the previous administration. This is yet another example of the empty words of an administration that claims to care about empowering women in the workplace.

Last week, the President signed two Executive orders that were designed to appear to promote women in the workplace, but when you look beyond the photo-op and the actual orders, they do not do a thing for women in the workplace. They do not put one Federal dollar toward advancing gender equality and gender equity. Now the Republicans are putting a bill on the floor and eventually on the President's desk that will make it easier for companies that discriminate against women in the workplace to get Federal dollars.

If this administration and if this Congress really care about making sure women do not face bias and discrimination, if they really care about businesses being able to compete on a level playing field, then why attack this protection?

I urge my colleagues to do the right thing and vote to keep the fair pay and safe workplaces protection in place.

I yield the floor.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, over the years, Congress has enacted laws to make workplaces safer and fairer and to raise wages for American workers. These laws protect American workers. These laws make America more productive. And these laws help to preserve good, safe, middle-class jobs.

The Fair Labor Standards Act introduced the 40-hour workweek, established a national minimum wage, and guaranteed time-and-a-half for overtime. The Occupational Safety and Health Act ensures that employers keep the workplace free from hazards like toxic chemicals, excessive noise levels, mechanical dangers, or unsanitary conditions. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination by employers because of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. The American with Disabilities Act prohibits unjustified discrimination based on disability. The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 requires affirmative action to employ qualified individuals With disabilities. The Age Discrimination in Employment Act forbids employment discrimination against older workers. The Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act requires equal opportunity and affirmative action for veterans. The Equal Pay Act addressed wage disparities based on gender. The Family and Medical Leave Act requires covered employers to provide employees job-protected unpaid leave for qualified medical and family reasons. The Davis-Bacon Act requires paying the local prevailing wages on public works projects. And the National Labor Relations Act protects the rights of private sector employees to organize into trade unions, engage in collective bargaining for better terms and work conditions, and take collective action including strike if necessary. These laws are already on the books. It is already against the law for Federal contractors to violate them. The obligation to comply with basic workplace protections applies to employers, whether they are government contractors or not and that obligation will remain in force regardless of what Congress does on the rule today.

At issue today is a rule that simply requires contractors to share information about their history of compliance with workplace protections in the last 3 years before getting a Federal contract. The rule does not impose any new compliance obligations on government contractors.

It has long been a tenet of Federal Government contracting that it is better to contract with responsible contractors that abide by the law, including labor laws. It also furthers economy and efficiency. Many studies find a strong correlation between labor law compliance and performance. One study found that from 2005 to 2009, one quarter of the companies that committed the top workplace violations and later received Federal contracts had significant performance problems on their contracts. It is not surprising that employers that abide by the law also do a better job on their contracts.

In the mid-1990s, however, the Government Accountability Office, then known as the General Accounting Office, found that the Government had awarded Federal contracts worth more than $60 billion to companies that had violated the National Labor Relations Act or the Occupational Safety and Health Act. More than 10 years later, the GAO found that the pattern continued. GAO found that almost two-thirds of the largest wage-and-hour violations and almost 40 percent of the largest workplace health-and-safety penalties issued between 2005 and 2009 were made against companies that went on to receive new Government contracts. Between 2007 and 2012, 49 Federal contractors responsible for large violations of

Federal labor laws were forced to pay more than $91 million in back wages.

To help address this problem, in August of last year, the Department of Defense, the General Services Administration, and NASA jointly issued the rule that we are talking about today. The rule amended the Federal Acquisition Regulation to implement Executive Order 13,673 on Fair Pay and Safe Workplaces. That Executive order was designed to increase efficiency and cost savings in Federal contracting by increasing contractor compliance with labor laws. At the same time last August, the Department of Labor issued guidance to help Federal agencies implement the Executive Order and the rule.

The rule also prohibited companies with contracts larger than $1 million from denying employees who are the victims of sexual assault, sexual harassment, or discrimination their day in court by forcing them to arbitrate these claims.

The rule helps to provide a level playing field for businesses that play by the rules. By requiring disclosure of violations, it encourages contractors to pay fair wages and provide safe workplaces. The rule helps to ensure that the government awards Federal contracts and the taxpayer dollars that fund them to responsible employers that comply with workplace safety laws, antidiscrimination laws, sexual harassment laws, and minimum wage and overtime laws. Without the rule, millions of taxpayer dollars would go to businesses that break these laws.

After my home State of Maryland implemented a living wage standard for contractors, the average number of bids for State contracts actually increased by nearly 30 percent. Nearly half of contractors interviewed by the State government said that the new standards encouraged them to bid, because the standards leveled the playing field.

Under the Federal rule, prospective contractors report the information themselves. The vast majority of contractors adhere to labor laws. If a prospective contractor does not have any violations, it simply checks a box.

Companies that do business with the government employ one in five Americans, so this rule improves the lives of millions of workers.

In September of last year, Donald Trump delivered a speech on jobs at the New York Economic Club. In that speech, Mr. Trump advocated what he called ''a new policy of Americanism.'' ''Under this American System,'' Mr. Trump said, ''every policy decision we make must pass a simple test: Does it create more jobs and better wages for Americans?'' The rule at issue today passes that test. It helps to create better wages for Americans. And repealing the rule would flunk the test that Mr. Trump laid out last year. Nonetheless, once again the Republican majority seeks to employ the blunt instrument of the Congressional Review Act to repeal that rule today.

Some critics label the Fair Pay rule as a ''blacklisting'' rule. But the rule does not require a contracting officer to deny any contract based on a history of labor violations. The rule simply provides information to contracting officers to help them make decisions that about whether a contractor is responsible. The goal of the rule is to encourage companies to come into compliance—not to bar them.

Enacting this Congressional Review Act disapproval resolution could effectively stop any new rules on the disclosure of labor law violations or the consideration of labor law violations as a requirement for Federal procurement contracts. Enacting this resolution will send the wrong message to companies who are tempted to skirt the law. And enacting this resolution will make it more likely that Federal dollars once again go to law-breaking contractors.

This resolution goes in the wrong direction, and thus I oppose it.

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

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

Mr. FRANKEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 10 minutes or 15 minutes.

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

Mr. FRANKEN. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss the effort by my Republican colleagues, including the President, to dismantle the Fair Pay and Safe Workplaces Executive order and roll back protections for workers.

For too long, many workers in this country have been subject to dangerous working conditions, wage theft, discrimination, and harassment. While most companies follow the law and play by the rules, a few have cut corners at the expense of workers' rights and safety and have factored in paying penalties as just another cost of doing business. That is not fair for workers, and it is not fair for the businesses that play by the rules. It is time we put a stop to it.

We certainly should not be spending taxpayers' dollars to pay Federal contractors who violate—and sometimes repeatedly violate—Federal labor laws. Repeated violations by Federal contractors is a serious problem.

According to a 2013 HELP Committee staff report, 49 government contractors accounted for 1,776 Federal labor law violations. We are talking about things like an unsafe workplace, discriminating against workers, or failing to pay workers what they earned. Understand when I talk about unsafe workplaces, I am talking about fatalities. But despite these widespread violations, these companies continue to receive taxpayer-funded Federal contracts worth $81 billion a year.

My colleagues may have seen a recent Politico Magazine report on VT Halter. VT Halter is a major Navy shipbuilder, but its safety track record is deeply concerning. In 2009, two workers were killed and five others injured—some severely—when an explosion occurred at a VT Halter shipyard. A month later, they received an $87 million Federal contract. About 6 months after the explosion, VT Halter settled charges relating to the explosion, admitting that they had willfully violated at least 12 Occupational Safety and Health Administration—or OSHA—workplace safety rules to prevent incidents like this from occurring—an incident in which two workers died. They willfully violated—willfully; that is willfully violated.

That explosion wasn't VT Halter's only incident. In 2009, a worker fell to his death at another VT Halter shipyard where there were no handrails or fall protections. In 2012, the company was fined by OSHA after a worker at a VT Halter shipyard was killed when the lid on a pressurized pot exploded. They were fined again in 2014 for violating crane safety rules after two cranes tipped over, injuring five workers, including one 63-year-old worker who now has the mental capacity of a child.

It doesn't make sense to keep rewarding companies like this with lucrative contracts when they repeatedly—and, again, willfully—disregard basic safety protections.

To address this problem, in 2014 President Obama issued an Executive order that essentially says that if you have repeatedly broken our labor laws, the Federal Government will need to examine a company's compliance record on labor law violations before awarding large taxpayer-funded government contracts. Companies with poor track records will need to prove they are taking action to make sure that these types of egregious labor law violations don't happen again.

In addition to cracking down on repeat violators who bid for Federal contracts, the President's Executive order also includes two other important provisions that I support: a requirement that companies give workers a pay stub each pay period and a provision to make sure workers are able to access justice if they have been wronged.

As the Presiding Officer may know, employers are required, under the Fair Labor Standards Act, to accurately report the number of hours an employee works and their pay. But, surprisingly, employers are not always required to give this information to an employee on a pay stub each pay period. This matters. This matters because when a bad actor cheats its employees by undercounting hours or underpaying wages, it is a lot harder for an employee to recover damages if they don't get a pay stub.

It is often low-income workers who work variable shifts who are most easily exploited in these cases. For example, last year, a group of janitors in the

Twin Cities won hundreds of thousands of dollars of back pay because their employer had miscounted their hours. And because most of them weren't given pay stubs, it took them much longer to discover that they had been underpaid. One of their key demands, in addition to being paid fairly, was that they start getting pay stubs to ensure they don't get cheated again. This seems to me like a sensible thing to ask.

Let's be clear. Most employers already give their employees pay stubs, so this requirement isn't a big change for them, but it makes a big difference for the workers who are most vulnerable to wage theft. And because this provision has already been implemented, repealing it will have real and obvious consequences for working families.

The fair pay and safe workplaces rule also took an important step toward protecting workers' fundamental rights by banning the use of forced arbitration in cases of discrimination or sexual assault and harassment. As we have seen in a multitude of contexts in recent years, corporate America is increasingly preventing its employees or customers from accessing the court, relying instead on forced arbitration to avoid accountability when people seek justice for being cheated or mistreated. And some of the most egregious cases we have heard are from workers whose rights have been viciously violated and whose cases were forced into the dark.

I have made it a priority during my time in the Senate to combat the widespread and harmful use of forced arbitration. In fact, the forced arbitration regulations within the fair pay and safe workplaces rule build on an effort that I successfully championed 8 years ago.

I first became interested in the issue after learning that major Department of Defense contractors charged with performing vital national security functions were using arbitration to sweep cases of sexual assault and harassment under the rug. I heard stories of women who were assaulted or subjected to hostile working conditions while employed by a DOD contractor. And when those women sought justice for the actions—or inactions—of their employers, they were forced into secret arbitration where none of the traditional safeguards of a public court of law apply. As a result, countless other victims were left in the dark about the women's cases, and the contractors were shielded from accountability, both from the courts and from the public eye.

