The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable Ben Sasse, a Senator from the State of Nebraska.

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

Let us pray.
O God most high, we know not what a day will bring forth—sorrow or joy—but our eyes are on You.
Sustain our Senators in their work. Give them the wisdom to repay Your Grace with the currency of their gratitude. Lead them to bear the burdens of the marginalized and so fulfill the law of love.
Lord, teach them anew the meaning of faith, hope, and love. Give them even tempers that can meet upsetting things with calm serenity.
Lord, keep them from being ashamed of that which they should be proud and proud of that which they should be ashamed.
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 senior assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:
U.S. SENATE,
President pro tempore,
To the Senate:
Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable Ben Sasse, a Senator from the State of Nebraska, to perform the duties of the Chair.
Orrin G. Hatch,
President pro tempore.

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER
The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

ISSUES BEFORE THE SENATE
Mr. McConnell. Mr. President, yesterday, the Senate confirmed former Georgia Governor Sonny Perdue to lead the Department of Agriculture.
We also took the next step in advancing Rod Rosenstein to serve as Deputy Attorney General. I look forward to confirming Mr. Rosenstein so he can get to work without further delay.
After we take that vote, we will be able to advance the Department of Labor nominee, Alexander Acosta. Mr. Acosta has an impressive background that will serve him well as he leads the Department on issues that can support America’s employers and employees as well as the overall economy.
I am pleased Mr. Acosta has outlined his commitment to ensuring that the Department of Labor encourages, rather than hampers, job growth—a welcome change after 8 years of job-destroying regulations and policies that sought to undermine the Obama administration’s efforts to help create jobs, enhance workforce development, and support middle-class workers.
As we advance these nominees, Senators are also continuing discussions on government funding legislation. These talks have been part of a bipartisan, bicameral process from the start, with appropriators having continued negotiations over the State work period. I look forward to more productive conversations with Senators, our House colleagues, and the White House so we can get this important work done quite soon.

DAYS OF REMEMBRANCE CEREMONY
Mr. McConnell. Mr. President, many decades ago, historic tragedy befell a continent, and unimaginable horror visited a people. Behind cold steel gates and within huddled boxcars, man’s capacity for cruelty reached grim new frontiers. An inhuman campaign of extermination by an inhuman regime not only took aim at the Jewish people but also tore deep at the collective bonds of our humanity. The scars of the Holocaust continue to run deep in the sinew of our history and of our humanity. It must never be repeated. It also must never be forgotten.
Today, the President of the strongest Nation in the world will again join with survivors in the Capitol Rotunda to help ensure it never is.
Today’s Days of Remembrance ceremony serves as yet another reminder of the unmeasurable suffering that was inflicted upon millions of innocent men, women, and children during the Holocaust, especially the Jewish people. It also serves as a reminder of our responsibility as free people to stand against evil and defend those who are persecuted.

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.
EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will hold an executive session to consider the pending nomination, which the clerk will report.

The assistant bill clerk read the nomination of Rod J. Rosenstein, of Maryland, to be Deputy Attorney General.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the time until 12:30 p.m. will be equally divided in the usual form.

The Democratic whip.

DAYS OF REMEMBRANCE CEREMONY

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I will yield the floor if the Democratic leader arrives, but until his arrival, I would like to do two things—first, join in the comments made by the majority leader, Senator MCCONNELL, relative to the Holocaust remembrance.

This is the day on which we gather in the Rotunda each year to remember the atrocities of World War II, which includes remembering the Holocaust victims, so many who were Jewish people as well as people of all faiths—list goes on and on—as well as those who were gay and gypsies. This was an ethnocleansing—the worst ever seen in the history of this world. We remember it on this day, as we should.

Mr. President, on a separate issue, before us now is the nomination of Rod Rosenstein to be the Deputy Attorney General of the United States.

The Deputy Attorney General oversees the day-to-day operations of the Department of Justice. In any circumstance, this is an important position that requires a nominee with experience, independence, management skills, and good judgment, which is especially true today.

Many have questioned whether Attorney General Sessions was the right person to be the chief law enforcement officer of the United States of America at this moment in history. Unfortunately, many of the actions of the new Attorney General, since he was confirmed, have not erased these concerns. The Attorney General has already begun making dramatic changes at the Justice Department, including on critical issues like criminal justice, civil rights, immigration, and funding for crime prevention.

Just last week, Attorney General Sessions disparaged a Federal judge from Hawaii who issued an order blocking the Trump administration’s Muslim travel ban.

Attorney General Sessions said: “I really am amazed that a judge sitting on an island in the Pacific can issue an order that stops the President of the United States from what appears to be clearly his statutory and constitutional power.”

Clearly his statutory and constitutional power. This is what the Supreme Court said in the decision last year that reverses a lower court order that stops the President of the United States. So, this is what the Supreme Court said.

Also, last week, Attorney General Sessions called into question the status of DACA recipients. The Department of Homeland Security Action for Childhood Arrivals Program, also known as DACA, when asked about DACA, Attorney General Sessions said: “We can’t promise people who are here unlawfully that they’re not going to be deported. That is exactly what DACA is. It is a commitment to young people who were brought to the United States as children and grew up in our country that they will be protected from deportation on a temporary renewable basis. Attorney General Sessions’ statement is contrary to his own administration’s policy as established by President Trump and Homeland Security Secretary John Kelly, who have primary responsibility for immigration enforcement.

The last confirmed nominee for Deputy Attorney General was Sally Yates, a veteran prosecutor and U.S. attorney from Georgia. Ms. Yates displayed sound judgment as Deputy Attorney General, and she was unafraid to speak truth to power.

Ms. Yates became the Acting Attorney General at the end of the Obama administration, and when President Trump signed his unconstitutional Muslim ban executive order on January 27, Sally Yates told the White House she could not defend the order in court because she was not convinced it was lawful. Ms. Yates was then fired by President Trump for disagreeing with him. However, multiple Federal courts agreed with Ms. Yates’ position and blocked this unconstitutional Executive order. Time and history have proven Ms. Yates correct.

We need a Deputy Attorney General like Sally Yates, who is highly competent and has the independence to say no to the President and to the Attorney General when necessary.

Rod Rosenstein has served as the U.S. Attorney for the District of Maryland since 2005 under both Democratic and Republican Presidents. I do not question his experience or his competence. As a member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, I looked closely at his nomination. I asked him many questions in the hearing. I sent some to “Chicago Sun Times” and “The Washington Post.” He has been forthcoming in his responses.

Mr. Rosenstein has pledged to be an independent voice and has committed that he will not recommend any changes in Justice Department policies unless he evaluates them, discusses them with appropriate officials, and determines that changes are warranted.

I expect he will be confirmed. Upon confirmation, Mr. Rosenstein will immediately be tasked with responsibility over critically important issues over which he will need to display both sound judgment and independence. Four come to mind.

First is the ongoing investigation into Russia’s efforts to interfere with the 2016 Presidential election to help the Trump campaign. What Russia did in that election last year is a further act of war against our democracy. It is imperative that we get to the bottom of what happened and make sure it never happens again. I have called for an independent, bipartisan investigation into Russia’s election interference. The responsibility of the House and Senate have resisted this call.

Instead, Republicans in Congress have referred this matter to the Intelligence Committees of both Houses, perhaps hoping it will fade away behind closed doors. I hope the Intelligence Committees will step up and conduct an investigation that is worthy of the importance of this issue, but when it comes to potential criminal acts involving Russia’s election interference, the responsibility to investigate falls solely on the Justice Department.

Attorney General Sessions has had to recuse himself from the investigation because of his work for the Trump administration and his failure to disclose his contacts with Russian officials last year. That means the Deputy Attorney General now has the responsibility over this investigation.

It will be incumbent on Mr. Rosenstein to ensure that the investigation is conducted with independence, diligence, and integrity. I believe that appointing a special counsel is the best way to ensure this. I hope he will make that appointment. If Mr. Rosenstein does not appoint a special counsel, the spotlight will be on him personally to make sure the investigation is conducted properly, no matter where it leads. I hope he exercises good judgment. This investigation is too important to get wrong.

The second issue that will require independence and good judgment from the Deputy Attorney General is the Justice Department’s threat to withhold Federal funding to prevent violence across America, including in the city of Chicago.

The Trump administration’s message has been confusing, to say the least, when it comes to Federal efforts to prevent violence. On the one hand, President Trump, in the middle of the night, tweets “Chicago needs help,” and “Send in the Feds,” but then the administration threatens to cut off critical funding for violence prevention under programs like Byrne JAG unless cities agree to turn their local police departments into deportation forces. It is pretty obvious that cutting off Federal violence prevention funding will hurt the cause of violence prevention. Do not take my word for it. Ask any law enforcement leader.

I listen to what the National Association of Chiefs of Police said: “ Penalizing communities by withholding assistance funding to law enforcement 

S2500 CONGRESSIONAL RECORD — SENATE April 25, 2017
agencies and other critical programs is counterproductive to our shared mission of reducing violent crime and keeping communities safe.”

It is no secret that the Attorney General is fixated on immigration, but we need the DOJ to work with Congress to ensure that this fixation does not undermine the important work that the Justice Department and local law enforcement cooperate to reduce violent crime.

The administration cannot call itself a law-and-order administration and then do something like cut the funds for violence prevention when police chiefs across America say that is just wrong.

The third area of critical importance is criminal justice policy. Today, our Federal prisons are 30 percent over capacity, and runaway prison expenditures are undermining important public safety priorities like crime prevention, drug courts, and addiction treatment.

The largest increase in the Federal prison population has been nonviolent drug offenders who are then separated from their families for years on end as a result of inflexible mandatory minimums. This has a destructive effect on communities and erodes faith in America in our criminal justice system.

Congress needs to pass legislation to reform our Federal drug sentencing laws, but the Justice Department’s policies for nonviolent drug offenses also can help.

Under the Obama administration, the Smart on Crime Initiative directed Federal prosecutors to reserve stiff mandatory minimum sentences for individuals convicted of serious offenses. This initiative has been very effective in focusing the Department’s limited resources on the worst offenders and ensuring that people convicted of low-level, nonviolent offenses are not subject to these same mandatory minimum penalties.

Attorney General Sessions has signaled that he wants to eliminate the Smart on Crime Initiative, and certainly those of us who listened to his opposition to criminal sentencing reform are not surprised. But, as Deputy Attorney General, Mr. Rosenstein will chair the Task Force on Crime Reduction and Public Safety that has been established by the President. This gives him an important voice. I hope he will work to ensure that the Department’s charging policy reserves stiff mandatory sentences for only serious violent offenders.

Mr. Rosenstein would also be responsible for determining the fate of the Justice Department’s efforts to work constructively with State and local law enforcement to protect civil rights and improve community and police relations. In particular, Mr. Rosenstein should support negotiations to pursue police reform in Chicago, backed up by an enforceable consent decree. The former U.S. attorney in Chicago, Zach Fardon, felt strongly that a consent decree was needed to correct the systemic problems we face. Mr. Rosenstein has shown more openness to using consent decrees than Attorney General Sessions, who has an ideological personal hostility toward them. I hope he will work carefully at this issue in Chicago and respect the judgment of Mr. Fardon and the career DOJ professionals who spent over a year investigating this matter.

Mr. Rosenstein would be responsible for reining in the Attorney General’s worst instincts on immigration. It is no surprise to any Member of this Chamber that when the issue of immigration came to the floor, the leading opponent on immigration reform was Senator Sessions of Alabama. I believe he offered 100 amendments to the immigration reform bill that passed the U.S. Senate. He has spoken out over and over again about his opposition to immigration reform.

The Attorney General has already directed Federal prosecutors across the country to make immigration cases a higher priority and look for opportunities to bring serious felony charges against those who cross the border without authorization. Federal prosecutors understand this is not the right approach. Listen to Paul Charlton, the U.S. attorney for Arizona under the Bush administration. According to him, this new directive will overburden the Federal courts already struggling to handle the volume of immigration cases. He said: “Prosecution and incarceration do not adequately address the real need, which is a reform of the immigration laws.”

Let me conclude. I see the Democratic leader on the floor.

There are a number of critical issues that will require sound judgment and leadership from the next Deputy Attorney General. I hope Mr. Rosenstein will approach these issues with the professionalism and integrity that have earned him bipartisan praise as U.S. Attorney in Maryland. I hope he will be willing to speak truth to power and to stand up to the President and the Attorney General if necessary.

I will support Mr. Rosenstein’s nomination. I hope we can work together constructively on the important matters facing the Department of Justice.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

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

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, first let me thank my friend from Illinois for his always thoughtful and good words. I agree with his sentiments on Mr. Rosenstein, whom I will support as well.

GOVERNMENT SPENDING BILL

Mr. President, first I want to say that it is very good news that the President is being the wall off the table in the negotiations we are having on an appropriations bill this week. It would remove the prospect of a needless fight over a poison pill proposal that Members of both parties don’t support. On a bill as important as one to keep the government open, it is a dangerous prospect for the administration to push so hard for such a flawed, incomplete, and unfunded-out proposal as a spending bill. It could tank what would have been productive, bipartisan, bicameral negotiations between the leaders in both Houses. If the threat of the wall is removed, as I hope is the case, our negotiations can continue and we can hopefully continue to resolve all of the outstanding issues by Friday.

Make no mistake about it, there are other important issues to resolve—no poison pill riders, above all, and the ratio of defense and nondefense spending in terms of increases above the baseline. On the nondefense side, miners are very important on our side, getting permanent healthcare for these miners who have struggled with their whole lives; the issue of cost-sharing, where 6 million people could lose their healthcare because it would become unaffordable; and the issue of Puerto Rico, which is struggling so, are among those that we feel very tight as well. There are other issues to resolve as well, but I am hopeful we can address them as the week moves forward. Poison pill riders are something that could really hurt the bill, and we don’t want that to happen.

