

States. Despite a difficult fiscal situation, Costa Rica is projected to increase its investment in security by 20 percent in 2017. I commend the Obama administration's decision to donate two Island-class cutters to the Costa Rican Coast Guard, which will greatly boost Costa Rica's capacity to combat the narcotics trade. This also serves as a reminder of the strategic value of the State Department's security cooperation at a time when the Trump administration is proposing shortsighted cuts to our foreign assistance budget.

Additionally, I want to call attention to Costa Rica's collaboration with the United States in addressing the humanitarian challenges related to individuals fleeing violence in Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras. Between 2013 and 2016, the number of migrants from these three countries who have requested asylum in Costa Rica more than quadrupled, a dramatic increase that reflects the urgency of the situation in Central America. In a clear demonstration of President Solis's leadership on these issues, Costa Rica and the United States signed an agreement with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, UNHCR, to establish a relocation and processing facility in Costa Rica for up to 200 at-risk migrants at a time from Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras. This critical screening provides immediate protection for those most vulnerable and opens opportunities for these individuals to be relocated to third countries.

Our joint agreement with UNHCR is but one example of U.S. and Costa Rican collaboration at multilateral fora. Costa Rica has consistently voted with the United States at the United Nations on critical issues related to Syria, North Korea, and Ukraine. In the past year, Costa Rica has also used its voice and vote at the Organization of American States to express concern about the growing challenges to democracy and human rights in Venezuela.

Furthermore, in August 2016, Costa Rica's commitment to human rights was on display when it became the first country to ratify the Inter-American Convention against Racism, Racial Discrimination and Related Forms of Intolerance—an important step toward a more just and egalitarian society within the Americas. The convention reinforces international standards on all forms of discrimination, reaffirms the commitment of member states of the OAS to the complete and unconditional eradication of racism, and takes a step forward in the legal definition of contemporary forms of racism.

As a champion of environmental stewardship, Costa Rica has made great strides to develop renewable energy. Costa Rica recently set an ambitious carbon neutrality goal for 2021 and is well positioned to achieve this important objective. The country recently ran 75 days straight on renewable power, and, with continued foreign

investment and U.S. diplomatic assistance, Costa Rica is on its way to becoming a carbon-neutral nation. I am hopeful that our diplomatic mission to Costa Rica will continue to support the country's interest in being a leader in the fight against climate change. Helping Costa Rica realize innovations in its power sector helps foster a broader strategic partnership with an important neighbor in our hemisphere.

At a moment characterized by the Trump administration's isolationist rhetoric, it is critically important to recognize that the United States is safer when we cooperate with other countries in the region to fight the battle against organized crime and illegal drug-trafficking. At the same time, Costa Rica's cooperation with the United Nations to support orderly and lawful migration, its collaboration with its neighbors in the region, and its efforts to promote human rights regionally are worthy of our commendation. Costa Rica is a true partner of the United States, and it is imperative that we continue to strengthen and expand the cooperation between our two countries to promote more security, prosperity, and stability in Central America and across the hemisphere.

#### TRIBUTE TO BARBARA VACHON

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, today I wish to honor Barbara Vachon, who retired this March after 16 years of service to the Senate. For as long as I have been in the Senate, with just a 2-month exception, Barb has served as my executive assistant and my right hand.

Barb's service to the Senate began in 2001, when her friend Trecia called and offered her a temporary position in Senator Jim Jeffords' office. In New Hampshire at the time, Barb decided she would take a chance and try out life in Washington, DC. Barb thought she was coming down to Washington for a 2-month assignment, answering phones and staffing the front office until the office could hire someone right out of college, but Barb quickly became an invaluable member of Senator Jeffords' team. Eventually, she became the Senator's executive assistant, working alongside him every day until his retirement from the Senate in 2007.

Barb's first year in the Senate included Senator Jeffords switching parties, 9/11, and the anthrax and ricin scares. Any one of these events might have given a different person a reason to leave the Senate, but Barb stayed and worked as hard as ever. When Senator Jeffords retired in 2007, Barb helped Senator BERNIE SANDERS' office learn the ways of the Senate for 2 months, after which she joined my office.

From day 1, Barb was always the person who made the trains run on time in my office. Barb had the challenging and sometimes impossible task of keeping my day on schedule, while at the same time juggling phone calls, personal notes, briefing memos, and

any number of inquiries that came across her desk. There were even a few times where she managed to track down particularly old and rare library books at my request. No matter the task at hand, Barb approached her work with good humor and a can-do attitude that impressed everyone.

Barb's contributions in my Senate office are immeasurable, but I thought it was worth trying to quantify some of the ways in which she has served the people of Pennsylvania and our Nation. During her decade of service to Pennsylvania, Barb welcomed more than 200 ambassadors, dignitaries, and administration officials to my office, drafted more than 500 letters, and greeted over 1,000 Pennsylvanians at my "Keystone Coffees." She acted as a mentor and support system for all my staff members, and befriended everyone she worked with in the Senate. Everyone, from the Capitol Police officers she passed on her 3-block commute, to the photographers in the Senate Photo Studio who patiently waited while Barb shepherded our constituents for photos, knows how valued Barb was to our team and to me personally.

Having been in the Senate long before I was, Barb understood how to balance the everyday needs in the office with the overall goals we set for ourselves when we first began our service here. Barb provided everyone in my office, myself included, with the important perspective that is often lost here in the Senate: it is easy to get bogged down in details or small problems, but the work we do here is important, lasting, and honorable. Barb never lost sight of how fortunate we are to work in this institution, and I know our team is grateful to have always had that reminder.