So in 2009, I introduced an amendment to the Department of Defense Appropriations Act that prevented certain DOD contractors from forcing their employees to arbitrate claims of discrimination or sexual assault and harassment. The amendment passed with bipartisan support. In the years since, it continues to be passed on a bipartisan basis as a part of the Defense appropriations process each year, most recently in December of 2014.

Now, it is unclear to me what has changed in the years since we passed my amendment that would make my Republican colleagues shift course. But what is clear is that now is not the time to roll back these critical protections for our workers.

According to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, at least 25 percent of American women say they have experienced sexual harassment in the workplace. And recent high profile revelations about abuse—for example, former Fox News chairman Roger Ailes' abuse of his employees, as well as the allegations of sex bias at Kay and Sterling Jewelers—demonstrate that we are far from addressing this issue on a broader scale. So I urge my Republican colleagues to reconsider their support for this resolution. I urge them to not force vulnerable women who have been wronged into the dark and into forced arbitration.

Blocking the fair pay and safe workplaces rule is just wrongheaded. A vote to repeal this rule is a vote to support giving taxpayer dollars to companies that break the law, it is a vote to help employers who cheat their employees out of fair pay, and it is a vote to take away workers' fundamental rights to access to the court.

I urge a ''no'' vote, and I thank the Presiding Officer for the generous window of 10 to 15 minutes.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has been recognized for 13½ minutes.

Mr. FRANKEN. Wow, I kind of hit it right on the nail. Am I out of order now saying that? No? Good. That means I have another minute and a half.

I thank the Presiding Officer.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 10 minutes on this resolution.

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

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, Americans are working longer and Americans are working harder than ever before, with less and less to show for it.

Over the last 40 years, GDP has gone up, corporate profits have gone up, executive salaries have gone up—all because American workers are more productive. Again, GDP is up, corporate salaries are up, corporate profits are up, executive salaries are up—all because of the productivity of American workers. Unfortunately—tragically—a big problem in our society is that workers don't share in the economic growth they have created for their companies.

On Friday, at the John Glenn School in Columbus, I rolled out a plan to do something about it. Instead of working to raise wages, the Senate is debating a measure to give large corporations even more ability, more leeway, more opportunity to shortchange American workers. It is as simple as that. One in five Americans works in a company that does some business with the American Government. We are talking about a rule that affects companies employing as much as one-fifth of the workforce. These workers deserve to be paid what they earn. They deserve safe workplaces, just as all American workers do.

Before this worker protection rule was put in place, nearly one-third of the companies in the United States with the worst safety and health violations were receiving taxpayer dollars in the form of Federal contracts. Federal dollars are going to these companies. They then turn around and hire workers in contract with the government and hire workers and cheat them and shortchange them. These corporations broke the law. They didn't pay their employees what they were owed or they broke health and safety rules. Yet they continue to rake in Federal dollars. That is unfair to workers. It is unfair to the good companies that play by the rules. It is unfair to those who are undercut, competitors that willfully and constantly follow the law. The good companies often are losing out. They are playing by the rules, yet lose out to the companies that aren't.

That is why the Obama administration put in place the Fair Pay and Safe Workplaces Executive order. If you want the privilege of doing business with American taxpayers, if you want a contract with the Federal government paid for by taxpayers, you must follow the law. It is as simple as that. That was yesterday. Also, yesterday the rule ensured that workers have accurate information about the hours they work, the overtime pay they can earn, the wages they are being paid—basic things that above-board companies are already doing anyway. That was yesterday.

Today this body is voting to undo that. Why would we want to roll back commonsense worker protections? Why would we reward companies that cheat their workers by giving them more taxpayer dollars? There is only one possible explanation: to make it easier for some big companies to cheat both their own workers and their competitors. When voters reject Washington, it is maneuvers like this they have in mind: Congress watering down rules that protect workers, that protect taxpayers, that let corporations that break the law off the hook.

The President came to Ohio a lot last year. He made a lot of big promises during his campaign. He is already facing a choice on issues like this one. Is he going to keep his promises to working families in Trumbull County, OH, Warren, Mansfield, Toledo, Springfield

or is he going to sell them out in favor of the same old corporate billionaire agenda?

The President has come to a fork in the road. He can go down the fork where workers will do better in this administration—make better wages, have a safer workplace—or he can take the other fork in the road that undercuts wages, that shortchanges workers, that makes the workplace less safe. Unfortunately, the President and, I am afraid, this Senate have chosen that fork in the road, the one that undercuts workers and makes the workplace less safe.

I hope my colleagues will join me in rejecting this attempt to undercut American workers.

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. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 7 minutes.

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

TRAVEL BAN

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, before I talk about the Republican's reckless move tonight to roll back important worker protections, I do want to address the President's revised immigration Executive order that he signed just hours ago. He may have rearranged some words, but make no mistake, this is still a ban on Muslims. It still flies in the face of everything this country is about and what we stand for.

Slamming the door shut on refugees and immigrants, no questions asked, is un-American. Just like we saw in January, people across this country are already standing up and saying once again this is wrong, and we will not tolerate broad orders that target some of the most vulnerable people in the world.

I urge the President, if you truly want to keep our country safe, work with us, but we will not sit idly by as you continue to push a hateful agenda that betrays our American values.

Mr. President, I want to turn to the vote that is going to occur shortly here on the floor. I thank all of my colleagues who will be joining me this evening. When President Trump was running for office, he claimed he was going to be a President who fought for the middle class. He made a promise that he wasn't going to do what most Republicans have done in recent years and simply work for millionaires and billionaires. He was going to be different. He would be someone workers could count on.

We are just over a month into this Presidency, and it couldn't be clearer; President Trump is breaking that promise, whether it is his Cabinet picks or billionaires and Wall Street bankers and corporate CEOs or his rush to destroy our healthcare system and create chaos for families across our country or what Republicans have chosen to bring to the floor tonight: another effort that would hurt our workers, hurt the middle class, and hurt our economy.

Here is what I think we should be doing in Congress. We should be working on ways to boost economic security for more working families, and we should be helping our economy grow in the way that we know is strongest: from the middle out, not from the top down.

We have made some important progress over the last several years, but I think all of us on either side of the aisle agree there is a lot of work left to be done. That is certainly what has been clear to me as I have traveled across my home State of Washington, listening and meeting with workers and their families. Families are working hard. They are meeting their responsibilities, but far too many are still unable to get ahead.

Again, that is the topic we should be discussing tonight: how to support and empower more workers. Instead, we are here today because President Trump and my Republican colleagues either simply are not getting that message or they are too busy focusing on what is best for the folks already at the top, because today Republicans are poised to roll back a rule which helps protect our workers from wage theft, from discrimination, from unsafe workplaces, and more.

I want to take just a few minutes to make very clear what is at stake for millions of working families if Republicans roll back this rule. Each year, far too many workers are deprived of overtime wages or they are denied basic workplace protections. They have endured illegal discrimination, and they face unwarranted health or safety risks. That is unacceptable, and it has to come to an end.

Last year, Democrats, working with the previous administration, pushed to finalize what is now known as the fair pay and safe workplaces rule. For far too long, the government has awarded billions of taxpayer dollars to companies that rob workers of their paychecks and fail to maintain safe working conditions. This rule helps to right that wrong. Under this rule, when a company applies for a Federal contract, they will need to be upfront about their safety, health, and labor violations over the past 3 years. That way, government agencies can consider an employer's record of providing workers with a safe workplace and paying workers what they have earned before they grant or renew a Federal contract. To be clear, this does not prevent companies from winning Federal contracts. It does not single out companies. It does not deny companies the right to be heard. It simply improves transparency and coordination so government agencies are aware of companies' violations and can work with them to make sure they come into compliance with essential labor laws.

Again, the emphasis on this is not punishment but on helping bring more and more companies into compliance with the law and zeroing in on violations that are, and I quote from the rule: ''Serious, repeated, willful, or pervasive.'' Not only are these measures common sense, but they would have major benefits for our workers, our businesses and, by the way, our taxpayers. It would help hold the worst violators accountable.

American taxpayers should have the basic guarantee that their dollars are going to responsible contractors that will not steal from their workers or expose their workers to safety hazards. It would protect basic worker rights, and that, in turn, will help expand economic security for all working families, and it will level the playing field for businesses that do follow the law.

I think we can all agree that businesses shouldn't have to compete with bad actors that cut corners and put their workers' safety at risk or cheat their workers on their paychecks.

All of this, frankly, is pretty simple. When workers arrive on the job, they deserve to know they will be treated fairly, that they will be provided with a safe and healthy workplace, that their right to collective bargaining will be respected, and they will be paid all the wages they earned. Businesses that contract with the government should set an example when it comes to each of these concerns, and taxpayer dollars should only go to businesses that respect these fundamental worker protections.

As I said, time and again, families nationwide are sending a very clear message at marches, with phone calls and letters, online, and in their communities. They expect and are demanding that their representatives are truly committed to working for them. I, for one, am committed to standing with them. I know my colleagues are committed, and we are prepared to fight back.

Let's be clear, in rolling back these protections, President Trump and his party are yet again breaking their campaign promise to put our workers first. Workers will be hurt, wages will go down, rights will be undermined, lives will be put at risk. Tonight I am here to urge my Republican colleagues to drop this deeply harmful effort, reverse course, and stand with working families once and for all.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, first, I thank my colleague from Washington State who has been such a leader on issues like this, throughout this session of Congress and throughout her entire career.

I want to add a few comments on H.J. Res. 37, which I strongly oppose. More

than one in five Americans is employed by a company that has at least one Federal contract. Unfortunately, every year tens of thousands of workers are denied overtime wages, not paid fairly because of their gender or age, or have health and safety put at risk by corner-cutting contractors. Those contractors who obey the rules are put at a disadvantage by those who cut corners, and that is what this proposal that President Obama put into effect was supposed to curb. That was the rule.

What do we find President Trump and our Republican colleagues doing? Once again, favoring the special interests, Big Business, over the working people. As my colleague from Massachusetts, Senator WARREN, just said: ''This is a debate about whom Congress actually works for.'' The President tries to present himself as a populist favoring working people. That is in his speeches, but in all of his actions, just about every single one, when there is a special interest, a business interest at stake versus a worker interest, he sides with the special Big Business interests.

The President promised to be a champion for working people in his inaugural address. An hour later, he signed an Executive order making it harder for working people to get a mortgage. Last week, the President made a whole host of claims about what his government would do only 24 hours after releasing a budget blueprint that would take a meat ax to the Federal agencies he was talking about. He had this beautifully sympathetic moment about medical research, and his budget is going to slash it. He talked about education as a major issue in America. His budget will slash that.

Again, less than a week after another populist speech to Congress, the President is doing exactly the opposite of what he said he was going to do—stick up for working men and women—by signing this resolution. President Trump promised: I will deliver better wages for the working class. Well, President Trump, more than 300,000 workers have been victims of wage-related labor violations while working under Federal contracts during the last decade. Are you now going to sign a bill, President Trump, that would make it easier for recidivist Federal contractors to skirt wage standards and hurt their workers? It sounds like it to me. This administration's hypocrisy knows no end. It is not populist. It is not for the working people, not in what they do.