THE PRESIDENT’S FIRST ONE HUNDRED DAYS

Mr. President, on another matter, as we quickly approach the 100-day mark of the Trump Presidency, it is a good time to look back on what this administration has accomplished and has not accomplished. One thing is clear: This President has either broken or failed to fulfill many of the promises he made to working families during the campaign. This morning, I wish to focus on one area in particular—this President’s promise to working people on jobs and the economy.

One of the President’s key rationales as to why he would be an effective President was that he was a good businessman who could create jobs and get the economy moving much faster than anyone predicted. But on the major issues of jobs, including outsourcing, “Buy American,” trade—key economic issues that help job growth in America, that help working families—PresidentTrump has made so much during his first 100 days and has broken several core campaign promises he made to kick-start the economy for working families.

On jobs, President Trump said he was going to be “the greatest job President that God ever created,” but have we seen one significant piece of legislation that would create jobs from this President? What about infrastructure, for instance? That is something that would create millions of good-paying jobs, and Candidate Trump talked about it a lot when he campaigned. He promised to fix America’s crumbling infrastructure, pledging a $1 trillion plan to do
it. But we haven’t seen any details of any plan yet, and no comprehensive plan to rebuild our infrastructure has been introduced by any Republicans in Congress.

So we Democrats came out with our own infrastructure plan, taking what the President said in his campaign. The bill would create 15 million good-paying jobs, going to the working families of America. We haven’t seen any proposal or gotten any specific proposal from the President. The only thing we have gotten from President Trump on infrastructure is that he has proposed multibillion-dollar cuts to vital transportation programs in his 2018 budget, saying one thing in the campaign—infrastructure jobs—yet doing exactly the opposite—cutting infrastructure jobs—in his proposed budget for next year.

On outsourcing, Candidate Trump lamented the fact that so many companies were shipping U.S. jobs overseas, promising to stop it day one. It’s so easy to stop.

While President Obama used regulatory measures to stop inversions in their tracks—a company in New York, Pfizer, which I thought was so wrong to try to avoid taxes, the President put a stop to that. He has just signed an Executive order to review those rules and potentially undo them—the exact opposite of what he campaigned on. This is astounding. He said he was going to prevent jobs from going overseas. President Obama put regulations that have virtually stopped inversions—companies moving their headquarters overseas for tax breaks. President Trump, directly in contradiction of what he talked about over and over again in his campaign, says: Now let’s review those rules and possibly undo them. It is just hard to comprehend.

President Trump said his policy would be “Buy American and Hire American,” and he has had a bunch of little rallies where he talks about this, but he has refused to insist that pipeline and water infrastructure be made with American steel.

If he were serious about stopping outsourcing, he would demand that Senate Republicans put Senator Baldwin’s bill requiring infrastructure to be made with American steel on the Senate floor. If we increase water and sewer as one of our biggest infrastructure proposals, and we provide a huge boost, if companies had to buy American steel. Senator Baldwin has a bill that does it. President Trump has not gotten any action. He ought to tell Leader McConnell, tell Speaker Ryan he is for that bill, and they should bring it to the floor, and, with a lot of Democratic votes—probably every one, just about—we can pass it.

On trade, which is another crucial issue for the American worker—maybe the single most important issue for working families—well, he has made some big promises, but he has either broken them or failed to deliver in his first 100 days. He pledged to hold China accountable for its rapacious trade practices, which have robbed America of millions of jobs and cost trillions of dollars of wealth. He said China was “world champion” of currency manipulation and pledged to name it a currency manipulator, and President Trump has done neither of those things. He has broken his promise to name them a currency manipulator, and he has backed off on his promise to get tough with trade on China in general.

This is an issue I am passionate about. I didn’t agree with President Trump on a whole lot of issues, but when he talked about China during the campaign, I said: I am closer to President Trump than I was with President Obama or President Bush, and I thought it would be one of the areas where we could make real progress. Instead, we have seen a U-turn—China, not a currency manipulator. When he said over and over again they were, and they are manipulating their currency. I know all the free-trade pundits get up and say: Yes, but now they are not reducing the value of their currency; they are doing the opposite. The best of what they did when they made it easier for them to export. But they are still manipulating it. It still doesn’t flow. As sure as we are sitting here, if China’s advantage is to once again devalue the currency, they have more exports and unfair advantages over American workers, they will do it in a minute.

Furthermore, had he called China a currency manipulator, it would have sent a shot across China’s bow. For years, frankly, under Democratic and Republican administrations, China has gotten away with economic murder. They steal our intellectual property. They don’t let good American companies get to their technology and then produce it in China and try to export it here. They have over the years manipulated the currency to their advantage, among many other things. They are hurting us. Probably nothing has done more to hurt American jobs than China’s rapacious trade policies. And President Trump is nowhere to be found. In fact, he is doing the opposite of what he promised on trade.

As I have told the President many times, if he governs from the middle, if he is willing to work with both parties to get things done, we might be able to compromise on some of the important economic issues where we have had these values for a long time—some of the issues I just mentioned. If the President, Republicans, and Congress continue their “my way or the highway approach,” the next 100 days will be just like the first—a lot of broken and unfulfilled promises and very few accomplishments from this new administration.

I yield the floor. I am disturbed by the absence of a quorum.

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

The assistant 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 PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FLAKE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

ANTIDETRITIS ACT

MS. CANTWELL. Mr. President, President Trump is expected to issue an Executive order directing the Department of the Interior to review all of the national monuments issued over the past 20 years, to see whether those monuments should be reduced in size or repealed. It is clear to me that many of us know the value of our public lands. But I am questioning whether our President understands that trying to illegally roll back those national monuments—one of the most treasured lands in our country—is something we should not do.

This shortsighted move is a pretext to attacking the designation of the Bears Ears National Monument in Utah, which is sacred to the five tribes that form the Bears Ears Inter-Tribal Coalition, and is a breathtaking site for all Americans who come to experience what is the unbelievable, unique beauty of the West.

Whether they are there hiking or climbing or vacationing, it is a special place. But President Trump’s Executive order is expected to go even further than just Bears Ears, reviewing any designation in the last 20 years, threatening the question of the San Juan Basin. Utah, the Prehistoric Pueblos, National Monuments and the creation of other sites around the United States and threatening our economy.
Time and again, the Trump administration is pushing for policies that are harmful to our recreation economy and a disaster for our pristine places, and it sets a terrible precedent for future conservation efforts.

The Antiquities Act is one of our Nation’s most successful conservation laws. It was signed into law in 1906 by President Theodore Roosevelt to designate Devils Tower in Wyoming as our Nation’s first national monument.

In the 110 years since its enactment, the Antiquities Act has been a very useful tool by 16 different Presidents—eight Republicans, eight Democrats—to designate more than 140 national monuments, including, as I mentioned, the San Juan Islands and Hanford Reach in the State of Washington.

Nearly half of all of our national parks, including national icons such as the Grand Canyon or Olympic National Park, were first designated as national monuments under the Antiquities Act. So it is a helpful tool to making sure we preserve those special places. I will note, too, that only 4 percent of all land in the United States is set aside this way, designated as part of the national park system or as a national monument.

So, of all the lands in the United States, we are asking to protect 4 percent of the lands, that are these unique special places, to be persevered for the American public and not turned over to special interests for oil and gas mining.

I also think it is important to note that the Antiquities Act gives the President the authority to make sure that these monuments are designated because from time to time there are those who do not believe in these special places.

I note that when the Grand Canyon was being considered, an editorial in that time period editorialized: “The idea of protecting the Grand Canyon represents a selfish and diabolical scheme.” Now, I don’t think that is what Americans think today about the Grand Canyon, nor do they think that it is something that hasn’t enriched the lives of millions of Americans over the years or added to our economy and tourism. So I find it ironic that the same people think that the designation of Bears Ears is somehow a “fiendish and diabolical scheme.”

Well, what I know is that the President thinks he can use the Antiquities Act in reverse. In 1938, an Attorney General’s opinion was issued stating that the President did not have the authority to use it in reverse.

So I think any attempt by the Trump administration to modify or revoke earlier national monument proposals is without the legal authority to do so. But I also want to make sure that we are talking about how important and how special Bears Ears is. It is a monument of true significance. It encompasses more than 1.3 million acres of beautiful desert hills, mesas, and sandstone canyons in southeastern Utah and is home to some of the most spiritually significant lands of the local Tribes and some of the best rock climbing in the world. Bears Ears encompasses Native American archaeological sites dating back at least 13,000 years. The area is covered in rock art, petroglyphs and petroglyphs, and artifacts. So if nothing else, those special places should be preserved.

It is also special to many of the early inhabitants of that area: the Ute Tribe, the Navajo tribe, the Uintah Ouray tribe, the Hopi tribe, and the Zuni tribe. Bears Ears is important to these Tribal members for sacred ceremonies, and hunting, and fishing.

Bears Ears also continues to be one of the richest paleontological resources in our Nation, with fossil records dating back millions of years. So it is easy to see why it is so important that this special place was designated.

In addition to its historical and cultural significance, Bears Ears is also a four billion acre recreation resource visited by rock climbers from all over the world. It is also visited by hunters, hikers, canyoneers, white water rafters, mountain bikers, and the entire conservation community. That is why they sought, by the Outdoor Industry, which had previously located its biannual event in Utah, decided after two decades that they were pulling out. That is right. They are pulling out their $40 million contribution to the Utah economy because they are against the efforts by many in Utah to oppose the Bears Ears monument and try to get the President to reverse the Antiquities Act and then use that Federal land for oil and gas exploration. I was so proud to see the outdoor industry take such a bold step. Companies like REI, Patagonia, Black Diamond, and Outdoor Research really made a big and bold statement. They decided that if a State was going to attack the very economy that was so important to their jobs and their livelihood, they were going to do something about it.

I agree with the Salt Lake Tribune editorial on the Outdoor Retailer’s decision, which said that the debate over public lands is about “who we are and where we are headed. To get there, we need leaders with a better appreciation of the magnificent gifts God has given everyone, not just Utahans.”

So what is ironic and, frankly, a bit sad is that at the same time the Trump administration is waging war on our public lands and fighting imaginary ones, like the War on Coal, we have new data on just what an economic engine the recreation industry has become. Just today, the Outdoor Industry Association released a new report on the economic contributions of the recreation economy. Today, the recreation industry generates $887 billion in consumer spending every year. That is up more than $200 billion—from $646 billion—since the last time this study was done four years ago. What does this tell us? Not only do more Americans enjoy recreation on our public lands, but an economy has been built around it, and it continues to grow and thrive, with new products, new services, and more comfortable and innovative ways to enjoy the outdoors. The outdoor recreation economy is responsible for 7.6 million jobs in this country. These are the jobs we need to do to make sure the last time the report was done.

Meanwhile, the Trump administration seems perfectly content to do the bidding of these natural resources industries instead of focusing on these jobs by protecting places like the Grand Canyon and Bears Ears.

I hope all of my colleagues will realize that this is a futile effort and that these special places do not belong only to a few. They do not belong to the people who are here on the Senate floor. They belong to generations and generations of Americans.

To those great Presidents—Republican and Democratic—who made those decisions and created those special places for all of us, thank you. I hope that some future generation will be standing here thanking us for protecting Bears Ears and all of the national monument designations that have taken place over the last two decades.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the President be suspended and the roll be taken.

Mr. President. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FARM SERVICE AGENCY

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, I rise today to acknowledge and honor Michigan farmers. Agriculture is a vital part of Michigan’s economy. In fact, Michigan is home to more than 51,000 farms that contribute over $100 billion to our Nation’s economy. Michigan is also the second most diverse agricultural produces in the Nation, growing more than 30 crops and more significant portion of our Nation’s milk, corn, cherries, cucumbers, and much more.
Last week I had the pleasure of visiting the Iciek Dairy Farm in Gladwin, MI. It was incredible to see firsthand how this family-run dairy has grown from a small farm of a few dozen cows to a large, modern dairy operation with 700 cows and seven full-time employees.

Today, the Iciek Dairy works with the Michigan State University Extension program to help mentor new businesses and farmers who are just starting or have grown small dairy operations. Michigan’s farmers and producers are our backbone; they feed our country and people around the globe, and we must do what we can to support them. Our agricultural businesses rely on the ability to access the resources they need to keep growing, creating jobs, and contributing to our economy.

Access to these resources can be especially challenging for new small farms and farmers, especially for new small farms that wish to diversify their markets. Small farms are facing tough economic conditions sometimes struggle to find and secure affordable credit. That is why I am working across the aisle with Senator PELLEGRINI to urge congressional appropriators to fully fund the Farm Service Agency loan programs as Congress considers government funding bills for 2018.

The Farm Service Agency works with lenders and delivers direct and guaranteed loans to small dairy farms that need them the most. When a farm has no other options, Farm Service Agency loans and guarantees can help farmers cover urgent operating costs for feed, seed, and fertilizer to get them through the season. Without these loans, farmers could lose their ability to purchase equipment and other necessities for the planting season and could be forced to curtail their operations.

Currently, more than 2,300 farms in Michigan have Farm Service Agency loans totaling over $630 million. Across the country last year, the Farm Service Agency made and guaranteed a total of 39,650 loans totaling $6.3 billion. It is critical that Farm Service Agency funding reflect expected demand for loans so that small farms can continue to have this crucial lifeline.