It is hard to imagine my office without Barb, but I know she will enjoy her retirement, whether she is home in New Hampshire or traveling the world. I wish her and her children, Heather and Michael, well in this new chapter.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### TRIBUTE TO LESLIE CARTNER

• Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, this week, I have the distinct honor of recognizing Leslie Cartner, commander of the Yellowstone Battalion of the U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps in Billings. Leslie's devotion to the Yellowstone Battalion, the only Sea Cadet organization in the State of Montana, has been outstanding. In the next few weeks, Leslie will complete her tenure as Yellowstone Battalion Commander and transfer responsibility for the Sea Cadet program to another capable Montanan.

In 1962, Congress chartered the U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps. Today there are over 380 Sea Cadet units and nearly 9,000 young Americans participating in the program. In the Yellowstone Battalion, under Leslie's leadership, the

cadets have been trained in drill and ceremony, first aid, inspection procedures, and taught the basics of fighting a fire while onboard a ship. In addition to learning introductory level Navy skills, the cadets have received character-building instruction in avoiding substance abuse and prevention of bullying and harassment. One of the instructors for the Yellowstone Battalion, Navy veteran George Blackard, described Leslie as the driving force behind the local Sea Cadet program and “the one who really got it off the ground.” I strongly share George’s appreciation for the work Leslie has done to enhance the program and her commitment to helping build the next generation of leaders.

From Libby to Ekalaka, Montanans are doing great things to strengthen their communities. A thank you for a job well done, I tip my cap to Leslie.

Good job, Sailor.●

#### TRIBUTE TO DOUG GRIFFIN

● Ms. HASSAN. Mr. President, today I wish to ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing and congratulating Doug Griffin of Newton, NH, for being named an “Advocate of the Year” by the Addiction Policy Forum. After Mr. Griffin lost his daughter Courtney to an opioid overdose in September 2014, he became a passionate advocate, determined to increase awareness of the opioid epidemic in the State of New Hampshire. Granite Staters and Americans impacted by this urgent crisis owe him a debt of gratitude for his work, and I am grateful that the Addiction Policy Forum has honored him with this distinction.

Mr. Griffin has been a leader in calling for easier access to naloxone, Narcan, for families at risk of an overdose, even testifying on the issue before the New Hampshire State Legislature. My colleagues in the U.S. Senate remember Mr. Griffin from his testimony on the rise of opioid-related deaths and the importance of passing the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act last year. In addition to his role as cochair of the Addiction Policy Forum’s families committee, Mr. Griffin has spearheaded several local efforts in the Granite State, including hosting a monthly church service for people with substance use disorders and their families, a club for young students to raise awareness of the dangers of opioids, and a project to create a farm-based sober living facility for those in recovery.

New Hampshire has benefited greatly from Mr. Griffin’s devotion and leadership. On behalf of my colleagues and the U.S. Congress, I thank Mr. Griffin for all the advocacy work he has done and continues to do. I congratulate him again on being named one of the Addiction Policy Forum’s “Advocates of the Year”.●

#### MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

##### ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

At 10:33 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bills:

S. 305. An act to amend title 4, United States Code, to encourage the display of the flag of the United States on National Vietnam War Veterans Day.

H.R. 1228. An act to provide for the appointment of members of the Board of Directors of the Office of Compliance to replace members whose terms expire during 2017, and for other purposes.

The enrolled bills were subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

At 12:20 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 372. An act to restore the application of Federal antitrust laws to the business of health insurance to protect competition and consumers.

H.R. 1101. An act to amend title I of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 to improve access and choice for entrepreneurs with small businesses with respect to medical care for their employees.

H.R. 1238. An act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to make the Assistant Secretary of Homeland Security for Health Affairs responsible for coordinating the efforts of the Department of Homeland Security related to food, agriculture, and veterinary defense against terrorism, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that pursuant to section 803(a) of the Congressional Recognition for Excellence in Arts Education Act (2 U.S.C. 803(a)), the Minority Leader reappoints the Honorable DEBBIE DINGELL of Michigan to the Congressional Award Board.

#### MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 372. An act to restore the application of the Federal antitrust laws to the business of health insurance to protect competition and consumers; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

H.R. 1101. An act to amend title I of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 to improve access and choice for entrepreneurs with small businesses with respect to medical care for their employees; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

H.R. 1238. An act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to make the Assistant Secretary of Homeland Security for Health Affairs responsible for coordinating the efforts of the Department of Homeland Security related to food, agriculture, and veterinary defense against terrorism, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

#### ENROLLED BILLS PRESENTED

The Secretary of the Senate reported that on today, March 23, 2017, she had

presented to the President of the United States the following enrolled bill:

S. 305. An act to amend title 4, United States Code, to encourage the display of the flag of the United States on National Vietnam War Veterans Day.

#### EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-1033. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Further Delay of Effective Dates for Five Final Regulations Published by the Environmental Protection Agency Between December 12, 2016 and January 17, 2017” (FRL No. 9960-28-OP) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 16, 2017; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-1034. A communication from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting a report on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General Andrew E. Busch, United States Air Force, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-1035. A communication from the Chairman, Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Council’s 2016 Annual Report to Congress; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-1036. A communication from the Executive Director, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Annual Update of Filing Fees” (RIN1902-AF35) (Docket No. RM17-00006-000) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 15, 2017; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-1037. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Further Delay of Effective Dates for Five Final Regulations Published by the Environmental Protection Agency Between December 12, 2016 and January 17, 2017” (FRL No. 9960-28-OP) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 16, 2017; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1038. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Technical Correction to the National Ambient Air Quality Standards for Particulate Matter” ((RIN2060-AS89) (FRL No. 9958-29-OAR)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 16, 2017; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1039. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Limited Federal Implementation Plan; Prevention of Significant Deterioration Requirements for Fine Particulate Matter (PM2.5); California; North Coast Unified Air Quality Management District” (FRL No. 9960-32-Region 9) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 16, 2017; to the