In his joint address to Congress, the President said, he would ''ensure new parents have paid family leave.'' Now is he going to sign a bill that makes it easier for companies that violate family leave laws to win contracts from the Federal Government? If the President was true to his populist rhetoric, he would say this resolution is dead on arrival because it hurts the working people. But if past is prologue, he will not. He will think that his tough talk about standing up for the working class is enough to cloak a hard-right, pro-corporate, pro-elite agenda.

So I challenge the President: If Republicans pass this resolution, show some courage and veto it because you are not going to get away with constantly, constantly saying that you are in favor of working people and signing legislation that hurts them.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LANKFORD). All time is expired.

Mrs. MURRAY. 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 yeas and nays were ordered.

The joint resolution was ordered to a third reading and was read the third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The joint resolution having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the joint resolution pass?

The yeas and nays have been previously ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE), the Senator from Georgia, (Mr. ISAKSON), and the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN).

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote:

The result was announced—yeas 49, nays 48, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 81 Leg.]

YEAS—49

Alexander	Fischer	Perdue
Barrasso	Gardner	Portman
Blunt	Graham	Risch
Boozman	Grassley	Roberts
Burr	Hatch	Rounds
Capito	Heller	Rubio
Cassidy	Hoeven	Sasse
Cochran	Inhofe	Scott
Collins	Johnson	Shelby
Corker	Kennedy	Strange
Cornyn	Lankford	Thune
Cotton	Lee	Tillis
Crapo	McCain	Toomey
Cruz	McConnell	Wicker
Daines	Moran	Young
Enzi	Murkowski	
Ernst	Paul	

NAYS—48

Baldwin	Gillibrand	Murray
Bennet	Harris	Nelson
Blumenthal	Hassan	Peters
Booker	Heinrich	Reed
Brown	Heitkamp	Sanders
Cantwell	Hirono	Schatz
Cardin	Kaine	Schumer
Carper	King	Shaheen
Casey	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Coons	Leahy	Tester
Cortez Masto	Manchin	Udall
Donnelly	Markey	Van Hollen
Duckworth	McCaskill	Warner
Durbin	Menendez	Warren
Feinstein	Merkley	Whitehouse
Franken	Murphy	Wyden

NOT VOTING—3

Flake	Isakson	Sullivan

The joint resolution (H.J. Res. 37) was passed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

DISAPPROVING A RULE SUBMITTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to H.J. Res. 44.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion to proceed.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the joint resolution.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A joint resolution (H.J. Res. 44) disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of the Interior relating to Bureau of Land Management regulations that establish the procedures used to prepare, revise, or amend land use plans pursuant to the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

TRAVEL BAN

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, earlier today, President Trump signed a new Executive order that bans travel to the United States from a new list of Muslim-majority countries and bans all refugees. This new Executive order includes some cosmetic changes, but these changes do not alter the fact that President Trump's travel ban is still unconstitutional and still inconsistent with the values of this Nation.

This Executive order plays directly into ISIS's argument that the United States is waging a war against a religion. The President's first travel ban was blocked by multiple Federal courts, and his latest, I hope, will face the same fate.

Let's consider how we have arrived at this point. During his first full week in office, President Trump signed his first Executive order that banned Muslims and refugees. This order resulted in chaos in airports across the country. Dozens of legal immigrants were detained, not because they did anything wrong or because they were any danger to our Nation. It was solely because of where they came from. There was an Iraqi immigrant who put himself and his family in harm's way by working with American troops as an interpreter, two disabled seniors—a husband and wife—and a 5-year-old child. These were people who were the victims of President Trump's first Executive order.

The order faced widespread resistance from the American people, the courts, and even from the administration itself. Acting Attorney General Sally Yates said the Justice Department could not in good conscience defend the President's Executive order. So the President fired her.

Now comes this new Executive order. We know that, over time, Ms. Yates was right. She stood for principle, and when multiple Federal courts blocked that Executive order, we understood that she appreciated the law, unlike those who crafted this terrible order.

Rather than repeal the Executive order or defend it in court, the Trump administration is trying to evade these

legal challenges by issuing a new version but with some tweaks. The original Executive order banned travelers to the United States from seven Muslim-majority countries. The President heard the plea about this ban on Muslim travelers. He issued a new order today which does not ban travelers from seven Muslim-majority countries but from only six. This is still, nevertheless, an attack on religious freedom that risks alienating hundreds of millions of Muslims across the world.

Our focus should be on people with suspected links to terrorism. The President will have no resistance from this Congress—from either side of the aisle—if he goes after actual suspects of terrorism, but this should be done regardless of the suspect's religion.

This order—the new one—still blocks refugees from coming to the United States for at least 120 days, and it cuts by more than 50 percent the number of refugees who will be settled in the United States this year. Turning away innocent people who are fleeing persecution, genocide, and terror is not the American way. It will not keep us safer. Sadly, it projects an image of America to the world that is totally inconsistent with where we have been as a Nation.

No matter what spin the White House puts on it, the President's new Executive order is still fatally flawed. Multiple statements from the President himself and from several of his advisers have made clear that his intention is to bar Muslims from entering the United States and to give priority to Christian refugees. This violates the Constitution's establishment clause and the equal protection clause. Tweaking the language of the ban cannot remedy the President's original unlawful intent.

During the Presidential campaign, the President issued the following statement:

> Donald J. Trump is calling for a total and complete shutdown of Muslims entering the United States until our country's representatives can figure out what is going on.

When the President signed his original Executive order, his advisers made clear that it was intending to carry out this campaign promise. Listen to what former mayor of New York City—and one of the closest advisers to Donald Trump—Rudy Giuliani said:

> I'll tell you the whole history of it: When President Trump first announced it, he said ''Muslim ban.'' He called me up. He said, ''Put a commission together. Show me the right way to do it legally.''

Rudy Giuliani.

Now White House Adviser Stephen Miller has made it clear that his intention is to ban Muslims, and he says:

> These are mostly minor, technical differences. Fundamentally, you are still going to have the same, basic policy outcome for the country.

Stephen Miller.

We are in the midst of the largest refugee crisis in the history of the world. More than 65 million people have been forcibly displaced from their homes. The brutal Syrian conflict—the epicenter of this crisis—has killed hundreds of thousands, injured more than a million, and displaced more than half of Syria's population. In some areas, children in this country—in the 21st century—are starving to death.

The conflict has forced more than 4.7 million refugees to flee Syria. Around 70 percent of all Syrian refugees are women and children. Half of the Syrian refugee children are not in school. Millions in and outside of Syria are in urgent need of humanitarian assistance.

We cannot forget the lessons of history. In 1939, the United States refused to let the SS St. Louis dock in our country, sending over 900 Jewish refugees back to Europe, where many died in concentration camps.

After that tragic moral failure in the United States—after we turned our back on Jewish refugees who were fleeing Hitler—the United States examined its conscience and came up with a new program. It came up with a new approach, and it was bipartisan. Since World War II, the American people have worked to set an example for the world by accepting refugees.

Listen to those who have been accepted and made a part of America—almost 400,000 Eastern Europeans after World War II, close to 400,000 Vietnamese refugees fleeing the Vietnam war, approximately 650,000 Cuban refugees after Castro came to power.

Let me note, parenthetically, that, of the four Hispanic U.S. Senators today, three can trace their roots to this Cuban migration to the United States, and their families were refugees. They sit on the floor of the Senate and represent some of our great States. Yet, with this President, he is asking them and all of us to ignore this history.

We have accepted more than 150,000 refugees from the former Yugoslavia. Over 100,000 Soviet Jews, who were escaping the persecution of their religion and looking for freedom, came to the United States. Many of these refugees were fleeing regimes that were hostile to our country. Some argued that spies and other hostile elements could be hidden among them.

Think about the hundreds of thousands who came from Communist-controlled Cuba into the United States. Were they subjected to extreme vetting? No. They were people who said: We have come here and are looking for freedom. We opened our doors, and they have made us a better country because of it. The United States was not frightened by the fearmongers when it came to these refugees joining us in the United States, and we shouldn't be today.

Let's be clear. Refugees who come into our country this day are the most carefully vetted and investigated of all of the travelers to the United States. Before refugees are admitted to the United States, they have to pass careful, rigorous security screenings. All of that screening takes place before they even set foot in America, and Syrian refugees undergo a new layer of enhanced review before they are allowed to come to America.

President Trump's own Department of Homeland Security has determined that his travel ban will not make us safer. Listen to this memo from the Department of Homeland Security's Office of Intelligence and Analysis in President Trump's administration:

> Country of citizenship is unlikely to be a reliable indicator of potential terrorist activity. Since the beginning of the Syrian conflict in March 2011, the foreign-born, primarily U.S.-based individuals who were inspired by a foreign terrorist organization to participate in terrorism-related activity were citizens of 26 different countries.

The Trump administration believes they have found—first seven—now six countries from where they will deny terrorists access to the United States, even those who have gone through the vetting to be considered refugees.

Listen to this. It is another memo from the same Department—the Department of Homeland Security's Office of Intelligence and Analysis—under President Trump:

> Most foreign-born, U.S.-based violent extremists likely radicalized several years after their entry to the United States, limiting the ability of screening and vetting officials to prevent their entry because of national security concerns.

The point is that it is not likely a terrorist is going to stand in line for 2 years to become a refugee to the United States and go through all of the background checks and live in a refugee camp for that purpose. Those who ended up being involved in terrorist activities were converted after their having arrived in the United States, and they included in their ranks many who were born in the United States.

If we are serious—really serious—about protecting America, we should close the loopholes that make it too easy for foreign visitors and suspected terrorists to buy deadly weapons. Most people do not know, but we have not precluded—or stopped—those who are visiting the United States from buying weapons. Even if we have not checked them, there are no background checks when it comes to terrorism. We should focus on individuals who are engaged in suspicious behavior, not target entire Muslim countries or the entire refugee population.

It makes no sense. Even President Trump's Department of Homeland Security says as much, but this President is determined to go forward with his Muslim ban. He is determined to build walls at our borders. He is determined to instill fear in our hearts.

That is not how America works, and it is not how we will move forward. Let's not continue the cruelty and deception of blaming immigrants and refugees for our security and economic challenges. We should work together, in the spirit of post-World War II America, and set an example for the world in order to build a better America for all Americans, including new

Americans—no matter the color of their skin, where their parents were born, or how they pray.

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

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. DAINES. 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 APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I would like to bring attention to an important anniversary in the history of the U.S. Senate. Today marks the 150th anniversary of the creation of the Senate Committee on Appropriations.

In 1867, the Senate passed a resolution creating a standing committee on appropriations. The committee was founded to bring greater discipline to government spending by consolidating the control, management and oversight of federal expenditures.

The primary role of the Congress in appropriating taxpayer dollars is explicit in our Constitution. It is an important responsibility and must not be taken lightly.