This program is in such high demand that just last year the Farm Service Agency was forced to deny farmers access to millions in operating loans, including more than 1,000 loans that had already been approved for small farmers. This led to a backlog of loans, and farmers were forced to wait for months until Congress passed emergency funding to get the loans guaranteed and delivered. Small farmers need capital to continue growing and supplying the products we need.

Access to capital is critical across a range of businesses, but it is incredibly important to our farmers. They can lose out on an entire growing season if they cannot buy the equipment and supplies they need while they wait for Congress to fund the Farm Service Agency.

Today, ensuring that the Farm Service Agency has sufficient funding is even more critical, especially following President Trump’s proposed $1.7 billion cut to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Like our small businesses, students, and families, America’s farmers deserve to have affordable loan options, and they deserve our attention and our support. I urge my colleagues to join me in asking for robust Farm Service Agency funding so we can continue to support and sustain our communities as they support and sustain us each and every day.

I suggest the absence of a quorum. The clerk will call the roll.

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

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

FOREIGN POLICY

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, as we come back into session after a 2-week State work period, I think we need to take stock of what we have been able to accomplish together during the last few months.

Through the efforts of the administration and in working with Congress, we have been able to greatly lessen the regulatory burden on many American job creators with $2 trillion in unnecessary costs cut from the budget. While our economy has continued to improve, the budget deficit has been growing and we need to take decisive action.

As President Obama left office, he left in his wake fires burning around the world. There is no better example than the Middle East. President Obama celebrated the Arab Spring as a testament to the power of a democratic voice, but he did little to help our partners across the Middle East and North Africa find stability and prosperity. Instead, he made the Middle East even more dangerous for all of us by his inaction or, in some cases, by his actions.

Libya is one of the most tragic examples.

Without his coming to Congress but instead of developing a strategy, instead of listening to his own military and national security leadership, President Obama and his team perversely opted to strengthen our adversary Iran. The ill-conceived JCPOA deal cemented its status as the world’s greatest sponsor of terrorism as a future nuclear power and released billions of dollars in sanctions relief to the regime and empowered our enemy to engage in even more terrorist activities abroad and at home. As we learned under the Obama administration, the bottom line is, our foremost enemy in the Middle East became stronger, not weaker.

On top of all of that, President Obama pushed aside our strongest ally in the region—Israel—time and time again to appease nations that were working against us. That is simply not how the United States should operate in its leadership role around the world.

Are we to go on and on about the foreign policy failures of the last administrations with respect to the Middle East, but it is not the only region in worse shape. Under President Obama’s watch, Russia invaded Crimea and Ukraine. It repeatedly threatened NATO member states and ramped up its cyber espionage to influence and undermine public confidence in free and fair elections both in the United States and in Europe. Along the way, our allies in Europe were cast aside rather than assured of our support—all with Russia’s mounting aggression close by.
In the Pacific, China continued to advance its regional dominance by making claims to islands disputed by our allies, going so far as to convert sand bars and reefs into island military bases—some with 10,000-foot military-capable runways right there in the South China Sea.

Finally, North Korea continues to develop and test its nuclear and ballistic missile capabilities with the threat of being able to use both to reach the continental United States. North Korea has conducted four nuclear tests during the Obama administration. That is simply unacceptable.

The truth is, after two terms of inaction, no coherent strategy, and leading from behind, our allies and partners around the world questioned the commitment and power of the United States and our ability to defend our national interests around the globe.

I, personally, am thankful for what we have seen President Trump accomplish, in stark contrast to action of his predecessor around the world. His tough but honest discussions about America’s role in the world are appreciated not only by those of us here at home but by our allies and friends around the world who have been hungry for American leadership.

When Assad crossed a line the entire international community deemed abhorrent, President Trump, unlike President Obama, took action. Unfortunately, President Trump has inherited foreign policy predicaments that were created by both the action and inaction of his predecessor around the world. My hope is, President Trump will continue to work with the great team he has assembled to make sure U.S. interests are put first and that America continues to exert its leadership role around the world.

The truth is, a strong America and an America that leads is a stabilizing and peacekeeping influence around the world. Just the opposite is also true. As America continues to retreat, China is quickly filling the leadership vacuum. It is inherently destabilizing, and it is an invitation for bad actors around the world to take advantage of that power vacuum.

I look forward to working with the administration, as well as all of our colleagues in the Congress, to help keep Americans safe by making clear that we will back up and support our allies and partners abroad and send a powerful message to those who threaten our interests.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CRUZ). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I support Mr. Rosenstein’s nomination to be Deputy Attorney General. Not only is he a very experienced and accomplished attorney, he has served in the Justice Department for almost three decades under five Presidents, but he served as the U.S. Attorney for the District of Connecticut under both President Bush and President Obama—a very rare record of service. During his nominations hearing to be Deputy Attorney General, Mr. Rosenstein promised us that he would “work to defend the independence of our justice department, to protect public safety, to preserve civil rights, to pursue justice, to advance the rule of law and to promote public confidence.”

However, there have been concerns about the FBI Director’s announcement of an investigation of Russia. And during his nominations hearing, Mr. Rosenstein was repeatedly asked if he would commit to appointing a special counsel to handle any investigation in this matter. I was impressed with his unflagging commitment to independence when he answered these questions.

Rather than prejudge investigations before the facts, he unwaveringly promised to make decisions only after thoroughly reviewing all the relevant information in a particular case. He committed to not prejudging the situation before he knew the facts. And he committed to conducting every investigation with independence.

I personally believe Mr. Rosenstein possesses the necessary independence to conduct any investigation of this type. He told us he had never met with Russian officials nor has he spoken to the President or Attorney General about this matter. And he spoke in great length about his career-long commitment to independence and to conduct his work free from political concerns.

In fact, we already know that he has a well-known reputation for independence. In 2012, Attorney General Holder specifically asked Mr. Rosenstein to handle an investigation into leaks of classified information because of his reputation for independence and impartiality.

When Republicans suggested a special prosecutor might be appropriate, members of the Judiciary Committee assured us that none was necessary precisely because Mr. Rosenstein was at the helm of the investigation. One member of the Committee described him to me as “independent.” There was “no reason to believe why [he] cannot work with the FBI and assemble a very strong prosecution team where warranted.”

Mr. Rosenstein is still scrupulous and independent. If Mr. Rosenstein could conduct an investigation with independence under Holder then, he can certainly do it now. Furthermore, Mr. Rosenstein comes with high recommendations from a bipartisan list of former Attorneys General and Deputy Attorneys General. And he comes with high recommendations from his home state Senators, current and former.

Former Senator Mikulski wrote the committee and told us that he will be a “strong, experienced leader at the Department of Justice who is fair and committed to the equal application of our laws” and “in these polarized times, now, more than ever we need a strong, experienced leader at the Department of Justice who is fair and committed to the equal application of our laws. I hope the Senate will confirm Rod Rosenstein for this important position.”

Senator Cardin described all Mr. Rosenstein’s professional accomplishments when he was introducing him at the hearing, he said, “What impresses me the most, he has done this in a totally non-partisan manner.” And concluded by saying, “I think Mr. Rosenstein is the right person at the right time for Deputy Attorney General.”

Finally, James Cole, President Obama’s Deputy Attorney General, and the senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that all time be read. And the Senate resume consideration of the Acosta nomination.

Mr. GRASSLEY. 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. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that all time postcloture on the Rosenstein nomination expire at 5 p.m. today and that, if confirmed, the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action and the Senate resume consideration of the Acosta nomination.

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

Mr. GRASSLEY. I yield the floor.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

The Senate, at 12:30 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. PORTMAN).
EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

HONORING NEBRASKA’S SOLDIERS WHO LOST THEIR LIVES IN COMBAT

MRS. FISCHER. Mr. President, I rise today to remember another of Nebraska’s fallen heroes—those young men and women who have given their lives defending our freedom in Iraq and Afghanistan. They all have different stories. Their families all have the same request: Remember their sacrifice. By telling the stories of these heroes here on the Senate floor, we honor the request of their families.

SPECIALIST WILLIAM “BILL” BAILEY

Today, Mr. President, I honor the life and service of William “Bill” Bailey of Bellevue, NE. Now, the name “William” comes from old German. It means “determined protector”. Bill Bailey lived up to his name. His mother Margaret says he was a born protector. When Bill was very young, he lost his father to a car accident. Margaret recalls how Bill embraced his younger sister Jessy just after her birth. The word came to her at once: protective.

As he grew, Bill naturally looked to protect those outside his family too. Ron Budwig was matched with Bill through the Big Brothers Big Sisters program.

Ron recalled a simple but profound example of Bill looking out for Ron’s family. Ron’s mother was running late to one of the program’s activities, and, meanwhile, the parking lot was filling up. Bill went and stood in a parking space, keeping it open until Ron’s mother could come. It was a simple act, but it said a lot.

Bill attended Bellevue East, where the call to protect his country prompted him to enlist in the Nebraska Army National Guard in 1995. After graduating from high school in 1996, he served out his enlistment with distinction.

A few years later, in December 2000, Bill met Deanna, whom everyone calls Dee. She was a bank teller at Wells Fargo. He drove an armored truck. They met through a service window. Now, Bill had left the service in 2001 when his enlistment ended. After 9/11, he felt the call to serve his country again—but first things first. Bill and Dee did. Dee’s sister, Cody and Maquala, took immediately to Bill and his children, Catlynn and Billy. Logan soon followed.

As you can expect, Bill’s protective nature made him a great father. It also made him a great firefighter. Extending his protection beyond his family once again, he joined the Bellevue Volunteer Fire Department. He was a natural fit. Whether there or working as a life flight dispatcher, Bill worked to keep Bellevue safe.

That deep desire to serve his country continued to tug at him. In 2005, Bill reenlisted in the Nebraska Army National Guard. Originally assigned to the 600th Transportation Company, he transferred to the 755th Chemical Company. Why the transfer? Because he learned the 755th would soon deploy. In late 2006 it did. Bill Bailey went with it. The 755th Chemical Company was assigned to provide security escorts for troops moving out of the Balad Air Base in Iraq. Iraq at this time was increasingly unstable. It was dangerous, but Bill’s good nature made it bearable.

SOT Tom Osowski remembers SPC Bill Bailey fondly: “When I became his team leader, I thought I had struck the jackpot.” By 2007, the insurgency in Iraq had erupted to new levels of violence. Increased American forces sought to seek out and destroy the al-Qaeda network. Casualties ran high.

Despite the high operations tempo, Bill and Dee communicated almost every day through phone calls or texts. On May 24, they were able to talk by phone. In typical fashion, Bill mentioned he was excited to finish his dull watchtower duty and start a new security escort mission the next day. Bill was also excited for his upcoming leave in June, when the Bailey family planned to celebrate Bill’s birthday.

The next day, May 25, 2007, Bill took part in that security escort mission. During it, his vehicle struck an improvised explosive device. Three Nebraska Army National Guard soldiers were wounded, and Bill Bailey was killed.

More than a dozen gathered in Bellevue to remember Bill. A Patriot Guard of more than 100 flag-flying motorcycles accompanied his funeral procession. Specialist Bailey earned several military awards, including the Purple Heart, the Bronze Star, the Iraqi Campaign Medal, and the Combat Action Badge. Bill’s brother-in-law, Damian Kuzepa, summarized Bill’s life:

“Bill was a wonderful husband, brother, son, father. He defined his life to helping other people. He was definitely a go-doer. He will definitely be missed.

William Bailey is survived by his mother Margaret, his wife Deanna, and their children, Cody, Maquala, Catlynn, Billy, and Logan. Bill Bailey is a true Nebraska hero. I am honored to tell his story.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I am pleased to be able to serve with the Presiding Officer on the Committee on Homeland Security. Part of our responsibilities on homeland security is to make sure that the extent that we can, that our borders are secure. We do that in a variety of ways. We do that, in some cases, with our Border Patrol officers. We have a lot of them. We appreciate the work they do.

We also have in many places, particularly along the border of Mexico—as the Presiding Officer knows—a lot of fencing that is there. We have a lot of roads that our vehicles can travel along to have mobility on the ground. Our President has proposed, at least earlier this year, that we spend about $25 billion to build a wall, maybe 10-, 15-, 25-feet high along the 2,000 miles between the Pacific Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico.

I have never been convinced that that is the best way—to put all of our money in the basket—that is really the best way to better ensure the security of our border with Mexico. As it turns out, most of the folks who are coming in and coming through United States, from that part of the world are not Mexicans. Actually, more Mexicans are going back into Mexico than Mexicans coming across the border into the United States.

Most of the illegal immigration—not all but most of it—is coming from three countries: Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador. The reason why they come here is because their lives are miserable. They are miserable because they want to get away from drugs. We want to reduce the appetite for illegal drugs. So a lot of them are trafficked through Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador.

We send money down to those three countries for the drugs, and we send money down to the whole world. When we catch bad guys in this country from Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador, we send them back to those three countries.

So part of the security of our southern border involves actually trying to help those three countries figure out ways to keep their people home, rather than wanting to come to our country. Part of it is making sure that they have decent lives to live. Twenty years ago, as you all may remember, a bunch of gunmen rounded up the supreme court justices in Colombia, took them into a room, and shot and killed them—shot them all to death.

It was a time when the government was floundering and there was a question of whether they were going to survive in Colombia. Some very brave people stood up in Colombia and said: No, no, we want to survive, we want to fend off the drug cartels, and we want to fend off the leftist guerrillas. Ultimately, they were successful. It has taken 20 years.

They worked on something called Plan Colombia to help turn around that part of the world. The reason why they were successful is the best way—to put all of our money in the basket—that is really the best way to better ensure the security of our border with Mexico. As it turns out, most of the folks who are coming in and coming through United States, from that part of the world are not Mexicans. Actually, more Mexicans are going back into Mexico than Mexicans coming across the border into the United States.

A similar kind of thing is going on in Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador. They have come up with their own Plan Colombia. You might call it “Plan Central America.” The three countries have come up with things they are responsible for doing to improve the quality of life for their folks and the ability to have economic growth and opportunity and hope. We are helping out as well. We have done
that in some appropriations bills for the last fiscal year. We are trying to spend a little bit more. Wisely invested, it will be a fraction of what they are actually spending on their own.

"To the extent that those three countries can be more attractive to people who live there, that actually helps a whole lot in terms of the pressure on our own borders. Plus, it is the right thing to do. The other thing I would mention as our energy policy in this country, is that sometimes we have had an “all of the above” energy approach. It is not just coal, it is not just wind, it is not just solar, it is not just geothermal, it is not just nuclear, and it is not just natural gas. It is all of the above. It is conservation. And we need a similar approach to continuing to protect our borders, whether it is in the South or other places. But it should involve a variety of things. There are some places along the 2,000 miles of border, it actually makes sense. There are a lot of places where a fence makes more sense. There are a lot of places where it makes more sense just to pave the roads alongside the border.

The Presidenting Officer actually spent, as he said, his “misspent youth”—but I will say his youth—earlier in his life where he and other kayakers were in boats along the Rio Grande River. Part of border security is boats along that stretch that stretches the border because it is literally hundreds of miles where the border is defined by a river. So in some places, boats make sense. In other places, boat ramps make sense.

Sometimes it makes sense to have drones up in the air that can surveil up to 100 miles into Mexico for folks coming our way. Sometimes it makes sense to put helicopters, sometimes fixed-wing aircraft. But you can’t just send them in the regulars. You have to put the right kind of surveillance equipment on there. We have that equipment. The key is to put it on the aircraft.

Sometimes stationary towers going up 200, 300 feet makes sense. Sometimes it makes sense to make those mobile. Sometimes we can put those surveillance systems 5,000 feet up in the air to look literally 100 miles into Mexico to see what is coming our way. If we put those surveillance systems, they could see not just during daylight, sunny skies, but they could see at night. They can see in fog and dense fog. So the key is all of the above—it is not one anything—and to find out what works. The other thing is, perhaps to continue to support and ask our Border Patrol: What do you guys and gals think? What do you think makes sense? And listen to them.

No, I am not smart enough to figure out how much money we put exactly in each one of those, but I think it makes sense, depending on what the needs are and on the advice of the folks who really are the experts on the ground, what they suggest, and we can do an “all of the above” approach. But we also have to consider that the reason most of the illegals are coming to our country is that they live their lives in misery. If we don’t do something to help them help themselves, we are going to be failing short and it is simply what it be. I just wanted to share that before we recognize the next Senator.

I am looking forward to the inaugural address of the new Senator from Illinois.

Mr. MERRICK. Mr. President, I am honored to be on the floor for the maiden speech of my colleague Senator DUCKWORTH.

Our Presidenting Officer, the Senator from Oregon.

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Mr. President, I thank my friend and mentor, a great Illinoisan, the leader for Illinois, the Senator from Illinois.

Mr. President, I am honored to be on the floor for the maiden speech of my colleague Senator DUCKWORTH.

Our Presidenting Officer, the Senator from Illinois.

Our Shared Values

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Mr. President, I thank my friend and mentor, a great Illinoisan, the leader for Illinois, the Senator from Illinois.

Mr. President, I am honored to be on the floor for the maiden speech of my colleague Senator DUCKWORTH.
other producers to get their goods to market inside and outside our country’s borders.

We were able to feed the world not only because of our strong agricultural sector and infrastructure alone but also because of the scientific advances supported by those educational institutions that helped produce farm production and yields.

Throughout our history, we pushed to expand human and civil rights from the streets to the suffrage movement, learning from people like the Tuskegee Airmen, the Selma marchers, and the LGBTQ leaders today that being inclusive and enabling people to reach their full potential only strengthens the American core. We did all of these things as a result of our shared values, and we have reaped their rewards for generations.

We have seen our Nation’s strength in our prouder moments, as when America chose to go to the Moon—not because it was easy but, in President Kennedy’s words, because it was hard.

We have seen our strength in tragedy, reuniting under a common cause in the rubble of the Pentagon and Ground Zero and 9/11.

We might get knocked down, but the America that I know, the America that I fought for and love, does not give up. That is not a Democratic principle or a Republican principle; it is simply the American way.

America’s greatness has never depended on the strength of any individual person, but on all of us working together toward a common goal. When we have failed to stay true to our core values, when we deny another person our Nation’s promise of opportunity, our Nation’s strength suffers. When a child can’t access the tools to succeed in school, when a woman can’t afford basic healthcare, when refugees fleeing terror see the door slammed shut in their face, then our liberty is tarnished, and our rights as Americans are diminished. When a black man is将军ized on the basis of skin color or sexual orientation or religion, and when a working family can’t put food on the table, our whole Nation suffers. At the end of the day, America’s greatness depends on each of us remaining true to the common values of our Nation.

But we have lost sight of those values. The Nation that built an interstate highway system, that was a refugee for immigrants who became the foundation of our economy, this Nation that pushed humanity to new heights, first with planes and helicopters and then into space, that same Nation seems to have forgotten how to invest in itself.

Our country that ushered in the era of aviation is now home to aging airports that struggle to compete with their global competitors. Our country that took on the Herculean task of reversing the flow of the Chicago River to protect the city’s drinking water can no longer muster the resources to modernize public water systems to prevent our children from being poisoned by lead. Our country that built the greatest military the world has ever seen, sending a signal that we will not cower in front of anyone, now finds itself with leaders who believe in the misguided notion that it is simply better to hide behind walls than to help lead with strength.

Make no mistake, America has not lost her greatness. Our Nation remains the dominant force on the global stage. But if we don’t act, if we don’t invest in ourselves, our adversaries are positioned to overtake us.

Though some may try to convince us the path forward is less engagement with the world, less acceptance of others, and less investment in ourselves, I know the path forward for our country cannot include—does not include—turning our backs on the shared values that built this Nation.

Perhaps more than any other State, Illinois knows this. We represent all the best of America that built this Nation. We have been hurt not only because of our dynamic cities to our strong rural and industrial communities and everything in between. We are the realization of the values that have created that robust American economy, bolstered by a strong and thriving manufacturing sector, both of which innovate and strengthen our Nation with the help of wise public policy and investments.

Those investments enabled Illinois steelworkers to help us develop our farmland, build our cities, and secure our military strength. American manufacturing built this Nation, but too many of the steel mills we relied on to win World War II have been idled or shuttered completely.

After years of illegal trade practices, like dumping of cheap foreign products and currency manipulation by our competitors, our manufacturing base took a beating. That hurts not only American jobs but also our Nation’s military strength as well as the resilience of our entire economy. We simply need to do a better job of keeping manufacturing jobs within our borders, and that requires the investments necessary to ensure that we have a workforce trained for our 21st century jobs.

We can do better by Illinois’ tens of thousands of farmers as well. These farmers, ranchers, and agricultural workers form the basis of our Nation. They all wake up with a purpose, each day dedicated to producing the goods to market, both domestically and internationally. Illinois has often led the way. We built the Nation’s first elevated electric rail line in the 1800s. But today, far too much of that infrastructure is crumbling. It is in dire need of the investments our society has long understood the need for. The down payments previous generations made paid dividends to us all in the form of increased tourism, lower costs, more efficient shipments, easier travel, and so many other benefits.

If we fail to continue the investments past generations have made, we risk falling behind our global competitors, hurting not only our tourism industry but also our manufacturers and our military strength. We must support our producers who will find it harder and more expensive to get their products to market.

If we choose to disregard our infrastructure much longer, we simply will not be able to compete in the 21st century global economy. Improving our infrastructure isn’t a partisan issue. It is common sense. It is an economic priority, a defense priority, and a national security imperative. This is something we can all work on together.

I am proud to say that the first bill I proposed after arriving here in the Senate passed unanimously with bipartisan support. It will cut red tape and help streamline efforts to modernize our infrastructure and allow our economy to continue growing for generations to come.

That is also true of supporting our schools, colleges, and universities. We need to work together to develop the higher standards and funding necessary for education that enable our manufacturers, agricultural workers, engineers, and brilliant Americans all across every sector to push our economy further.

There is a reason that wealthy elites across the globe—including world leaders from foreign lands—still send their children to be educated on our shores, in world class institutions like the University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign and Chicago. Our education system is widely recognized as the best in the world. Our teachers and institutions continue to produce some of the best trained and most skilled professionals in every field imaginable—both American and international students. That is a good thing.

But more and more Americans are no longer able to access those same educational opportunities. We have priced too many of our own children out of the market for those colleges and universities that we have developed to ensure our Nation’s workforce remains
more skilled than our competitors, or we have saddled them with crippling debt. We are failing to make the necessary investments in K–12 public institutions that, regardless of ZIP Code, should be preparing every single one of our children to lead our country into the future.

Quality primary education should not be a privilege only for the wealthy, and it should not depend on rolling the dice on receiving a voucher. In the greatest and wealthiest Nation in the world, a quality education should be a right for every single American child. Our Nation’s promise of opportunity should be a reality for every child in America, not just for those whose parents can afford it. We already have some of the world’s greatest teachers, the brightest students, and the best facilities within our own borders. All we have to do is ensure they have the resources they need to succeed. That means our kids should not have to worry about school being too far away from home, getting the help they need after school or being able to pay for college when they graduate high school.

That is why I focus on commonsense solutions to access to education—solutions that support opportunity, whether by helping to lead the charge to make college more affordable or doing well to ensure the education we are providing people actually helps them find good-paying jobs when they graduate.

In that vein, I am also disheartened by the recent erosion of civil rights protections in our Nation. The calls for bigger walls and closed doors are not only bad, costly policies, they run counter to our society’s shared value for inclusion over exclusion. Too many of us seem to forget the immigrant roots within our own families. If we lose sight of our Nation’s founding principles, as some in Washington would like us to do, we will lose out on the benefits we have seen from immigrants and immigrant families.

If we had rejected immigrants years ago, Apple Computers might never have been founded by the son of a Syracuse native. Our military would be a failure for us and a weakness elsewhere for moral leadership. That is why I focus on commonsense solutions to access to education—solutions that support opportunity, whether by helping to lead the charge to make college more affordable or doing well to ensure the education we are providing people actually helps them find good-paying jobs when they graduate.

I worry that we are at risk of going backward instead of forward. Failing to continue our Nation’s inclusive nature weakens us as well as what the rest of the world begins to look elsewhere for moral leadership. That would be a failure for us and a weakening of our Nation that I will fight to prevent.

Of course, I also know how much our military has contributed to our Nation’s greatness throughout our history. We must do a better job of recognizing these contributions, not just by purchasing equipment and technology, though what our skilled workforce has done is the envy of the world, but also by ensuring that we recognize and respect the sacrifices made by our troops, our military families, and our veterans. Servicemembers embody our values of shared sacrifice and perseverance, the foundation of our Nation’s service, and they each make great sacrifices to protect us.

They deserve from their leaders in Washington a clear sense of mission and strategy, and they deserve to know the sacrifices they have made.

This is deeply personal for me. I worry that at a time when we still have so much work to do to make our Union more perfect and to provide truly equal rights for all, under the current administration we are at risk of backtracking on hard-fought progress made by civil rights leaders who bled and even died for the rights of all Americans, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, income or ZIP Code to have the right to vote, to have equal protection under the law, to have basic worker protections, and for the everyday rights and privileges so many of us take for granted. We still have so much progress left to make if we want the American dream to be accessible to all Americans—equal pay for equal work, a criminal justice system that truly provides opportunity to all, and basic health care for all Americans. Indeed, my family and I have followed this amazing story of Tammy Duckworth, a U.S. Senator from Illinois. She didn’t disappoint us.

If there was ever an inspirational speech speaking to who we are as a nation and what we can be, she encapsulated it in her comments on the floor of the U.S. Senate. It was an inspirational speech, too. It could serve as a model for all of us to do a better job for this Nation, to make it stronger and to represent more effectively the people who have sent us here to serve them.

I thank my colleagues for joining me today for my maiden speech.

Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I rise to thank my colleague for her first speech. The first speech given on the floor of the Senate is a once-in-a-lifetime occasion for not only my colleague but for the staff, friends, and family who have followed this amazing story of Tammy Duckworth, a U.S. Senator from Illinois. She didn’t disappoint us.

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Mr. President, it is an honor to be able to serve my home state, Illinois, as the first U.S. Senator since 1922 with a disability. I am humbled by the support and understanding of so many of my colleagues and their staff.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I rise to congratulate Senator Duckworth.

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Mr. President, I rise to thank my colleagues for joining me today for my maiden speech.

Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I rise to congratulate Senator Duckworth.

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Mr. President, I rise to thank my colleagues for joining me today for my maiden speech.

Thank you, Mr. President.
World War II, who led the Republican side of the aisle; Senator Daniel Inouye, a personal friend to both Senator DUCKWORTH and me, who served in World War II; Senator Paul Douglas of Illinois, who served as well; Strom Thurmond, from South Carolina, a Republican; and my good friend, Representative Cleland, a Vietnam veteran; Bob Kerrey, John Kerry—the list goes on and on, the great people who have served our Nation in the military and then came to serve in the Senate.