The Appropriations Committee has served the American people by working together to make thoughtful decisions in the allocation of public funds. It is challenging work. Each year we consider a vast amount of input from public hearings, expert sources, our fellow Senators, and our constituents. We do our best to weigh competing priorities and make responsible recommendations.

The Appropriations Committee faces great pressures as discretionary spending is increasingly crowded out by mandatory spending and persistent deficits. It is more important than ever that the appropriations bills be brought before the Senate for careful consideration. I hope we can find a way to do that in the coming months and years.

As we mark the 150th anniversary of the Senate Committee on Appropriations, I look forward to working with my friend and vice chairman, the Senator from Vermont. I hope all Senators will work with us to enact appropriations bills that provide for a strong national defense and support our country's domestic and international priorities.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, today we celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Senate Appropriations Committee. Established on March 6, 1867, its powers are rooted in article I, section 9 of our Constitution, which states, ''No money shall be drawn from the treasury, but in consequence of appropriations made by law.'' The founders of our country recognized the power of the purse as one of the most important tools Congress has to ensure our system of checks and balance and to conduct oversight of the Executive and Judicial branch, but it is much more than that. The Appropriations Committee is also where we translate the priorities of a nation into the realities of the people.

Our country is not a business, where we allocate resources only according to the bottom line. We do not invest in order to make a profit, or a one-for-one dollar in return. We invest in those areas where it is uniquely right for government to take the lead. We invest in the areas that make a difference in the everyday lives of Americans and that help build the foundations of our country and our economy—infrastructure, national security, our environment, education, health care. The Appropriations Committee is where we fund nutrition programs to ensure that children do not have to sit through class hungry and remain healthy so they can develop and grow. It is where we allocate the resources to clean our lakes and our streams and make investments in growing our communities and promoting jobs. It is where we invest in research to cure cancer. It is where we can define who we are as country.

I have been a member of this Committee for almost my entire tenure in the Senate, and just a few short months ago, I became vice chair. I am proud to serve on this committee, and I feel honored to join in the ranks of its leaders. Today I am glad to join you all in celebrating 150 years of an institution that is at the foundation of the Senate. I look forward to working with my friend Chairman COCHRAN in continuing the long and bipartisan history of the Appropriations Committee in the months and years ahead.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message from the President of the United States was communicated to the Senate by Ms. Ridgway, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGE REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate a message from the President of the United States submitting a nomination which was referred to the Committee on Armed Services.

(The message received today is printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

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. TESTER (for himself, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. COONS, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. FRANKEN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. WARREN, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE):

S. 528. A bill to amend the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 to provide leave because of the death of a son or daughter; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. BOOZMAN (for himself and Mr. COTTON):

S. 529. A bill to prohibit the use of eminent domain in carrying out certain projects; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. MANCHIN:

S. 530. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to disclose to non-Department of Veterans Affairs health care providers certain medical records of veterans who receive health care from such providers; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. PAUL:

S. 531. A bill to amend the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 to designate a portion of the Edward T. Breathitt Parkway as Interstate Route I–169; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. PAUL:

S. 532. A bill to prohibit the use of United States Government funds to provide assistance to Al Qaeda, Jabhat Fateh al-Sham, and the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and to countries supporting those organizations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. NELSON (for himself, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. REED, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE):

S. 533. A bill to modernize the Undetectable Firearms Act of 1988; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. NELSON, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. RUBIO, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mrs. ERNST, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. WARREN, Ms. HARRIS, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, and Mr. YOUNG):

S. 534. A bill to prevent the sexual abuse of minors and amateur athletes by requiring the prompt reporting of sexual abuse to law enforcement authorities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. THUNE:

S. 535. A bill to amend the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation Act to make applicable to the State of South Dakota a provision relating to certain Bureau of Reclamation permit fees; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. HATCH (for himself, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. MCCONNELL, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. ROBERTS, and Mr. SCOTT):

S.J. Res. 32. A joint resolution disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of Labor relating to savings arrangements established by States for non-governmental employees; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. HATCH (for himself, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. MCCONNELL, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. ROBERTS, and Mr. SCOTT):

S.J. Res. 33. A joint resolution disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of Labor relating to savings arrangements established by qualified State political subdivisions for non-governmental employees; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. CASEY, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. COONS, Mr. REED, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. BENNET, Mr. CARPER, Mr. NELSON, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. PETERS, Mr. BROWN, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. PERDUE, and Mrs. GILLIBRAND):

S. Res. 81. A resolution recognizing the 196th anniversary of the independence of Greece and celebrating democracy in Greece and the United States; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 27

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 27, a bill to establish an independent commission to examine and report on the facts regarding the extent of Russian official and unofficial cyber operations and other attempts to interfere in the 2016 United States national election, and for other purposes.

S. 59

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the names of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS), the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY) and the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES) were added as cosponsors of S. 59, a bill to provide that silencers be treated the same as long guns.

S. 198

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 198, a bill to require continued and enhanced annual reporting to Congress in the Annual Report on International Religious Freedom on anti-Semitic incidents in Europe, the safety and security of European Jewish communities, and the efforts of the United States to partner with European governments, the European Union, and civil society groups, to combat anti-Semitism, and for other purposes.

S. 220

At the request of Mr. SASSE, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 220, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit a health care practitioner from failing to exercise the proper degree of care in the case of a child who survives an abortion or attempted abortion.

S. 222

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 222, a bill to repeal provisions of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and provide private health insurance reform, and for other purposes.

S. 242

At the request of Mr. CASSIDY, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 242, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to permit veterans to grant access to their records in the databases of the Veterans Benefits Administration to certain designated congressional employees, and for other purposes.

S. 297

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 297, a bill to increase competition in the pharmaceutical industry.

S. 303

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 303, a bill to discontinue a Federal program that authorizes State and local law enforcement officers to investigate, apprehend, and detain aliens in accordance with a written agreement with the Director of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and to clarify that immigration enforcement is solely a function of the Federal Government.

S. 327

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 327, a bill to direct the Securities and Exchange Commission to provide a safe harbor related to certain investment fund research reports, and for other purposes.

S. 339

At the request of Mr. NELSON, the names of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) and the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) 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. 352

At the request of Mr. CORKER, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 352, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to Master Sergeant Rodrick ''Roddie'' Edmonds in recognition of his heroic actions during World War II.

S. 379

At the request of Mr. WHITEHOUSE, the names of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) and the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) were added as cosponsors of S. 379, a bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to eliminate the five month waiting period for disability insurance benefits under such title for individuals with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis.

S. 397

At the request of Mr. CORKER, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 397, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to ensure fairness in Medicare hospital payments by establishing a floor for the area wage index applied with respect to certain hospitals.

S. 422

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor 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. 444

At the request of Ms. HEITKAMP, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 444, a bill to amend the Investment Company Act of 1940 to expand the investor limitation for qualifying venture capital funds under an exemption from the definition of an investment company.

S. 446

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 446, a bill to allow reciprocity for the carrying of certain concealed firearms.

S. 462

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 462, a bill to require the Securities and Exchange Commission to refund or credit certain excess payments made to the Commission.

S. 484

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) was added as a cosponsor of 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.

S. 497

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the names of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY), the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) were added as cosponsors of S. 497, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for Medicare coverage of certain lymphedema compression treatment items as items of durable medical equipment.

S. 512

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 512, a bill to modernize the regulation of nuclear energy.

S. 523

At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 523, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to establish a stewardship fee on the production and importation of opioid pain relievers, and for other purposes.

S. 526

At the request of Mrs. FISCHER, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 526, a bill to amend the Small Business Act to provide for expanded participation in the microloan program, and for other purposes.

S.J. RES. 26

At the request of Mr. SASSE, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 26, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Department of Education relating to teacher preparation issues.

S.J. RES. 27

At the request of Mr. CASSIDY, the names of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) were added as cosponsors of S.J. Res. 27, a joint resolution 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''.

S.J. RES. 29

At the request of Mr. DAINES, the names of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI) and the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) were added as cosponsors of S.J. Res. 29, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the final rule of the Office of Natural Resources Revenue of the Department of the Interior relating to consolidated Federal oil and gas and Federal and Indian coal valuation reform.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 81—RECOGNIZING THE 196TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF GREECE AND CELEBRATING DEMOCRACY IN GREECE AND THE UNITED STATES

Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. CASEY, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. COONS, Mr. REED, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. BENNET, Mr. CARPER, Mr. NELSON, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. PETERS, Mr. BROWN, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. PERDUE, and Mrs. GILLIBRAND) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 81

Whereas the people of ancient Greece developed the concept of democracy, in which the supreme power to govern was vested in the people;

Whereas the founding fathers of the United States, many of whom read Greek political philosophy in the original Greek language, drew heavily on the political experience and philosophy of ancient Greece in forming the representative democracy of the United States;

Whereas Petros Mavromichalis, the former Commander in Chief of Greece and a founder of the modern Greek state, said to the citizens of the United States in 1821, ''It is in your land that liberty has fixed her abode and . . . in imitating you, we shall imitate our ancestors and be thought worthy of them if we succeed in resembling you.'';

Whereas the Greek national anthem, the ''Hymn to Liberty'', includes the words, ''most heartily was gladdened George Washington's brave land'';

Whereas the people of the United States generously offered humanitarian assistance to the people of Greece during their struggle for independence;

Whereas Greece heroically resisted Axis forces at a crucial moment in World War II, forcing Adolf Hitler to change his timeline and delaying the attack on Russia;

Whereas Winston Churchill said, ''if there had not been the virtue and courage of the Greeks, we do not know which the outcome of World War II would have been'' and ''no longer will we say that Greeks fight like heroes, but that heroes fight like Greeks'';

Whereas hundreds of thousands of the people of Greece were killed during World War II;

Whereas Greece consistently allied with the United States in major international conflicts throughout the 20th century;

Whereas Greece is a strategic partner and ally of the United States in bringing political stability and economic development to the volatile Balkan region, having invested billions of dollars in the countries of the region and having contributed more than $750,000,000 in development aid for the region;

Whereas the Government and people of Greece actively participate in peacekeeping and peace-building operations conducted by international organizations, including the United Nations, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the European Union, and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe;

Whereas Greece received worldwide praise for its extraordinary handling during the 2004 Olympic Games of more than 14,000 athletes and more than 2,000,000 spectators and journalists, a feat the government and people of Greece handled efficiently, securely, and with hospitality;

Whereas Greece, located in a region where Christianity meets Islam and Judaism, maintains excellent relations with Muslim countries and Israel;

Whereas Greece remains an integral part of the European Union;

Whereas the Government of Greece has taken important steps in recent years to further cross-cultural understanding, rapprochement, and cooperation in various fields with Turkey, and has also improved its relations with other countries in the region, including Israel, thus enhancing the stability of the wider region;

Whereas the governments and people of Greece and the United States are at the forefront of efforts to advance freedom, democracy, peace, stability, and human rights;

Whereas those efforts and similar ideals have forged a close bond between the people of Greece and the United States; and

Whereas it is proper and desirable for the United States to celebrate March 25, 2017, Greek Independence Day, with the people of Greece and to reaffirm the democratic principles from which those two great countries were founded: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) extends warm congratulations and best wishes to the people of Greece as they celebrate the 196th anniversary of the independence of Greece;

(2) expresses support for the principles of democratic governance to which the people of Greece are committed; and

(3) notes the important role that Greece has played in the wider European region and in the community of nations since gaining its independence 196 years ago.