One of the points she made in that speech was one of the reasons I supported her so wholeheartedly. When we face the most difficult, trying, and challenging votes in a Senate career, the vote to go to war, having the voice of TAMMY DUCKWORTH on the floor is a reminder of the real cost of war and how we should avoid it at any cost, if we can, and what we are asking our men and women in America to do if we send them off to war. She will have more credibility, will have more confidence in her judgment, than virtually any colleague on the floor of the U.S. Senate. So she is going to play a special role.

Finally, let me say, in a short period of time, serving as a U.S. Senator from the State of Illinois, she has shown that she is not going to be taking it easy. She has covered our State from one end to the other, most recently during the Easter recess, with town meetings and meetings with all sorts of people, leaving a positive impression of her commitment to public service.

When I saw her and her mom and her little daughter Abigail get on the plane just the other day, yesterday, to come out here, I realized it is a family commitment which includes all of her family and her husband Bryan. They are committed to this country, they are committed to our great State, and we are fortunate to have her service.

Mr. President, I congratulate my colleague. I yield the floor.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HOEVEN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

THE ECONOMY

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, it is no surprise that the economy continues to be one of the top issues on the minds of Americans. The 8 years of the Obama administration were characterized by weak economic growth, a dearth of jobs and opportunities, and almost nonexistent wage growth. The Obama administration ushered in long-term economic stagnation.

The Congressional Budget Office predicts that the economy will grow at a rate of just 1.9 percent over the next 30 years—a full percentage point lower than the average growth rate over the past 50 years. We cannot resign ourselves to that. Resigning ourselves to long-term growth of 1.9 percent would mean resigning ourselves to decades of fewer jobs and opportunities, low wage growth, and high rates of living. Fortunately, there are a lot of things we can do to get our economy thriving again and to spur economic growth.

A recent report from the Economic Innovation Group identified one important problem with our economy today, and that is a lack of what the EIG calls economic dynamism. Economic dynamism, as the Economic Innovation Group defines it, refers to the rate at which new businesses are born and die. In a dynamic economy, the rate of new business creation is high and significantly outstrips the rate of business death, but that has not been the case in the United States lately. New business creation has significantly dropped over the past several years. Between 2009 and 2011, business death outstripped business birth, and while the numbers have since improved slightly, the recovery has been poor and far from historical norms.

The Economic Innovation Group notes that in 2012—which, by the way, was the economy’s best year for business creation since the recession—it still “fell far short of its worst year” prior to 2008. The standard of concern because new businesses have historically been responsible for a substantial part of the job creation in this country, not to mention a key source of innovation. When new businesses are not being created at a strong rate, workers face a whole host of problems. “A less dynamic economy,” the Economic Innovation Group notes, “is one likely to feature fewer jobs, lower labor force participation, slack wage growth, and rising inequality—exactly what we see today.”

Restoring economic dynamism would go a long way toward boosting economic growth and providing new jobs and opportunities for American workers. One big thing we can do to achieve this is to relieve the burden of excessive government regulations. Obviously, some government regulations are important and necessary, but too many others are unnecessary and do nothing with compliance costs and paperwork hours. The more resources businesses spend on complying with regulations, the less they have available for growth and innovation. Excessive regulations also prevent many new businesses from ever getting off the ground. Small startups simply do not have the resources to hire individuals—let alone consultants and lawyers—to do the costly work of complying with scores of government regulations.

Unfortunately, over the past 8 years, the Obama administration spent a lot of time on imposing burdensome and unnecessary regulations on American businesses. According to the American Action Forum, the Obama administration was responsible for implementing more than 675 major regulations that cost the economy more than $800 billion. Given those numbers, it is no surprise that the Obama economy left behind a legacy with the business community dedicated to growing and creating jobs or that new business creation seriously dropped off during the Obama administration.

Since the new Congress began in January, Republicans in Congress and the President have been focused on repealing burdensome Obama-era regulations. So far, we have saved individuals and businesses approximately $67 billion and freed them from 56 million hours of paperwork. Eliminating burdensome regulations will continue to be a priority for both Republicans in Congress and for the White House.

In addition to removing burdensome regulations, we need to focus on reforming our Tax Code to make U.S. businesses more competitive in the global economy, and we need to reduce taxes for small businesses so that we do not choke off these sources of growth and innovation. Measures like allowing new businesses to deduct their startup costs and expense more of their investments in machinery and equipment would spur new business creation and help small businesses thrive.

Our goal is to take up tax reform this year, and I am looking forward to that debate. Reforming our Tax Code will go a long way toward restoring dynamism to our economy and encouraging growth, job creation, and better wages. There are other growth-boosting measures we can take as well, like reforming our education system and helping our workers and job creators adapt to new technology.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HOEVEN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

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

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

TRIBUTE TO BRIAN MCGUIRE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, this is one of those days I never look forward to. In my time in the Senate, I have had a lot of outstanding chiefs of staff. It is a pretty impressive group of men and women who have been in that position. We have seen others—none more impressive than the person who, unfortunately, I have to say goodbye to today.

I am here today to pay tribute to Brian McGuire, the chief of staff in my personal office, who is going to be leaving after well over 10 years of service in several different capacities but over the last few years as my personal office chief of staff. He is really a uniquely gifted person. He is one of the most skilled writers I have ever encountered and, of course, I am not one to talk about skilled writer I ever encountered. But in addition to that, he is good at a whole lot of other things, too, as I will subsequently describe in my remarks.

As I think back about the chiefs of staff, I have had a lot tenants, but that was Brian McGuire, and he NY—not exactly what I had envisioned, but I had just been elected to this position. After the 2014 election, when I became majority leader, I asked Brian to leave speechwriting behind and become the chief of staff in my personal office. He quickly proved himself in that role. But I had just been elected to this position. There was a lot of pressure to get some time to look back and reflect on all he has accomplished here in his time with us.

At his core, though, Brian is incredibly grounded. He is all about the things that really matter—his Catholic faith, his two beautiful children, Stella and Max, and his wonderful wife Ashley. Ashley, I am happy to say, is due with their third child next month—just in time for Mother’s Day. So Brian has a lot to look forward to as he climbs the next mountain. I hope he takes some time to look back and reflect on all he has accomplished here in his time with us.

Let me say again that Brian McGuire, on so many different occasions, has made me look so much better than I am. I could never thank him enough for the work he did. He made not only to my career but to Kentucky and my life.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I rise today in support of the nomination of Rod J. Rosenstein to be the Deputy Attorney General of the United States at the Justice Department. Rod has served the people of Maryland extraordinarily well since 2005 as the U.S. attorney for the District of Maryland. I am pleased to support his nomination, and I hope the Senate will confirm him in short order.

I might point out that he received a favorable recommendation from the Judiciary Committee by a lopsided vote of 18-to-1.

Rod Rosenstein is the total package. He has committed his life to public service. Rod graduated from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania with a B.S. in economics, summa cum laude, in 1986. He earned his J.D. degree from Harvard Law School in 1989, where he was the editor of the Harvard Law Review. He then served as a law clerk to Judge Douglas H. Ginsburg of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit. After finishing his clerkship in 1990, he became an assistant U.S. attorney in the Public Integrity Section of the Criminal Division of the Department of Justice. He has remained at the Justice Department for his entire career.

Mr. Rosenberg has devoted his life to public service. He was appointed in 2005 by President Bush and then held over by President Obama, with the strong support of his two home State Senators, which include myself and the senior Senator at the time. Senator Mikulski and I had no hesitation when asking Mr. Rosenberg to remain on as the U.S. attorney in the country today.

I really want to underscore that point. I know my colleagues know the prerogatives we have when we come to office and there is an opening at the U.S. attorney’s office because of an election of a President from your own party where the previous U.S. attorney was appointed by the other party. In fact, this, it was a Republican who appointed Mr. Rosenberg. President Obama came into office, and the senior Senator and junior Senator had the opportunity to replace that U.S. attorney, which has been the tradition in the Senate. Senator Mikulski and I had no hesitation when asking Mr. Rosenberg to remain on as the U.S. attorney in Maryland. We did that because we knew how valuable he was for law enforcement in our State.

As U.S. attorney for the District of Maryland, Rod has received broad bipartisan support from the State and local law enforcement officials across our great State as he has tackled problems of crime, terrorism, drug trafficking, gun and gang violence, civil rights enforcement, environmental crimes, and corruption. I just mentioned a couple of those.

I sat down with the U.S. attorney to talk about gang violence in our State because I had been to Central America and I saw the exporting of gang violence from Central America to Maryland. The U.S. attorney, Mr. Rosenstein, and I had a chance to talk about
the strategies we would use in Maryland to combat that. But he didn’t just work by himself at the U.S. attorney level; he worked with local law enforcement to make sure we had a team approach.

In terms of his pro bono work, Rod wrote in his Judiciary Committee questionnaire:

My entire legal career has been devoted to public service, and much of my work directly benefits disadvantaged persons. In addition to my varied public speaking I have taught without compensation at area law schools, served as a judge at law school moot court and mock trial competitions, and counseled students who have desired some or all of their career to public service.

He has truly been a model for many others in public service, a real role model.

Let me share a few examples with my colleagues of how State and local officials in Maryland have viewed Rod’s work over the past decade. Let me begin with the city of Baltimore, which has just entered into a consent decree with the U.S. Department of Justice to reform police practices after the death of Freddie Gray in custody 2 years ago.

Baltimore police commissioner Kevin Davis wrote:

Mr. Rosenstein and the Baltimore Police Department have collaborated on numerous large-scale investigations and resulting indictments of violent criminal organizations operating in Baltimore City. Under Mr. Rosenstein’s leadership, the U.S. Attorney’s Office and its prosecutors operate with the highest sense of justice and integrity in the course of these investigations and trials.

Commissioner Davis continues:

It is undeniable that Baltimore City is a safer place as a result of Mr. Rosenstein’s tenure as U.S. Attorney. Through our professional collaborations, I have come to know Mr. Rosenstein on a personal basis as well. Mr. Rosenstein is a man of utmost character and intellect.

Former State’s attorney for Baltimore City, Gregg Bernstein, a Democrat, wrote:

Simply stated, Rod was a terrific partner. Even a hasty review of his body of work as the United States Attorney for the District of Maryland makes readily apparent that Rod was committed to reducing the level of violent crime in Baltimore. His commitment and effort trickled down to other law enforcement agencies as well, including the Baltimore City State’s Attorney’s Office.

In Rod, we saw a person who was not interested in personal credit or accolade, but instead, one who created an atmosphere of collaboration that had not been seen in Baltimore for some time. It was much more important to him that everyone was working as hard as they could to fight crime in the City and the rest of Maryland.

Mr. Bernstein continues:

As a result of his tireless efforts, Rod helped to reduce the homicide rate in Baltimore to historically low levels not seen in decades. He also was responsible for supervising the leadership of the Attorney’s Office that was able to dismantle many of the gangs in Baltimore that were responsible for much of the illegal drug trade and violence that have plagued the City. He has earned the universal respect and admiration of not only his colleagues in the United States Attorney’s Office, but other law enforcement agencies, and a debt of gratitude from the public that has greatly appreciated his work to make Baltimore a safer place to live and work.

State and local elected prosecutors of both political parties have also weighed in in support of Mr. Rosenstein’s nomination. Scott She llenberger, the Baltimore County State’s attorney, wrote on behalf of the Maryland State’s Attorneys’ Association:

Rod has been an outstanding partner with every local prosecutor in the State of Maryland. Whether it is partnering with prosecutors in the Criminal Division to identify gun violence, to the prosecution of prison gang corruption both in the city and in rural counties... Rod has always been there for law enforcement. When prosecutors in this State ask Rod for assistance, he does not care if you are a “D” or an “R,” he has only cared about making this State a safer place.

I have a deep confidence that Rod will call it like he sees it without regard to partisan or political considerations and that he will continue to uphold his oath to support and defend the Constitution and laws of the United States.

I must tell you that I have heard from State and local officials directly who have worked with Rod on political corruption cases and thanked Rod for the manner in which he collaboratively worked to root out corruption and misconduct by State and local officials in Maryland. As you can imagine, State and local officials do not always welcome Federal investigations or prosecutions into their domain, so this really speaks volumes about Rod as a prosecutor, action person and his ability to get along and accomplish results.

Former Maryland attorney general Doug Gansler wrote:

I have always found [Rod] to be totally by-the-book and apolitical. Rod understands the importance of staying out of the political limelight. The fact that I am a Democrat who served in elected office for 16 years and was appointed by a Republican President never was mentioned. He makes decisions for the right reasons and articulates those reasons with aplomb, ... Rod is always and always has been extremely ethical and conscientious, qualities which have earned him the respect of his peers and colleagues.

As Deputy Attorney General, Rod Rosenstein would basically serve as the chief operating officer at the Justice Department and manage the daily operations of the Nation’s largest firm. The Department of Justice is a sprawling Cabinet Department with more than 110,000 employees, a budget of $28 billion, and a budget. That is a pretty big undertaking. It is good to know that a person of his reputation has shown that he will not yield to partisan pressure but do what is right. It is good to know that we have that type of person whom we can trust to hold the position of Deputy Attorney General. That is why it is so important that we have an effective manager and leader.

Mr. Rosenstein is a man of utmost character and intellect. As a result of his tireless efforts, Rod helped to reduce the homicide rate in Baltimore to historically low levels not seen in decades. He also was responsible for supervising the leadership of the Attorney’s Office that was able to dismantle many of the gangs in Baltimore that were responsible for much of the illegal drug trade and violence that have plagued the City. He has earned the universal respect and admiration of not only his colleagues in the United States Attorney’s Office, but other law enforcement agencies, and a debt of gratitude from the public that has greatly appreciated his work to make Baltimore a safer place to live and work.

State and local elected prosecutors of both political parties have also weighed in in support of Mr. Rosenstein’s nomination. Scott Shellenberger, the Baltimore County State’s attorney, wrote on behalf of the Maryland State’s Attorneys’ Association:

Rod has been an outstanding partner with every local prosecutor in the State of Maryland. Whether it is partnering with prosecutors in the Criminal Division to identify gun violence, to the prosecution of prison gang corruption both in the city and in rural counties... Rod has always been there for law enforcement. When prosecutors in this State ask Rod for assistance, he does not care if you are a “D” or an “R,” he has only cared about making this State a safer place.

I have a deep confidence that Rod will call it like he sees it without regard to partisan or political considerations and that he will continue to uphold his oath to support and defend the Constitution and laws of the United States.

I must tell you that I have heard from State and local officials directly who have worked with Rod on political corruption cases and thanked Rod for the manner in which he collaboratively worked to root out corruption and misconduct by State and local officials in Maryland. As you can imagine, State and local officials do not always welcome Federal investigations or prosecutions into their domain, so this really speaks volumes about Rod as a prosecutor, action person and his ability to get along and accomplish results.

Former Maryland attorney general Doug Gansler wrote:

I have always found (Rod) to be totally by-the-book and apolitical. Rod understands the importance of staying out of the political limelight. The fact that I am a Democrat who served in elected office for 16 years and was appointed by a Republican President never was mentioned. He makes decisions for the right reasons and articulates those reasons with aplomb, ... Rod is always and always has been extremely ethical and conscientious, qualities which have earned him the respect of his peers and colleagues.

As Deputy Attorney General, Rod Rosenstein would basically serve as the chief operating officer at the Justice Department and manage the daily operations of the Nation’s largest firm. The Department of Justice is a sprawling Cabinet Department with more than 110,000 employees, a budget of $28 billion, and a $28 billion budget. That is a pretty big undertaking. It is good to know that a person of his reputation has shown that he will not yield to partisan pressure but do what is right. It is good to know that we have that type of person whom we can trust to hold the position of Deputy Attorney General. That is why it is so important that we have an effective manager and leader.

Maryland attorney general Brian Frosh, a Democrat, wrote:

I have found [Rod] to be intelligent, principled, and fair. As U.S. Attorney, Mr. Rosenstein has been an exemplary leader. He inherited an office that was in turmoil. With a steady hand and superb management, he has built it into an institution that is universally respected in our state. He has been able to recruit and retain talented attorneys, investigators and staff, and the office has been effective and successful in carrying out its mission.

I expect Rod to exercise the same management style as the Deputy Attorney General overseeing the dozens of divisions, offices, and agencies at the Department of Justice. He will use that same commitment that he used as the U.S. attorney for the State of Maryland. Lastly, let me quote from former Deputy Attorney General James Cole, who served in President Obama’s administration under Attorney General Holder. I know Mr. Cole well. He was the special counsel during the House ethics investigation of Speaker-Newt Gingrich, which committee I was on. Mr. Cole supports Mr. Rosenstein’s nomination. Mr. Cole writes:

Rod brings with him the knowledge, skill, experience, and wisdom that is required for this job. He also brings the ability of, and respect for, the important role the Department of Justice occupies in our government—the need for it to not only enforce the laws, but to also maintain a level of independence that enables it to have credibility in the eyes of our citizens. Rod will make an excellent Deputy Attorney General. ... Even at an earlier age, Rod demonstrated the sound judgment and careful thought that was necessary to handle the very sensitive public corruption cases that were prosecuted by the Public Integrity Section of the Criminal Division.

That is Mr. Cole. Mr. Cole was a former Deputy Attorney General, and he understands this role very well and understands Mr. Rosenstein is uniquely qualified to hold this position.

I want to conclude by urging my colleagues to support Mr. Rosenstein’s nomination.

I especially thank Rod’s family for their contribution to public service as well. As we know, we can’t do this without a supportive family, and this service comes at a steep price in terms of time spent doing public service and sacrifices made by his family. I thank his wife Lisa and his daughters, Julie and Allison, for being willing to share their husband and father with our country.

I urge the Senate to confirm Mr. Rosenstein’s nomination to be the next Deputy Attorney General of the United States at the Justice Department.

Mr. LEAHY, Mr. President, Rod Rosenstein’s nomination to be Deputy Attorney General comes at a unique moment in history and critical juncture for the Department of Justice, as well as for this country. It has been 44 years since the Senate considered a nomination.

It is a sad commentary that we have to go through this process. We should have the opportunity to consider what is truly the most important role in our government, the Attorney General comes at a unique moment in history and critical juncture for the Department of Justice, as well as for this country. It has been 44 years since the Senate considered a nomination.
campaign and administration. Since the Judiciary Committee reported Mr. Rosenstein’s nomination to the Senate earlier this month, further press reports underscore how important it is that we have an independent and impartial investigation into Russian interference and connections to the Trump campaign.

In just the past 3 weeks, we learned that a notable Trump campaign adviser was reported to be the subject of a FISA warrant. CNN reported that this adviser was among those who “Russian operatives tried to use . . . to infiltrate the Trump campaign.” The AP reported that Paul Manafort, who worked for free as the Trump campaign chairman, previously received at least $1.2 million for consulting work on behalf of a Ukrainian ally of Russian President Putin. That is in addition to reports that Mr. Manafort earned $10 million for secret work on behalf of Vladimir Putin. We learned that President Trump’s first National Security Advisor “failed to list payments from Russia-linked entities” on his financial disclosures.

We also learned that the President’s son-in-law and top campaign aide’s repeated statements and omissions about his Russian contacts were revealed on a tape. The Russian Ambassador and other officials on his application to obtain top secret security clearance—just like when the Attorney General provided false testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee—failed to answer questions from me and Senator Franken about his own Russian contacts.

If confirmed, Mr. Rosenstein will assume leadership of the sprawling investigation into Russia’s multifaceted attempts to interfere with our elections, an investigation that embroils not only individuals in the Trump campaign, but also those who are now in the President’s Cabinet and senior officials in the White House. The Deputy Attorney General Sessions was forced to recuse himself from this investigation after the press revealed that he had misled the Judiciary Committee and the American people about his connections to Russian officials and agents. There is no question that the Attorney General’s recusal was required—and should have happened on day 1 after assuming office. Justice Department regulations required him to recuse himself because of the fact that then-Gov. Sessions played in the Trump campaign and his continuing contacts with those directly under investigation. These Department of Justice regulations protect the impartiality of all Justice Department investigations.

The Justice Department regulations regarding appointment of a special counsel are equally significant. These regulations direct appointment of a special counsel when there is “a conflict of interest for the Department or other extraordinary circumstances” and “it would be in the public interest to appoint an outside Special Counsel to assume responsibility for the matter.” The current situation unquestionably meets that standard. Mr. Rosenstein acknowledged at his confirmation hearing that it would be an unusual challenge to lead an investigation that potentially includes the Attorney General himself, and that this investigation now not only includes Mr. Rosenstein’s potential boss, but also several others inside the White House.

Americans deserve an investigation that is independent and inspires public confidence in the appointment of a special counsel who is free from political influence. This issue is too important for us to skew for partisan motivations. Country must come before party, and I hope and trust Mr. Rosenstein will understand that if he is confirmed.

We know that this administration and this President have already interfered with the House Intelligence Committee’s investigation into Russian activity and connections to the Trump campaign. Deputy Attorney General Rosenstein, the chairman of the House Intelligence Committee, recused himself from his own committee’s investigation after what Ryan Lizza of the New Yorker called a “coordinated effort between the Trump campaign and [Chairman] Nunes . . . to manufacture a fake scandal” in order to distract from, as well as obstruct, any real investigation. Earlier this month, President Trump even said that “it’s not too late” to fire FBI Director Comey, suggesting he cannot be trusted to respect the independence of any investigation, which is why we need an outside special counsel. Whose assumes the role of Deputy Attorney General in this administration will face extraordinary tests of integrity. Mr. Rosenstein has a reputation for integrity that is unusual for this administration’s nominees, and I hope he is up to the challenge.

We already know from the intelligence community and the report that Russian President Putin waged a multifaceted influence campaign to delegitimize Secretary Clinton and help Donald Trump win the Presidency. Worse, he intended to undermine public faith in our democratic process. This interference did not end on November 8th. It is ongoing and, according to the intelligence community, President Putin will continue using cyberattacks and propaganda campaigns to undermine our future elections—but there is still much we do not know.

We need a thorough, independent investigation. President Putin’s goal last year was to undermine our democratic institutions—to corrode Americans’ trust and faith in our government. If we do not get to the bottom of Russian interference, he will have been successful, and he will no doubt do it again. I hope that Mr. Rosenstein will do the right thing and appoint a special counsel to lead a truly independent investigation—one in which all Americans can have confidence.

If confirmed, Mr. Rosenstein will face other critical tests as well, including whether he will continue to support the Justice Department’s Smart on Crime initiative, focusing the most serious criminal penalties on the most serious offenders. With his 27 years of experience in the Justice Department, I know that Mr. Rosenstein will understand that, as Deputy Attorney General and as Acting Attorney General in matters relating to the Trump campaign, he will remember that he is not the President’s attorney, but the people’s attorney.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I rise today to address President Trump’s proposed budget for fiscal year 2018. My predecessor in this seat, my friend, former Vice President Joe Biden, once said, to me some years ago, if you have the floor, I think you should say what your home State of Delaware would look like if you were there for the Trump administration.

Last month President Trump released an overview of his budget—what is called a skinny budget—and we haven’t yet received a full and detailed budget proposal. Even though what we have received is just an overview, it indicates that the cuts President Trump is proposing will significantly weaken vital domestic programs, often with the goal of completely eliminating existing and valued initiatives.

This chart gives a summary of all the different Federal agencies that would take double-digit hits in order to be able to pay for the significant $54 billion increase to defense spending. Targeting only nondefense programs that millions of Americans and Delawareans rely on ignores commitments made over the last couple of budget cycles and years, as Republicans and Democrats have worked together to ensure placing equal priority on defense and nondefense spending.

Under sequestration, under the Budget Control Act, we have already made significant cuts to important domestic programs. After the difficult budgets of the last few years, we have already made too many cuts to some of the programs that helped build our Nation.

To be clear, I am as passionate as anyone in this body about supporting our Armed Forces, particularly when they are in harm’s way and particularly as we continue to conduct operations against ISIS in Iraq and Syria.
But Democrats will not stand for cutting domestic programs simply to pay for a $54 billion military expansion that hasn’t been explained or justified through a thorough review of what are the appropriate investments in defense that correspond to the challenges and threats we face in this world.

To pay for that $54 billion increase in defense by cutting investments in education, housing, job training, and more here at home strikes me as the wrong set of priorities and the wrong direction. If anything like these proposed Trump budget cuts are enacted, I know my home State of Delaware would lose millions and millions of dollars for valuable and much needed Federal programs that help my constituents each and every day. Trump’s budget proposal would cut research and health programs. It would cut job-creating infrastructure programs. It would cut grants to our local schools. It would cut housing and so much more.

I wish to take a few minutes to focus on a few of many proposed budget cuts to give a sense of the impact it might have on our livelihood, our security, and the way we live at home. Let me start with some cuts that would directly affect our national security, our safety.

In my view, the deep cuts made in the proposed Trump budget would simply make us less safe. For example, the U.S. Coast Guard, which has a station in Delaware, would be cut by more than $1.3 billion. The Transportation Security Administration, or TSA, has just an $8 million cut. Ironically, even though these are the very agencies that protect our ports and other points of entry, Trump proposes cutting their funding so that a southern border wall can be built for an estimate well above $25 billion. This elimination makes no sense. If you listen to the words of the Coast Guard Commandant, ADM Paul Zukunft, he warned that simply focusing on all those resources on building a wall along the border with Mexico would leave our ports and waterways even more appealing to smugglers and those who seek to bring illicit drugs or to bring people into the United States through unlawful entry.

That is not all. Trump’s budget would make us less safe by depleting Federal protection from natural disasters, starting with a proposed $600 million cut to FEMA State and local grants. The budget also proposes re-structuring fees for the National Flood Insurance Program, which would lead to raising rates for homeowners who get flood insurance.

My home State of Delaware is the lowest mean elevation State in America—literally the lowest lying State in America—a State that borders on the Chesapeake Bay, one of the world’s largest estuary systems, and Delaware is a State that depends on Federal support to help Delaware manufacturers increase sales by more than $120 million, helping create more than 1,600 good-paying jobs and finding over $100 million in cost savings in Delaware’s small and medium manufacturers. These are great impacts for a fairly small program. Why that program specifically targeted at helping small and medium manufacturing companies would be a priority for elimination is beyond me.

Cuts to other areas that impact research and energy in our economy also strike me as unwise and ill-considered. It is not just our economy and national security; Trump’s budget would also threaten our infrastructure, our transportation, and our housing.

As a Delawarean and someone who rides Amtrak between Wilmington and Washington almost every day we are in session, briefly knowing that our passenger rail system is for the Northeast, as well as for connecting the rest of our country. Amtrak’s long-distance routes are critically important to the Nation’s economy and to sustaining passenger rail service. Yet, as our competitors around the world are investing billions of dollars in high-speed rail and in efficient rail networks that connect whole countries, President Trump’s proposal would eliminate all Federal funding for Amtrak’s long-distance routes.

Another effective Federal program that has made a difference in my home State in infrastructure is the so-called TIGER Grant Program. This program invests in a whole range of infrastructure options—highway, transit, rail and port—by leveraging private capital and supporting competitive, innovative solutions to infrastructure challenges. The Trump budget instead of this vital program like a new regional rail transportation center at the University of Delaware, taking advantage of the former Chrysler rail yard, and the significant new growth we are seeing at the University of Delaware’s STAR campus is an investment that will have several multiples that will leverage private sector benefits by promoting economic development, accessible housing, and multimodal transportation choices in the area.