APPOINTMENTS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, on behalf of the Vice President, pursuant to Public Law 94–304, as amended by Public Law 99–7, appoints the following Senators as members of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (Helsinki) during the 115th Congress: the Honorable JOHN BOOZMAN of Arkansas, the Honorable MARCO RUBIO of Florida, and the Honorable THOM TILLIS of North Carolina.

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, MARCH 7, 2017

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m. on Tuesday, March 7; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, 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 resume consideration of H.J. Res. 44; finally, that there be 8 hours of debate remaining on the resolution, equally divided in the usual form.

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

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:59 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, March 7, 2017, at 10 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nomination received by the Senate:

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

LT. GEN. HERBERT R. MCMASTER, JR.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING MS. KRISTEN WHITE AS THE 2018 SANTA ROSA COUNTY TEACHER OF THE YEAR

HON. MATT GAETZ

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 6, 2017

Mr. GAETZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Ms. Kristen White as the 2018 Santa Rosa County Teacher of the Year. Ms. Brown has a long history of serving the Santa Rosa County School District with exceptional passion and an unwavering commitment to helping her students.

In Northwest Florida, we are fortunate to have some of the best teachers in the Nation. It is recognized that the teaching profession is one of the most difficult yet rewarding professions in existence. Ms. White has exceptionally performed her teaching duties, while also striving to be an active and supportive member of her community.

Ms. White has served as an elementary reading and writing intervention teacher at East Milton Elementary and coordinates the Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math (STEAM) Innovate Lab, which serves K–5 students. She also provides professional development to teachers, coordinates Discovery education assessments, and collects and interprets data for grade levels.

Previously she has served as a Kindergarten teacher and grade level chair. Her support and mentoring extends far beyond the walls of her classroom through her willingness to serve as a Professional Learning Community facilitator. I commend Ms. White for her steadfast willingness to serve those that matter most, the students and youth of our Nation.

For all of her admirable contributions, I am truly proud to have Ms. White as a constituent in Florida's First Congressional District.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I am privileged to recognize Ms. Kristen White for her accomplishments and her commitment to excellence in the Santa Rosa County School District. I thank her for her service and wish her all the best for continued success.

RECOGNIZING LIEUTENANT COLONEL STEVE ''THIRSTY'' SMITH FOR REACHING 10,000 FLYING HOURS IN A B–52 BOMBER

HON. MIKE JOHNSON

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 6, 2017

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor that I rise today to commend the achievements of Lieutenant Colonel Steve "Thirsty" Smith for making United States Air Force history on March 3, 2017 by being the only currently serving member of the United States Air Force to reach 10,000 flying hours in a B–52 heavy bomber, officially labeled a B–52 Stratofortress, and contributing to the backbone of the manned strategic bomber force for the United States.

Lt. Colonel Smith joined the United States Air Force after graduating from the ROTC program at the University of Mississippi. He continued on to graduate navigation school at Mather Air Force Base in 1985 where he earned his wings and received his first assignment for the B–52.

As a navigator with the 93rd Bomb Squadron belonging to the 917th Wing at Barksdale Air Force Base in Louisiana, Lt. Colonel Smith has distinguished himself as one of our nation's most experienced navigators. He spent seven years on active duty before becoming a reservist for over 20 years. He has flown 10,000 B–52 hours and 1,819 B–52 sorties including 496 combat hours and 42 combat sorties over the span of four different wars; Operations Desert Storm, Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom and Inherent Resolve. He was awarded the Air Medal in 1991 and the Aerial Achievement Medal in 2002 and 2004.

His expertise with the B–52 played an instrumental role in modernizing the aircraft with a targeting pod that provides greater accuracy leading to more successful missions. Additionally, he has been an inspiration to many young navigators as a flight instructor, teaching over 180 young weapons systems officers at Barksdale Air Force Base in the same aircraft.

Dating back to World War I, the 93rd Bomb Squadron has repeatedly distinguished itself in its contributions to the security of the United States during deployments around the world. This distinction has continued today with global demonstrations of strategic attack capabilities.

Lt. Colonel Smith is greatly regarded throughout the Air Force and Louisiana communities and is known as a humble man who has selflessly given back to the country he loves so dearly. He has earned widespread respect for his continued commitment to serve in defense of our great nation.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, it is my pleasure to join a grateful community in saluting his outstanding achievements. My wife Kelly and I thank Lt. Colonel Smith for his dedicated services and wish him all the best for continued success in what is an already remarkable career.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF THE KHOJALY MASSACRE

HON. DONALD M. PAYNE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 6, 2017

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor all those lost in the Khojaly Massacre. On February 25, 1992, a little more than 25 years ago, over 600 people were brutally murdered in Khojaly, Azerbaijan. These were mostly elderly men, women, and children—innocent victims that should have never been part of such a heartbreaking tragedy. It is essential that we take the time every year to remember those who lost their lives during this horrific event in Azerbaijan. Their unwilling sacrifice continues to serve as a reminder to hold fast to the principles of democracy.

Azerbaijan is a strong partner of the United States in a strategically critical and compound region of the world. I ask my colleagues to join me and our Azerbaijani friends in commemorating the tragedy that occurred in the town of Khojaly.

HONORING SAM SCINTA FOR HIS DEDICATED SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 6, 2017

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor Mr. Sam Scinta, a dedicated volunteer for the Democratic Party and resident of Tonawanda, New York. Sam's tireless service is recognized today by his friends on the City of Tonawanda Democratic Committee. Sam has committed countless hours to further Democratic causes in our community and is most deserving of the City of Tonawanda Democratic Committee's Man of the Year Award.

Sam was raised in Buffalo, New York where he attended Public School 76 and Hutchinson Central High School. In 1954, he enlisted in the U.S. Navy. He is a Korean War Veteran and worked in aviation as a line captain and mechanic. He served in Kingsville, Texas, in a Patrol Squadron in San Diego, and in the Philippine Islands, until he was discharged in 1958.

In 1959, Sam began his career with the Erie Rail Road as a locomotive fireman and was promoted to locomotive engineer in 1966. When the Erie Rail Road merged with the Lackawanna Rail Road, he became active in the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen as an organizer, rising to the rank of Vice President, then Local Chairman. Following a union merge he became Local Chairman of the United Transportation Union. In 1976, he went to work for Con Rail after the North East Railroads merged, where he served as a locomotive engineer until his retirement in 1999.

Sam moved to Tonawanda in 1998 and following his retirement became active in the City of Tonawanda Democratic Committee and has served as Vice Chairman of the Committee for over a decade. One example of his dedication is Sam's command of the Smoothie Booth for the City Committee's fundraiser during Canal Fest since 2003. He constructs the booth, does the scheduling, works in the booth and is there from open to closing all 8 days. Each year, Sam puts in a long day at the Committee's annual picnic in August. Sam is also the proud custodian of the Committee's banner.

As a volunteer on Hillary Clinton's successful campaign for Senator in 2000, and at Congresswoman LOUISE SLAUGHTER's campaign headquarters in 2001, Sam worked tirelessly. In 2005 he hopped on board Legislator Michele Iannello's campaign. Following her victory, Sam went to work for Legislator Iannello in her district office for 2006 and 2007. In 2008, he went to work for the Erie County Board of Elections and retired again in June, 2016.

Sam is the loving father of Sam James Scinta and daughter-in-law Kerry, and a proud grandfather to Sam Jr. and Anthony. As a proud family man, while Sam's son was young, Sam coached and served as President of the Little League at Public School 81 in the 1970's.

Mr. Speaker, I honor Mr. Sam Scinta and his dedication to Democratic politics and our community. Sam's commitment and dependability are admirable and I am pleased to be able to recognize him today with the City of Tonawanda Democratic Committee as they present to him their Man of the Year Award.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SCOTT TAYLOR

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 6, 2017

Mr. TAYLOR. Mr. Speaker, due to travel with President Trump, I was unable to attend votes. Had I been present, I would have voted nay on Roll Call No. 122, yea on Roll Call No. 123, nay on Roll Call No. 124, nay on Roll Call No. 125, and yea on Roll Call No. 126.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE WHISNANTS

HON. MARK MEADOWS

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 6, 2017

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize The Whisnants, a musical ensemble from Morganton, North Carolina. On behalf of the people of Western North Carolina, I would like to congratulate The Whisnants for nearly 50 years of the continued growth of their remarkable ministry.

This ministry began many years ago in 1970, when John and Betty Whisnant and their family began singing gospel music in Morganton, North Carolina. The group has expanded over the years, with members coming and going, but they have always remained true to their mission. This family has asked God to use their ministry to touch more and more lives, and he has clearly used their music to do so. In the 47 years since they got their start, the Whisnants have performed across the nation and the world. The Whisnants have been recognized as leaders in gospel music, and their songs have frequently been awarded top accolades throughout their career.

As the family's ministry continues to grow and as new generations of Whisnants take new roles, they do so with my prayers and continued best wishes. The Whisnants have been extraordinary representatives of our community across our state and nation. On behalf of the people of Western North Carolina, it's my honor to recognize them on this important family milestone.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 6, 2017

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to cast votes on Monday February 27, 2017 due to a family medical emergency. Had I been present I would have voted: Roll Call No. 100: YEA, Roll Call No. 101: NO, and Roll Call No. 102: YEA.

HONORING GAYLE SYPOSS FOR HER DEDICATED SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 6, 2017

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, my hometown county Democratic committee gathered recently to honor the longtime chair of the City of Tonawanda Democratic committee, Gayle Syposs, to commemorate her service both to her community and to the Democratic Party.

A career public servant, Gayle has in the past served as an elected member of her hometown city council, as a civil servant and appointed public servant in county government, and at present once again serving her hometown as the Tonawanda City Clerk, where its elected leadership—be they Republican or Democratically affiliated—agree that her experience and institutional knowledge was critically important when the longtime incumbent city clerk retired in 2015.

But it is how Gayle came to public life that helps illustrate what is great about America, and about how committed people, working together, can be an effective voice for the communities they love.

In the 1970s, New York State government had plans to ''improve'' transportation in the city of Tonawanda—but the local community didn't think much of it. The state wanted to change Niagara Street into a four lane highway, which would have turned this main thoroughfare adjacent to the city's waterfront parks into a dangerous highway totally not in keeping with the needs and wants of city residents, destroying the city's character in the process.

This ill-conceived action midwifed the birth of a great civic and political activist in Gayle Syposs. After reading a newspaper article detailing the number of old-growth trees destined to be removed to build this highway, Gayle formed a citizens' committee that successfully fought the state's top-down plan, preserving Niagara Street and the character of her hometown the right way, in a grassroots, bottom-up fashion, energizing and educating neighbors to join the fight.