Many of my colleagues have similar experiences in their States about the impact of the TIGER Grant Program in the last year, it had a demand nearly 20 times the available funding. Yet those Trump budget cuts I know how important our Federal funding to this vital transportation infrastructure program that creates jobs and helps to leverage private sector investment.

There are so many other programs on the chopping block, it is hard to begin to touch on them: Community Development Block Grants, which I relied on in my previous job as county executive to provide support for low-income and disabled individuals to have access to high quality housing; the funds that support things like Meals on Wheels, that allow our low-income seniors to age in place rather than having to be moved to institutions; and many other programs through the Federal Department of Housing that have a positive impact in communities up and down my State, from Newark and Wilmington to Dover and Seaford.

If you take the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s rural water and waste management programs and cut those completely, these would be eliminated entirely. These programs are critical to ensuring that rural communities can access funds to support safe drinking water and sewer systems. Many communities in Southern Delaware rely on rural water funds to ensure safe drinking water supplies for the families that live there. As I have suggested, the list of potential cuts to programs goes on and on.

Let me move to some impacts on the environment, briefly. The Chesapeake Bay is one of the world’s largest estuary systems, and Delaware is a State that borders on the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Economists insist that there is nearly $1 trillion worth of economic value to the Chesapeake Bay watershed, yet the Trump budget cuts nearly half of the funding for the EPA to allow States to get grants that will help improve air quality, clean up contaminated waste sites, and remove lead from drinking water. Delaware alone would lose $3 million in these vital initiatives.

There are millions of Americans who rely on many more programs listed
April 25, 2017

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD — SENATE

S2515

here—AmeriCorps, Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program, Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the African Development Foundation, and many more—all eliminated in this budget in order to prioritize a focus on our military and defense. It’s a choice.

I don’t think the President understands that we cannot maintain our status as a global leader with defense and military alone. We need to ensure that a complementary strength exists in our development and diplomacy programs that can complement our defense spending on national defense.

I recently had the opportunity to see the impact that USAID and our programs to assist the hungry and needy around the world can make in stabilizing fragile states and preventing them from becoming failed states. We spent less than one percent of the Federal budget on these sorts of programs. They provide a critical connection to parts of the world where a positive understanding of America and our values would be a good thing.

The international affairs budget, which includes needed funding for USAID, the State Department, and other related programs, would be cut by one-third under the Trump budget—a 29 percent cut to the State Department alone.

If history is any indicator, the last 70 years show these investments in diplomacy and development are critical. Foreign assistance is not charity. It serves a humanitarian purpose, but it also makes us stronger by promoting American values around the world, building coalitions that isolate our adversaries, and helping make tens of millions less susceptible to terrorism and to extremism around the world.

This is a false choice between significantly increasing our defense spending and the need to sustain our investments in diplomacy and development. I hope my colleagues and constituents will take time to think about the many different Federal programs that I have briefly discussed in these remarks about the proposed budget and all the different ways that these Federal programs have invested in our quality of life, in our national security, and our economic prosperity. Many of them are scheduled for elimination under this budget.

As I have heard both Republicans and Democrats say in press interviews and on this floor: No President’s budget is scheduled for elimination under this Trump budget has left—along with the loan-killing, anti-jobs disaster that we commonly refer to as Dodd-Frank. Every reasonable person with a passing knowledge of our banking system recognizes the destabilizing effect that Dodd-Frank has had on local economies, community banks, and the Nation’s credit unions.

Just last week, President Trump turned to the problems brought by Dodd-Frank by signing two Presidential memorandums to take a look at the Orderly Liquidation Authority and the systemic risk designation process at the Financial Stability Oversight Council. I applaud the President’s efforts in this regard. I believe they are desperately needed. Reforming this flawed law is crucial to the future success of the American economy.

Some of my colleagues were here when Dodd-Frank was passed in 2010. As we are well aware, it was intended to prevent another 2008-like banking crisis by strengthening Federal Government regulation of financial services. But in the process, as so often happens, Congress actually crippled America’s small banks and credit unions. Those that played absolutely no role—none, zero, nada—in instigating the 2008 meltdown. And that is not just my opinion. Our Federal Reserve Chair, Dr. Janet Yellen, appeared before the Senate Banking Committee earlier this year—actually, February 14. When it was my turn to ask her questions, I asked her the following simple question: ‘‘What did community banks do wrong in 2008?’’

This was the Chairwoman’s answer: ‘‘Well, community banks were not the reason for the financial crisis. It was larger institutions that took risks and risks that developed outside the banking system.’’

Let me read that first sentence again. Chair Yellen: ‘‘Well, community banks were not the reason for the financial crisis.’’

I believe she is right. The fact is that our smaller banks and credit unions are the weight of Dodd-Frank. I will give you an example of what I am talking about. The Truth in Lending Act passed by Congress is actually 22 pages long. The Federal Reserve Act, setting up our Federal Reserve System, is 32 pages long. Glass-Steagall, about which we heard a great deal, was 37 pages long. Dodd-Frank is a breathtaking 2,300 pages with 22,000 pages of regulations. You can stand on the thing and paint the ceiling.

That is why so many community banks no longer exist. Those that have managed to survive have seen their costs go up, their profits go down, and their ability to make small business and consumer loans curtailed—all as a result of the unnecessary, heavy hand of government. In fact, since Dodd-Frank was passed in 2010, this country has lost 1,700 small institutions. The result of the very mandated effort to make our financial system more stable has forced community banks and credit unions to merge, consolidate, or to go out of business because of the heavy hand of regulation and because they can’t make the loans that they normally would be able to make.

Nationwide, we have been losing an average of one community bank or credit union a day—every single day—since Dodd-Frank was passed because of its costs, which have driven our banks to sell or merge with larger banks. It is so ironic that this forced consolidation—forcing our smaller banks and credit unions to either merge with or be bought out by larger banks—has resulted in greater concentration of assets on the books of even larger and, in some cases, too-big-to-fail banks that Dodd-Frank was supposed to do something about.

I am legislation that will provide 785 American credit unions. It will help 5,661 community banks in our country survive. Specifically, financial institutions with assets of less than $10 billion—if you are a financial institution and you have less than $10 billion in assets, you will be exempt completely from Dodd-Frank, its 2,300 pages and its 22,000 pages of regulations. We are talking about a lot of banks.

Banks with less than $10 billion in assets make up 92 percent of all commercial loans, 16 percent of residential mortgages, 44 percent of lending to purchase farmland, 43 percent of lending for farm operations, and 35 percent of commercial real estate loans. If my bill passes, these institutions will no longer have to reduce their products and service offerings in order to divert resources to compliance, to interpretation, and to execution.

The expertise of our smaller banks and credit unions in America in evaluating risk will no longer be reduced to some algorithm—some mathematical exercise. Instead, our institutions will be able to deliver the desperately needed capital to the customers they know so well because that is what community banks and credit unions do. They take in local deposits and make loans to local borrowers whom they know and whose creditworthiness they can closely monitor because community bankers, as we all know, are relationship bankers. They don’t participate in widespread trading. They don’t use derivatives to speculate, and they never did. Most of them have fewer than 100 employees.

The type of regulation they need—any type of regulation they don’t need regulation. What I am suggesting is the type of regulation they need—because of the risks our small institutions take—is much different than the

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss my bill, the Reforming Finance for Local Economies Act, which I introduced earlier this week. This bill is very simple and straightforward. It reduces the cost burden on banks and credit unions with assets of less than $10 billion from complying with the loan-killing, anti-jobs disaster that we commonly refer to as Dodd-Frank. Every reasonable person with a passing knowledge of our banking system recognizes the destabilizing effect that Dodd-Frank has had on local economies, community banks, and the Nation’s credit unions.

Just last week, President Trump turned to the problems brought by Dodd-Frank by signing two Presidential memorandums to take a look at the Orderly Liquidation Authority and the systemic risk designation process at the Financial Stability Oversight Council. I applaud the President’s efforts in this regard. I believe they are desperately needed. Reforming this flawed law is crucial to the future success of the American economy.

Some of my colleagues were here when Dodd-Frank was passed in 2010. As we are well aware, it was intended to prevent another 2008-like banking crisis by strengthening Federal Government regulation of financial services. But in the process, as so often happens, Congress actually crippled America’s small banks and credit unions. Those that played absolutely no role—none, zero, nada—in instigating the 2008 meltdown. And that is not just my opinion. Our Federal Reserve Chair, Dr. Janet Yellen, appeared before the Senate Banking Committee earlier this year—actually, February 14. When it was my turn to ask her questions, I asked her the following simple question: ‘‘What did community banks do wrong in 2008?’’

This was the Chairwoman’s answer: ‘‘Well, community banks were not the reason for the financial crisis. It was larger institutions that took risks and risks that developed outside the banking system.’’

Let me read that first sentence again. Chair Yellen: ‘‘Well, community banks were not the reason for the financial crisis.’’

I believe she is right. The fact is that our smaller banks and credit unions are the weight of Dodd-Frank. I will give you an example of what I am talking about. The Truth in Lending Act passed by Congress is actually 22 pages long. The Federal Reserve Act, setting up our Federal Reserve System, is 32 pages long. Glass-Steagall, about which we heard a great deal, was 37 pages long. Dodd-Frank is a breathtaking 2,300 pages with 22,000 pages of regulations. You can stand on the thing and paint the ceiling.

That is why so many community banks no longer exist. Those that have managed to survive have seen their costs go up, their profits go down, and their ability to make small business and consumer loans curtailed—all as a result of the unnecessary, heavy hand of government. In fact, since Dodd-Frank was passed in 2010, this country has lost 1,700 small institutions. The result of the very mandated effort to make our financial system more stable has forced community banks and credit unions to merge, consolidate, or to go out of business because of the heavy hand of regulation and because they can’t make the loans that they normally would be able to make.

Nationwide, we have been losing an average of one community bank or credit union a day—every single day—since Dodd-Frank was passed because of its costs, which have driven our banks to sell or merge with larger banks. It is so ironic that this forced consolidation—forcing our smaller banks and credit unions to either merge with or be bought out by larger banks—has resulted in greater concentration of assets on the books of even larger and, in some cases, too-big-to-fail banks that Dodd-Frank was supposed to do something about.

I am legislation that will provide 785 American credit unions. It will help 5,661 community banks in our country survive. Specifically, financial institutions with assets of less than $10 billion—if you are a financial institution and you have less than $10 billion in assets, you will be exempt completely from Dodd-Frank, its 2,300 pages and its 22,000 pages of regulations. We are talking about a lot of banks.

Banks with less than $10 billion in assets make up 92 percent of all commercial loans, 16 percent of residential mortgages, 44 percent of lending to purchase farmland, 43 percent of lending for farm operations, and 35 percent of commercial real estate loans. If my bill passes, these institutions will no longer have to reduce their products and service offerings in order to divert resources to compliance, to interpretation, and to execution.

The expertise of our smaller banks and credit unions in America in evaluating risk will no longer be reduced to some algorithm—some mathematical exercise. Instead, our institutions will be able to deliver the desperately needed capital to the customers they know so well because that is what community banks and credit unions do. They take in local deposits and make loans to local borrowers whom they know and whose creditworthiness they can closely monitor because community bankers, as we all know, are relationship bankers. They don’t participate in widespread trading. They don’t use derivatives to speculate, and they never did. Most of them have fewer than 100 employees.

The type of regulation they need—any type of regulation they don’t need regulation. What I am suggesting is the type of regulation they need—because of the risks our small institutions take—is much different than the
regulation needed by a $700 billion or a trillion-dollar bank.

I am certain that the proponents of Dodd-Frank were well-intentioned when they wrote and passed it. But 150 years ago, doctors used to bleed their patients until their patients died. They stopped doing that because their patients died. That is why I suggest today that we eliminate Dodd-Frank for our smaller institutions. Making Dodd-Frank applicable to community banks and credit unions is a lot like using a sledgehammer to go after a gnat. It is way over the top.

Now, certainly our smaller institutions need regulation. Certainly, they need regulation to ensure that they are stable and secure. Our small institutions know that. They know they need it. They want it. They welcome it. But even after my bill becomes law, community banks are still going to be subject to a strict regulatory scheme established by dozens of applicable Federal statutes. I am talking about the Banking Secrecy Act, the Electronic Fund Transfer Act, the Truth in Lending Act, and the Equal Credit Opportunity Act. I could go on and on and on.

All of these statutes will still apply to our community banks and credit unions. Our smaller banks and credit unions—now exempt, if my bill passes, from Dodd-Frank—will still be under the supervision of the Federal Reserve. They will still be under the supervision of the Currency. They will still be regulated by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, the National Credit Union Administration, and even the Department of Justice.

America’s smaller lending institutions need some relief. What they need is relief from the destabilizing consequences of Dodd-Frank. The Reforming Finance for Local Economies Act, in my estimation, is a step in that direction. I would also like to say, in closing, I am talking about the Banking Secrecy Act, the Electronic Fund Transfer Act, the Truth in Lending Act, and the Equal Credit Opportunity Act, and I could go on and on.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. 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. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, in less than an hour, we will consider the nomination of Rod Rosenstein to be Deputy Attorney General of the United States.

We consider his nomination under highly unusual, if not unique, circumstances. Only today, there were revelations from the House Oversight Committee [at] that the Attorney General—former State attorney general, knows well the importance of independence—has recused himself from his own conversations with Russian officials. That special prosecutor against the President of the United States.