Today, Niagara Street remains as it was, a low-speed thoroughfare adjacent to county and city parks, preserved, we hope, in perpetuity for the enjoyment of residents and families during each of Western New York's great four seasons. Gayle's activism spawned a career in public service and politics, leading her to 6 non-consecutive terms on the city council, and into greater governmental and political activism—something from which so many Western New York Democrats have benefited.

Indeed, while I have known Gayle for the better part of thirty years, I have come to benefit most directly since her city was included into my congressional district in 2012. In addition to being a steadfast supporter, Gayle has been a friend and an important link for me and for my staff to her local community—a service she has been kind enough to provide to me and to the people I work to serve.

Gayle is, as I mentioned, currently the chair of the city of Tonawanda's Democratic Committee, but that is only one of many titles she has held. While she has served as chair as long as many of us can remember, she also serves as Chair of the Erie County Association of Town Chairs, as Treasurer of the county Democratic party, and as a member of the New York State Democratic Committee.

A few weeks ago, Gayle was honored by our Erie County Democratic Committee as the 2017 recipient of the Joseph F. Crangle Legacy Award. Named for our legendary former county and state chairman, this award is the gold standard for local Democrats; it rightfully raises Gayle's name among the great leaders of our party.

But no one should imagine that earning this award will mean that Gayle will slow down anytime soon. Gayle will likely read this speech, reflect upon it for a few moments, and quickly move on to a call she recently received about a broken sidewalk, or pass along the résumé of a neighbor's college-aged grandson who is looking for an opportunity as he works his way through college. Gayle's dedication to her country, her community and, yes, her party, represent all that is great about Western New York, and I am thankful for the opportunity to honor her and to have the House take note of the many positive contributions she has made throughout our community.

HONORING MS. AILEEN CLARKE HERNANDEZ

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 6, 2017

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the extraordinary life of Aileen Clarke Hernandez. With her passing on February 13, 2017 in Irvine, California, I look to recognize her passion for women's equality, and the invaluable influence it has had on our nation.

Aileen was born in Brooklyn on May 23, 1926, to Charles Henry Clarke, and Ethel Louise Hall. Ms. Hernandez excelled in school and graduated magna cum laude from Howard University, where she was drawn into politics and worked with the NAACP. In 1951, she took an organizing job with the West Coast division of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union.

Her work with the Garment Workers Union brought her to California, and led to her involvement in California politics and government, where she eventually was appointed as

the assistant chief of the Fair Employment Practices Division for the State.

In 1964, Clarke was appointed by President Lyndon B. Johnson, as the first woman to serve on the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), and in 1966, she left the commission to form her own consulting firm, Hernandez and Associates. Her firm worked to end racism, sexism and all forms of discrimination, and to establish standards for equity in government and corporations.

In 1970 she was appointed the second President of the National Organization for Women (NOW) where she was instrumental in organizing the national Women's Strike for Equality on August 26, 1970.

In 1973, Ms. Clarke took initiative and founded Black Women Organized for Action in San Francisco. In addition, Ms. Clarke was the Co-Chair and Founder with Marilyn Fowler, of the California Women's Agenda, a network and action alliance of over 600 organizations in California, and was chairwoman of the committee that led to the founding of the National Women's Political Caucus that worked to increase political power for women.

Aileen Clarke Hernandez was a leader and fought against discrimination for more than seven decades. She took it as her mission to ensure a voice for women of color in the women's movement and civil rights movement, and worked on behalf of all people seeking social justice. Her monumental efforts have guided our nation on the right trajectory toward a more just society.

On a personal note, I met Aileen in 1972 during Shirley Chisholm's groundbreaking presidential campaign. She became a mentor and helped shape my political views and guided my growing political involvement. I was constantly amazed at how she could build bridges between activists in the feminist movement, people of color, and the civil rights movement, in order to work together for positive change. I was proud to call Aileen my friend; I know that her legacy will live on, and her spirit will continue to guide us through the many challenges that we continue to face.

Today, California's 13th Congressional District honors Aileen Hernandez's memory and her lifetime of service working on behalf of social justice and equality. We join her loved ones in celebrating her incredible life with a promise to honor her tremendous legacy.

REMEMBERING MAJOR REID B. NANNEN, UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

HON. DARIN LaHOOD

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 6, 2017

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, today, I would like to honor United States Marine Corps Major Reid B. Nannen, who passed away Sunday, March 1, 2014, while training at TOPGUN NAS in Fallon, Nevada.

Reid attended Olympia High School where he was a two-year captain of the swim team, a section leader for the drum line, and an Illinois State Scholar. Reid then attended the University of Illinois where he participated in the Marching Illini Drum Line, and also served as commander of the NROTC Drill Team his senior year. After graduating, Reid married the love of his life, Sarah M. Simpson, on August 6, 2005, in Peoria, Illinois.

Reid was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant in May 2004. After completing The Basic School, Reid attended Naval Aviation Training and received his Wings of Gold in February 2007. He deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom from May to December of 2010. Reid attended Tactical Air Control Party training in 2011 and proceeded to Camp Pendleton, California, for duty as a forward air controller. Reid deployed for the second time to Afghanistan from October of 2011 to May of 2012. Reid's valor and leadership led him to serve as a decorated hero receiving the Afghanistan Campaign Medal, Navy Unit Commendation, Navy Achievement Medal, and the Navy Commendation Medal and Air Medal.

In honor of Reid's sacrifice, it is my privilege to commemorate his service through the designation of the Major Reid B. Nannen Highway in Hopedale, Illinois. My prayers and thoughts go out to his wife, Sarah, and their four children, who have lost a loving husband and father. Our Nation is blessed to have servicemen like Captain Reid who have selflessly given their life in defense of our country and our freedom.

HONORING ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CATHEDRAL

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 6, 2017

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the rich history of St Paul's Episcopal Cathedral, a long standing community pillar that is celebrating its 200th anniversary this year.

The Episcopal Cathedral was incorporated on February 10, 1817 in the city of Buffalo. This building was Buffalo's first permanent house of worship and was consecrated on February 25, 1821.

A major milestone in the Church's history was the consecration of a new edifice. This building was designed by renowned architect Richard Upjohn and began a second period of growth for the Church.

St Paul's Cathedral flourished in the city until May 22, 1888 when it was tragically destroyed by a fire. Through perseverance and a strong commitment to the community, the restored St Paul's Cathedral was inaugurated just two years later.

The Church committed to remaining in the downtown community of Buffalo. Even with the hardships of the twentieth century around the country and in Buffalo, St Paul's Cathedral took advantage of every opportunity to grow and serve the community.

St Paul's Cathedral is where The Most Rev. Michael Bruce Curry, Presiding Bishop and Primate of The Episcopal Church, attended while he was going through Buffalo Public Schools.

Through different projects throughout the city of Buffalo, the people of St Paul's Cathedral have shown their commitment to social service and preserving their history.

Mr. Speaker, I honor a long standing institution in the city of Buffalo. I am proud to celebrate St Paul's Episcopal Cathedral's bicentennial and I wish the Church good fortune for many years to come.

INTRODUCTION OF THE ANIMAL WELFARE ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY ACT

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 6, 2017

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, early last month, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) abruptly pulled animal welfare violation documents from its website. This database contained thousands of inspection reports and other information about violations of the Animal Welfare Act and the Horse Protection Act made by research laboratories, zoos, dog breeding operations, and other facilities. While the agency has begun to repost some of these documents, it has so far only restored a small fraction of the information that was taken down. In the meantime, consumers and animal welfare advocates lack the transparency needed to make informed decisions and hold violators accountable.

For the life of me, I can't understand why USDA would hide this vital information. Ensuring transparency under these laws is a no-brainer. Luckily, many of my colleagues feel the same. Today, I am pleased to introduce, with 34 of my colleagues, the Animal Welfare Accountability and Transparency Act. This bill would require USDA to repost this information on its website and would increase accountability for those who treat animals inhumanely.

Providing consumers with information about where their pets come from and how animals are treated is the least we can do to discourage people from violating the law. It is critical that we ensure the standards set forth by Animal Welfare Act and the Horse Protection Act are upheld. This is why the Animal Welfare Accountability and Transparency Act would create an additional incentive to abide by these laws.

The bill would take away certain tax benefits for businesses that are found to be in violation of those laws. Under current tax rules, the costs of breeding and working animals are treated the same as machinery and equipment, and businesses may deduct these costs from their taxes over a specified period. The bill would prohibit businesses found to have violated the Animal Welfare Act or the Horse Protection Act from claiming these accelerated depreciation bonuses for tax purposes.

I am also happy to have worked with my colleague from Oregon, Senator RON WYDEN, who introduced a Senate version of this legislation late last week. This bill is a small step that this Congress can take quickly to show that we respond to animal abuse and that the federal government should be transparent with consumers. I call on my colleagues to support this bill so that we can send a strong message to animal abusers across this country that their horrendous actions will not be kept in the shadows.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 90TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SACRAMENTO MEMORIAL AUDITORIUM

HON. DORIS O. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 6, 2017

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 90th Anniversary of Sacramento's Memorial Auditorium. As the City of Sacramento celebrates one of its most valued and awe inspiring buildings, I ask all my colleagues to join me in honoring this historical piece of architecture in Sacramento.

The Memorial Auditorium, listed on the National Register of Historic Places since 1977, opened in 1927 and is dedicated as a tribute and memorial to those in our community who gave their lives to our country. The Memorial Auditorium has provided the venue for a variety of events including concerts, local graduations, competitions and gubernatorial inaugurations. The building has many unique architectural design elements and operational features.

In honor of this anniversary, the City of Sacramento is offering a viewing of the classic comedy and silent film ''Steamboat Bill, Jr.'' accompanied by the local organist Dave Moreno live. This Buster Keaton film has special connection with the area, as it was filmed on the Sacramento River in 1927 the same year the Memorial Auditorium opened.

Mr. Speaker, as the City of Sacramento honors the 90th Anniversary of the Memorial Auditorium, I ask all my colleagues to join me in honoring this staple of the Sacramento area and all it has provided to the community.

HONORING DONALD R. WHITE

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 6, 2017

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the extraordinary work of Donald R. White, who recently retired after 32 years of serving as Alameda County's Treasurer-Tax Collector. I recognize his exemplary work and the invaluable influence he had on our community in the County of Alameda.

Mr. White graduated from California State University, Hayward (now Cal State East Bay) where he earned a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration. He is a Certified Public Accountant, a member of the California Society of CPAs, and a member of the American Institute of CPAs. These qualifications helped him become the first African American auditor at Ernst and Young's San Francisco office and he later co-founded Adams, Grant, White & Co, a minority owned accounting firm that had offices in Washington, D.C., Oakland, and Fresno.

Donald began his work for Alameda County in 1985 when he made history as the first African American to be elected to the position of Treasurer-Tax Collector. As Alameda County's Treasurer, White oversaw billions of dollars in county funds, managed multiple departments, and supervised a staff of over 60 employees.

Mr. White is a trailblazer. He dedicated his career to serving and supporting his community, investing years with countless community service organizations. He has committed himself to numerous non-profit boards, including service on the Board of Trustees for the East Oakland Youth Development Center and on the Board of Directors and as chair of the Audit Committee of the Episcopal Diocese of California. He served as treasurer for the Alpha Gamma Boule Foundation and treasurer of the Black Elected Officials and Faith Based Leaders of the East Bay.

Over the years Mr. White has also committed his time and expertise to numerous professional organizations, including the California Association of County Treasurers and Tax Collectors, National Association of Securities Professionals, National Association of Black Accountants, and is an active member of the Oakland Chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP).

Mr. White is an exemplary model of a positive community activist, promoter of equality, and role model for all. He has worked tirelessly as a public servant and committed himself to expanding and promoting diversity in every aspect of professional services for the county.

On a personal note, I had the privilege to be involved in Don's first campaign, when I organized an event for him with Congressman Harold Ford. Don was also a member of a business delegation that I led to Africa, and the group benefitted tremendously from his expertise and insights. More than anything, Don always lived up to his role as an exemplary public servant, and I am proud to call him my friend.

Today, on behalf of California's 13th Congressional District, I salute the long and successful career of Donald R. White. I offer my congratulations and acknowledge the positive impact that he had on the communities of Alameda County.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RODNEY DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 6, 2017

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, during the afternoon of Tuesday February 28, 2017, I was absent from the House due to a meeting at the White House with Vice President Mike Pence and my constituent and guest to the President's Address to the Joint Session of Congress, Elizabeth Snyder. I would like to reflect how I would have voted had I been present for legislative business.

Had I been present, I would have voted ''aye'' on Roll Call 105. I would have voted ''nay'' on Roll Call 106, Roll Call 107, and Roll Call 108.

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 Tuesday, March 7, 2017 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

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

2:15 p.m.
Committee on Indian Affairs
To hold an oversight hearing to examine Indian affairs priorities for the Trump Administration.
SD–628

2:30 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Cybersecurity
To receive a closed briefing on cybersecurity from the Defense Science Board.
SVC–217

Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Strategic Forces
To hold hearings to examine the global nuclear weapons environment.
SR–222

MARCH 9

9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
To hold hearings to examine U.S. Central Command and U.S. Africa Command.
SH–216

10 a.m.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

Business meeting to consider S. 327, to direct the Securities and Exchange Commission to provide a safe harbor related to certain investment fund research reports, S. 444, to amend the Investment Company Act of 1940 to expand the investor limitation for qualifying venture capital funds under an exemption from the definition of an investment company, S. 462, to require the Securities and Exchange Commission to refund or credit certain excess payments made to the Commission, S. 484, 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, and S. 488, to increase the threshold for disclosures required by the Securities and Exchange Commission relating to compensatory benefit plans.

SD–538

Committee on the Judiciary

Business meeting to consider S. 419, to require adequate reporting on the Public Safety Officers' Benefits program, and the nominations of Danny C. Reeves, of Kentucky, to be a Member of the United States Sentencing Commission for a term expiring October 31, 2019, and Charles R. Breyer, of California, to be a Member of the United States Sentencing Commission for a term expiring October 31, 2021.

SD–226

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

10:15 a.m.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

Subcommittee on Regulatory Affairs and Federal Management

To hold hearings to examine agency use of science in the rulemaking process, focusing on proposals for improving transparency and accountability.

SD–342

10:30 a.m.

Committee on Foreign Relations

Business meeting to consider the nomination of David Friedman, of New York, to be Ambassador to Israel; to be immediately followed by a hearing to examine resolving the conflict in Yemen, focusing on U.S. interests, risks, and policy.

SD–419

2 p.m.

Select Committee on Intelligence

To hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters.

SH–219

MARCH 15

2:30 p.m.

Special Committee on Aging

To hold hearings to examine raising grandchildren in the opioid crisis and beyond.

SD–562

3:30 p.m.

Committee on Armed Services

Subcommittee on Airland

To hold hearings to examine all arms warfare in the 21st century.

SR–232A

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

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S1589–S1605

Measures Introduced: Eight bills and three resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 528–535, S.J. Res. 32–33, and S. Res. 81. **Pages S1603–04**

Measures Passed:

Federal Acquisition Regulation Rule: By 49 yeas to 48 nays (Vote No. 81), Senate passed H.J. Res. 37, disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of Defense, the General Services Administration, and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration relating to the Federal Acquisition Regulation. **Pages S1591–S1601**

Measures Considered:

Federal Land Policy and Management Act Rule—Agreement: Senate began consideration of H.J. Res. 44, disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of the Interior relating to Bureau of Land Management regulations that establish the procedures used to prepare, revise, or amend land use plans pursuant to the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, after agreeing to the motion to proceed. **Pages S1601–03**

A unanimous-consent-time agreement was reached providing for further consideration of the joint resolution at approximately 10 a.m., on Tuesday, March 7, 2017; and that there be eight hours of debate remaining on the joint resolution, equally divided in the usual form. **Page S1605**

Appointments:

Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (Helsinki): The Chair, on behalf of the Vice President, pursuant to Public Law 94–304, as amended by Public Law 99–7, appointed the following Senators as members of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (Helsinki) during the 115th Congress: Senators Boozman, Rubio, and Tillis. **Page S1605**

Nomination Received: Senate received the following nomination:

1 Army nomination in the rank of general. **Page S1605**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages S1604–05**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Page S1605**

Additional Statements:

Record Votes: One record vote was taken today. (Total—81) **Page S1601**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 2 p.m. and adjourned at 6:59 p.m., until 10 a.m. on Tuesday, March 7, 2017. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Acting Majority Leader in today's Record on page S1605.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

No committee meetings were held.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 12 public bills, H.R. 1362–1373; and 2 resolutions, H. Res. 171–172 were introduced. **Pages H1536–37**

Additional Cosponsors: **Page H1538**

Reports Filed: There were no reports filed today.

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Harris to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. **Page H1535**

Guest Chaplain: The prayer was offered by the Guest Chaplain, Rev. Gene Hemrick, St. Joseph's Catholic Church, Washington, DC. **Page H1535**

Board of Visitors to the United States Merchant Marine Academy—Appointment: The Chair announced the Speaker's appointment of the following Member on the part of the House to the Board of Visitors to the United States Merchant Marine Academy: Representative Suozzi. **Page H1535**

Senate Messages: Messages received from the Senate by the Clerk and subsequently presented to the House today appear on pages H1535.

Quorum Calls—Votes: There were no yea-and-nay votes, and there were no Recorded votes. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 4 p.m. and adjourned at 4:03 p.m.

Committee Meetings

No hearings were held.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR TUESDAY, MARCH 7, 2017

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

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, 2:15 p.m., SD–192.

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, 10 a.m., SD–226.

Select Committee on Intelligence: closed business meeting to consider the nomination of Daniel Coats, of Indiana, to be Director of National Intelligence, 2:20 p.m., SH–219.

Full Committee, to hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters, 2:30 p.m., SH–219.

House

Committee on Rules, Full Committee, hearing on H.R. 725, the "Innocent Party Protection Act"; H.R. 1301, the "Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2017", 5 p.m., H–313 Capitol.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Full Committee, hearing entitled "Shaping the Future: Consolidating and Improving VA Community Care", 7:30 p.m., 334 Cannon.

CONGRESSIONAL PROGRAM AHEAD

Week of March 7 through March 10, 2017

Senate Chamber

On *Tuesday*, at approximately 10 a.m., Senate will continue consideration of H.J. Res. 44, Federal Land Policy and Management Act Rule, with up to eight hours of debate, and vote on passage of the joint resolution.

During the balance of the week, Senate may consider any cleared legislative and executive business.

Senate Committees

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Committee on Appropriations: March 7, 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, 2:15 p.m., SD–192.

March 8, 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, 10 a.m., SD–192.

March 8, Subcommittee on Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies, to hold hearings to examine saving lives through medical research, 10:30 a.m., SD–138.

Committee on Armed Services: March 8, Subcommittee on Strategic Forces, to hold hearings to examine the global nuclear weapons environment, 2:30 p.m., SR–222.

March 8, Subcommittee on Cybersecurity, to receive a closed briefing on cybersecurity from the Defense Science Board, 2:30 p.m., SVC–217.

March 9, Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine U.S. Central Command and U.S. Africa Command, 9:30 a.m., SH–216.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: March 9, business meeting to consider S. 327, to direct the Securities and Exchange Commission to provide a safe harbor related to certain investment fund research reports, S. 444, to amend the Investment Company Act of 1940 to expand the investor limitation for qualifying venture capital funds under an exemption from the definition of an investment company, S. 462, to require the Securities and Exchange Commission to refund or credit certain excess payments made to the Commission, S. 484, 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, and S. 488, to increase the threshold for disclosures required by the Securities and Exchange Commission relating to compensatory benefit plans, 10 a.m., SD–538.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: March 8, to hold an oversight hearing to examine the Federal Communications Commission, 10 a.m., SH–216.

Committee on Environment and Public Works: March 8, to hold hearings to examine an original bill entitled, ''Nuclear Energy Innovation and Modernization Act'', 10 a.m., SD–406.

Committee on Foreign Relations: March 9, business meeting to consider the nomination of David Friedman, of New York, to be Ambassador to Israel; to be immediately followed by a hearing to examine resolving the conflict in Yemen, focusing on U.S. interests, risks, and policy, 10:30 a.m., SD–419.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: March 8, to hold hearings to examine the nomination of Elaine C. Duke, of Virginia, to be Deputy Secretary of Homeland Security, 9:30 a.m., SD–342.

March 9, Subcommittee on Regulatory Affairs and Federal Management, to hold hearings to examine agency use of science in the rulemaking process, focusing on proposals for improving transparency and accountability, 10:15 a.m., SD–342.

Committee on Indian Affairs: March 8, to hold an oversight hearing to examine Indian affairs priorities for the Trump Administration, 2:15 p.m., SD–628.

Committee on the Judiciary: March 7, 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, 10 a.m., SD–226.

March 9, Full Committee, business meeting to consider S. 419, to require adequate reporting on the Public Safety Officers' Benefits program, and the nominations of Danny C. Reeves, of Kentucky, to be a Member of the United States Sentencing Commission for a term expiring October 31, 2019, and Charles R. Breyer, of California, to be a Member of the United States Sentencing Commission for a term expiring October 31, 2021, 10 a.m., SD–226.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: March 9, to hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of multiple veterans service organizations, 10 a.m., SD–G50.

Select Committee on Intelligence: March 7, closed business meeting to consider the nomination of Daniel Coats, of Indiana, to be Director of National Intelligence, 2:20 p.m., SH–219.

March 7, Full Committee, to hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters, 2:30 p.m., SH–219.

March 9, Full Committee, to hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters, 2 p.m., SH–219.

House Committees

Committee on Agriculture, March 9, Subcommittee on Commodity Exchanges, Energy, and Credit, hearing entitled ''The Next Farm Bill: Rural Development and Energy Programs'', 10 a.m., 1300 Longworth.

March 9, Subcommittee on Biotechnology, Horticulture, and Research, hearing entitled ''The Next Farm Bill: Specialty Crops'', 2 p.m., 1300 Longworth.

Committee on Appropriations, March 8, Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, and Related Agencies, hearing entitled ''Members' Day'', 10 a.m., 2362–B Rayburn.

March 8, Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government, hearing entitled ''Members' Day'', 2 p.m., 2359 Rayburn.

March 8, Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies, hearing for public witnesses, 10 a.m., 2358–B Rayburn.

March 8, Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies, hearing on quality of life in the military, 10 a.m., 2362–A Rayburn.

March 9, Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies, hearing entitled ''Members' Day'', 2 p.m., 2362–A Rayburn.

March 9, Subcommittee on Defense, hearing entitled ''Members' Day'', 9:30 a.m., H–140 Capitol.

March 9, Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies, hearing entitled ''Management Challenges at the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education and the Social Security Administration: Views from the Inspectors General'', 10 a.m., 2358–B Rayburn.

March 9, Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs, oversight hearing on Department of State and Foreign Operations Programs, 10 a.m., 2362–A Rayburn.

March 9, Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies, hearing entitled ''Members' Day'', 10 a.m., 2358–A Rayburn.

Committee on Armed Services, March 8, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Military Assessment of Nuclear Deterrence Requirements'', 10 a.m., 2118 Rayburn.

March 8, Subcommittee on Readiness, hearing entitled ''The Current State of U.S. Army Readiness'', 2 p.m., 2212 Rayburn.

March 8, Subcommittee on Seapower and Projection Forces, hearing entitled ''An Independent Fleet Assessment of the U.S. Navy'', 3:30 p.m., 2118 Rayburn.

March 9, Subcommittee on Strategic Forces, hearing entitled ''Nuclear Deterrence—the Defense Science Board's Perspective'', 3:30 p.m., 2118 Rayburn.

March 10, Subcommittee on Tactical Air and Land Forces, hearing entitled ''The Effect of Sequestration and Continuing Resolutions on Marine Corps Modernization and Readiness'', 9 a.m., 2118 Rayburn.

Committee on Education and the Workforce, March 8, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 1304, the ''Self-Insurance Protection Act''; H.R. 1101, the ''Small Business Health Fairness Act of 2017''; and H.R. 1313, the ''Preserving Employee Wellness Programs Act'', 10 a.m., 2175 Rayburn.

Committee on Ethics, March 9, Full Committee, organizational meeting for the 115th Congress, 2 p.m., 1015 Longworth.

Committee on Financial Services, March 9, Subcommittee on Housing and Insurance, hearing entitled ''Flood Insurance Reform: FEMA's Perspective'', 10 a.m., 2128 Rayburn.

March 9, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 910, the ''Fair Access to Investment Research Act of 2017''; H.R. 1219, the ''Supporting America's Innovators Act of

2017''; H.R. 1257, the ''Securities and Exchange Commission Overpayment Credit Act''; the ''U.S. Territories Investor Protection Act of 2017''; H.R. 1343, the ''Encouraging Employee Ownership Act of 2017''; and H.R. 1312, the ''Small Business Capital Formation Enhancement Act'', 1:30 p.m., 2128 Rayburn.

Committee on Foreign Affairs, March 9, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Undermining Democratic Institutions and Splintering NATO: Russian Disinformation Aims'', 10 a.m., 2172 Rayburn.

March 9, Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations, hearing entitled ''Democracy Under Threat in Ethiopia'', 2 p.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Committee on Homeland Security, March 8, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 876, the ''Aviation Employee Screening and Security Enhancement Act of 2017''; H.R. 1238, the ''Securing our Agriculture and Food Act''; H.R. 1249, the ''DHS Multiyear Acquisition Strategy Act of 2017''; H.R. 1252, the ''DHS Acquisition Authorities Act of 2017''; H.R. 1258, the ''HSA Technical Corrections Act''; H.R. 1282, the ''DHS Acquisition Review Board Act of 2017''; H.R. 1294, the ''Reducing DHS Acquisition Cost Growth Act''; H.R. 1297, the ''Quadrennial Homeland Security Review Technical Corrections Act of 2017''; H.R. 1302, the ''Terrorist and Foreign Fighter Travel Exercise Act of 2017''; H.R. 1309, the ''TSA Administrator Modernization Act of 2017''; H.R. 1353, the ''Transparency in Technological Acquisitions Act of 2017''; the ''Department of Homeland Security Blue Campaign Authorization Act of 2017''; a bill to be introduced prior to consideration by Chairman McCaul; the ''Homeland Security for Children Act''; and the ''Department of Homeland Security Acquisition Innovation Act'', 10 a.m., HVC–210.

March 9, Subcommittee on Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Protection, hearing entitled ''The Current State of DHS Private Sector Engagement for Cybersecurity'', 10 a.m., HVC–210.

Committee on House Administration, March 8, Full Committee, markup on a committee funding resolution, 10:45 a.m., 1310 Longworth.

Committee on the Judiciary, March 8, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''The Department of Homeland Security's Proposed Regulations Reforming the Investor Visa Program'', 10 a.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Committee on Natural Resources, March 9, Subcommittee on Indian, Insular, and Alaska Native Affairs, hearing entitled ''Improving and Expanding Infrastructure in Tribal and Insular Communities'', 10 a.m., 1324 Longworth.

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, March 8, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 1293, 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; the ''Official Time Reform Act of 2017''; H.R. 653, the ''Federal Intern Protection Act of 2017''; H.R. 680, the ''Eliminating Pornography from Agencies Act''; H. Res. 38, expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that offices attached to the seat of Government should not be required to exercise their offices in the District of Columbia; the ''SOAR Reauthorization Act''; H.R. 745, the ''Federal Records Modernization Act of 2017''; and the ''Electronic Message Preservation Act of 2017'', 10 a.m., 2154 Rayburn.

March 8, Subcommittee on Government Operations; and Subcommittee on Healthcare, Benefits, and Administrative Rules, joint hearing entitled ''Examining IRS Customer Service Challenges'', 2 p.m., 2154 Rayburn.

March 9, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Reviewing ATF's Failures in the Death of ICE Agent Jaime Zapata'', 10 a.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Committee on Rules, March 8, Full Committee, hearing on H.R. 720, the ''Lawsuit Abuse Reduction Act of 2017''; H.R. 985, the ''Fairness in Class Action Litigation Act of 2017'', 3 p.m., H–313 Capitol.

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, March 8, Subcommittee on Space, hearing entitled ''Regulating Space: Innovation, Liberty, and International Obligations'', 10 a.m., 2318 Rayburn.

March 9, Subcommittee on Research and Technology, hearing entitled ''National Science Foundation Part I: Overview and Oversight'', 11 a.m., 2318 Rayburn.

March 9, Full Committee, markup on the ''Honest and Open New EPA Science Treatment Act of 2017''; and the ''EPA Science Advisory Board Reform Act of 2017'', 9:30 a.m., 2321 Rayburn.

Committee on Small Business, March 8, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Small Business Cybersecurity: Federal Resources and Coordination'', 11 a.m., 2360 Rayburn.

March 9, Subcommittee on Investigations, Oversight, and Regulations, hearing entitled ''An Overview of SBA's 7(a) Loan Program'', 11 a.m., 2360 Rayburn.

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, March 8, Subcommittee on Aviation, hearing entitled ''Building a 21st Century Infrastructure for America: Air Transportation in the United States in the 21st Century'', 10 a.m., 2167 Rayburn.

March 9, Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment, hearing entitled ''Building a 21st Century Infrastructure for America: The Role of Federal Agencies in Water Infrastructure'', 10 a.m., 2167 Rayburn.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs, March 8, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 369, to eliminate the sunset of the Veterans Choice Program, and for other purposes; H.R. 1181, the ''Veterans 2nd Amendment Protection Act''; H.R. 1259, the ''VA Accountability First Act of 2017''; a bill to improve the authority of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to hire and retain physician and other employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs; and a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the entitlement to educational assistance under the Post-9/11 Educational Assistance Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs for members of the Armed Forces awarded the Purple Heart, 10:30 a.m., 334 Cannon.

Joint Meetings

Joint Hearing: March 9, Senate 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, 10 a.m., SD–G50.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

10 a.m., Tuesday, March 7

Senate Chamber

Program for Tuesday: Senate will continue consideration of H.J. Res. 44, Federal Land Policy and Management Act Rule, with up to eight hours of debate, and vote on passage of the joint resolution.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

12:00 p.m., Tuesday, March 7

House Chamber

Program for Tuesday: To be announced.

Extensions of Remarks, as inserted in this issue

HOUSE

Blumenauer, Earl, Ore., E275
Davis, Rodney, Ill., E276
Gaetz, Matt, Fla., E273
Higgins, Brian, N.Y., E273, E274, E275
Johnson, Mike, La., E273
LaHood, Darin, Ill., E275
Lee, Barbara, Calif., E274, E276
Lofgren, Zoe, Calif., E274
Matsui, Doris O., Calif., E276
Meadows, Mark, N.C., E274
Payne, Donald M., Jr., N.J., E273
Taylor, Scott, Va., E274

Congressional Record

The *Congressional Record* (USPS 087–390). The Periodicals postage is paid at Washington, D.C. The public proceedings of each House of Congress, as reported by the Official Reporters thereof, are printed pursuant to directions of the Joint Committee on Printing as authorized by appropriate provisions of Title 44, United States Code, and published for each day that one or both Houses are in session, excepting very infrequent instances when two or more unusually small consecutive issues are printed one time. ¶Public access to the *Congressional Record* is available online through the U.S. Government Publishing Office, at *www.govinfo.gov*, free of charge to the user. The information is updated online each day the *Congressional Record* is published. For more information, contact the GPO Customer Contact Center, U.S. Government Publishing Office. Phone 202–512–1800, or 866–512–1800 (toll-free). E-Mail, *contactcenter@gpo.gov*. ¶To place an order for any of these products, visit the U.S. Government Online Bookstore at: bookstore.gpo.gov. Mail orders to: Superintendent of Documents, P.O. Box 979050, St. Louis, MO 63197–9000, or phone orders to 866–512–1800 (toll-free), 202–512–1800 (D.C. area), or fax to 202–512–2104. Remit check or money order, made payable to the Superintendent of Documents, or use VISA, MasterCard, Discover, American Express, or GPO Deposit Account. ¶Following each session of Congress, the daily *Congressional Record* is revised, printed, permanently bound and sold by the Superintendent of Documents in individual parts or by sets. ¶With the exception of copyrighted articles, there are no restrictions on the republication of material from the *Congressional Record*.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Superintendent of Documents, *Congressional Record*, U.S. Government Publishing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402, along with the entire mailing label from the last issue received.