I have asked Rod Rosenstein to follow the precedent that was established by Elliot Richardson under circumstances that were not unlike the ones we encountered here.

The saying is that history almost never repeats, but it rhymes. What we have here is a situation that rhymes with the one that Elliot Richardson encountered when he was Attorney General. He was requested to appoint a special prosecutor as a condition of his confirmation. He agreed to do so in 1973. He appointed Archibald Cox. That, in turn, led to the Watergate investigation and, ultimately, to the impeachment of the President of the United States.

I suggest the absence of a quorum. The PRESIDING OFFICER. The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I yield the floor.
and it cannot bring criminal charges and pursue a conviction. It probably cannot make fully transparent or disclose all of the facts that it uncoveres. Its custom is to issue a report and, when it does so, redacting information that can be considered classified or sensitive. It may well lead, in an abundance of caution, toward redacting rather than disclosing.

That is why I have asked Rod Rosenstein, the Attorney General of his becoming Deputy Attorney General, to commit that he will appoint a special independent prosecutor. Call that office whatever you wish—special counsel, independent counsel, special prosecutor. That role is put, that is signal. It is someone who will uncover the wrongdoing and follow the evidence and the facts wherever they lead.

Neither Mr. Rosenstein nor Mr. Sessions can do so. Neither Mr. Rosenstein nor Mr. Sessions will ever convince the public that they are really pursuing their boss, the President of the United States, if there is evidence that leads to his culpability. They report to him. Rod Rosenstein reports to Jeff Sessions, and he, in turn, reports to the President of the United States. That is why the appearance and the reality of independence is so critically important, and that is why only a special prosecutor can pursue that interest.

If we were in normal times, Rod Rosenstein would be an eminently acceptable nominee, and I would welcome his nomination without attaching any kind of request or condition. He is certainly a public servant. He is a career prosecutor. I admire his dedication and commitment to public service. As U.S. attorney for Maryland, he certainly has an admirable record. He is, in some senses, what we value in the Department of Justice—one who is committed to the rule of law. That is why I have been surprised and disappointed that he has failed to heed my request.

Whatever happens today, I want to ensure my colleagues and, most especially, him and the loyal and dedicated members of the Department of Justice that I will support his work in his capacity as Deputy Attorney General, if he is confirmed today, because the professionalism of the Department of Justice is of preeminent interest for me personally, having served as a U.S. attorney and also as attorney general of my State, but it is also vitally important for the American people.

We must consider his nomination in the light of the looming constitutional crisis that our Nation confronts. It is a crisis partly of the administration's making by its attacks on the judiciary, calling a member of the bench a "so-called judge," saying to the American people that a circuit court of appeals will be responsible for any violence that may occur as a result of its ruling on the constitutionality of Executive orders. Immigration, deportation, and disparaging a judge because of his ethnic heritage—a judge born, in fact, in Indiana.

These kinds of attacks on the judiciary undermine respect and trust in a branch of government that is the bulwark of our democracy and that, in my view, when the history of this era is written, will be regarded as having been one of its finest hours. We will be judging whether this Nation's constitutional guarantees of fundamental rights and liberties. The independence of the judiciary is a sacred pillar of our democracy, and it must be free of political interference.

The robust congressional oversight is of preeminent interest for me personally, having served as a U.S. attorney and also as attorney general of my State, but it is also vitally important for the American people.

We know Russia interfered in the 2016 election. We know the FBI is investigating Trump administration officials regarding legal implications for their Russian ties with Russia. That is more than ample information to justify appointing a special prosecutor, but there is much more, including actions by Carter Page, Paul Manafort, Roger Stone. Those Russian. That is more than ample information to justify appointing a special prosecutor, but there is much more, including actions by Carter Page, Paul Manafort, Roger Stone.

The administration's supposed attempts to investigate itself have produced mixed signals and clear conflicts of interest such as House Intelligence Chair Devin Nunes's ill-fated trip to Russia. We have learned who was under investigation. The President himself has sold real estate to Russian investors seeking to profit from their corrupt activities in Russia or, as his son, Donald Trump, put it, "We see a lot of money pouring in from Russia."
worry about what his boss thinks or what his boss's boss thinks.

So I have reached the conclusion reluctantly—that Rod Rosenstein has a very admirable record of public service—that I must vote against his nomination in just a short time because of his failure to commit to a special prosecutor. I have no illusions about convincing my colleagues about joining me to vote on cloture with a degree of realism about the views of this body on his nomination, but I hope he will heed the example of Mr. Richardson in 1972 and also of Jim Comey, who at one point also resorted to a special prosecutor to investigate a controversial matter that arose during President George Bush's administration.

There is clear, unmistakable, bipartisan precedent for a special prosecutor under these circumstances. There is not only precedent, there is historical imperative. At the root of this constitutional crisis is a concern for the rule of law, for preserving the public's faith and trust and respect for our justice system. It is at the foundation of what we do when we vote. When we make laws, we presume they will be rigorously and fairly enforced without fear or favor, and that no official, not even the President of the United States, will be placed above the law. That is the lesson of Watergate, but it is also the lesson established throughout our history, going back to the Founders and the preeminent role played by our U.S. Supreme Court.

I will support Mr. Rosenstein in his efforts to pursue the truth and pursue justice, as I believe he must do, and I also pledge my support for him and the loyal, dedicated, hardworking members of the Department of Justice if he is confirmed.

Thank you, Mr. President. I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum. The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. JOHNSON). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Under the previous order, all time is expired.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Rosenstein nomination?

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second? There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 94, nays 6, as follows:

**YEAS—94**

| Alexander | Gardner | Paul |
| Baldwin | Graham | Perdue |
| Barasso | Grassley | Peters |
| Bennet | Hassan | Portman |
| Blunt | Hatch | Reed |
| Boozman | Inhofe | Risch |
| Brown | Reisch | Roberts |
| Burr | Heller | Rounds |
| Canwell | Hoeven | Rubio |
| Capito | Inoue | Sanders |
| Cardin | Johnson | Schatz |
| Casey | Kennedy | Schumer |
| Cassidy | Kennedy | Scott |
| Cochran | King | Shelby |
| Collins | Kennedy | Stabenow |
| Corker | King | Strange |
| Cornyn | Leahy | Sullivan |
| Cotton | Lee | Tester |
| Crapo | Manchin | Thune |
| Cruz | McCain | Tills |
| Daines | McCaskill | Toomey |
| Donnelly | Menendez | Udall |
| Duckworth | Menendez | Van Hollen |
| Durbin | Merkley | Warner |
| Ernst | Moran | Whitehouse |
| Feinstein | Murkowski | Wicker |
| Fischer | Murphy | Wyden |
| Flake | Murray | Young |
| Franken | Nehlen | Young |

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

**EXECUTIVE CALENDAR**

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of R. Alexander Acosta, of Florida, to be Secretary of Labor.

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. RUBIO). Without objection, it is so ordered.

**LEGISLATIVE SESSION**

**MORNING BUSINESS**

Mr. THUNE. 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.

**ARMS SALES NOTIFICATION**

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act requires that Congress receive prior notification of certain proposed arms sales as defined by that statute. Upon such notification, the Congress has 30 calendar days during which the sale may be reviewed. The provision stipulates that, in the Senate, the notification of proposed sales shall be sent to the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

In keeping with the committee's intention to see that relevant information is available to the full Senate, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the notifications which have been received. If the cover letter references a classified annex, then such annex is available to all Senators in the office of the Foreign Relations Committee, Room SD–423.

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

**DEFENSE SECURITY**

**COOPERATION AGENCY**

**Arlington, Va.**

Hon. BOB CORKER,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations,
U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 17–18, concerning the Air Force’s proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to Canada for defense articles and services estimated to cost $195 million. After this letter is delivered to your office, we plan to issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale.

Sincerely,

GREG KAUSNER,
(For J.W. Rixey, Vice Admiral,
USN, Director).

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 17–18

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Government of Canada.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:

Major Defense Equipment* $ 0 million.

Other $195 million.

Total $195 million.

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase:

Major Defense Equipment (MDE): None.

Non-MDE: Non-MDE items and services under consideration for sale are follow-on support for five (5) CC-177 aircraft (Canada’s designator for the C-17), including contractor logistics support (CLS) provided through the Globemaster III Integrated Sustainment Program (GISP), in-country field services support, alternate mission equipment, major modifications and retrofit, software support, aircraft maintenance and technical support, support equipment, personnel training and training equipment, additional spares and repair parts, and technical documentation, and other U.S. Government and contractor engineering, logistics and program support.


(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: CN–D–QZZ–$1.3B–15 Nov 06.

(vi) Notification Commission, Foe, etc., Paid, Offered, or Agreed to be Paid: None.

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: None.

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD — SENATE

April 25, 2017

S2519

*As defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

Government of Canada—Sustainment Support for C-17 Aircraft

The Government of Canada has requested a possible sale of follow-on support for five (5) CC177 aircraft (Canada’s designator for the C-17), including contractor logistics support (CLS) provided through the Globemaster III Integrated Sustainment Program (GISP), in-country field services support, aircraft maintenance and technical support, support equipment, alternate mission equipment, software, personnel training and support, and contractor engineering and logistics support services, publications and technical documents, major modification and retrofit kits support. The total estimated program cost is $195 million.

This proposed sale will contribute to the foreign policy and national security objectives of the United States by sustaining the military capabilities of Canada, a NATO ally that has been, and continues to be, an important force for ensuring political stability and economic progress in the world, including through its involvement in military, peacekeeping, and humanitarian operations. The sustainment of Canada’s C-17s will ensure the country’s continued capability to rapidly deploy its forces, as well as the continued interoperability between the U.S. and Canadian Air Forces’ C-17s.

The proposed sale of defense articles and services is required to maintain the operational readiness of the Royal Canadian Air Force C-17 aircraft. Canada’s current contract supporting its five (5) C-17s will expire on 20 September 2017. The Royal Canadian Air Force will have no difficulty absorbing this support.

The proposed sale of this equipment and support will not alter the basic military balance in the region.

Sources of supply will award contracts when necessary to provide the defense articles ordered if items ordered are not available from U.S. stock or are considered lead-time away.

The prime contractor will involve the following contractors:

Boeing Company, Long Beach, California.

Boeing Company Training Systems, St. Louis, Missouri.

Lockheed Martin Corporation/MFC, Lexington, Kentucky.

There are no known offsets. Any offset agreements will be defined in negotiations between the U.S. and Canada.

Implementation of this proposed sale will not require the assignment of any additional U.S. Government or contractor representatives to Canada.

There is an on-going formal military sales case providing C-17 sustainment services. There are currently 13 contractors from Boeing in-country providing contractor technical services support on a continuing basis.

There will be no adverse impact to U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

DEFENSE SECURITY

COOPERATION AGENCY,

Arlington, Va.

HON. BOB CORKER,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

April 18, 2017

DRAMA NA: Chairman: Pursuant to the report requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 17-10, Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended.

Enclosures:

TRANSMITTAL NO. 17-10

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) Prospective Purchaser, Government of Iraq.

(ii) Total Estimated Value

Major Defense Equipment * $40.6 million.

Total $235.0 million.

(iii) Description and Qualities or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase:

(a) Major Defense Equipment (MDE): Four thousand four hundred (4,000) M16A4 Rifles.


Thirty-six (36) M151 High Mobility Multi-purpose Wheeled Vehicles (HMMWVs).

Seventy-seven (77) M1151 up-armed HMMWVs.

(b) Non-MDE: All necessary equipment and accessories to outfit two Peshmerga Regional Brigades with sufficient battalions, to include twelve (12) 3 kilowatt tactical quiet generator sets, body armor, helmets, and other Organization Clothing and Individual Equipment (OCIE); small arms and associated accessories including tripods, cleaning kits, magazines, and mounts; mortar systems and associated equipment; CBRNE detection and protection equipment; dismounted and mounted radio systems; commercial navigation equipment including compasses, binoculars, and Geospatial Position System (GPS) limited to the Standard Positioning System (SPS); M1112 HMMWVs; medical equipment; Mine Resistant Ambush Protected Vehicles (MRAP); cargo and transportation equipment, including light tactical vehicles, medium tactical vehicles, water trucks, fuel trucks, and ambulances; six (6) refurbished M119A2 105mm howitzers; spare parts, training and associated equipment related to the mentioned vehicles and artillery systems.

This proposed sale will contribute to the foreign policy and national security objectives of the United States, by supporting Iraq’s capacity to degrade and defeat the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). Iraq will have no difficulty absorbing this equipment into its armed forces.

This proposed sale of equipment and support will not alter the basic military balance in the region.

There are a number of contractors involved in this effort, including but not limited to AM General, Oshkosh Defense, Navistar Defense, Harris Radio, and Colt Corporation. There are no known offset agreements proposed in connection with this potential sale.

Implementation of this proposed sale will not require the deployment of any additional U.S. Government or contractor personnel to Iraq.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 17-10
Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

ANNEX No. vii
(vii) Sensitivity of Technology:

1. M16A1 Assault Rifle. The M16A1 assault rifle is the fourth generation of the M16 series that fires 5.56mm ammunition. The A4 variant is equipped with a removable carrying handle and full length quad Picatinny rail for mounting optics and other ancillary devices. The highest level of information that could be disclosed through the sale and testing of this end-item is UNCLASSIFIED.

2. M2 Machine Gun. The M2 machine gun is an air-cooled belt-fed machine gun that fires the .50 caliber Browning Machine Gun (BMG) cartridge. The highest level of information that could be disclosed through the sale and testing of this end-item is UNCLASSIFIED.

3. M204B Machine Gun. The M204B machine gun is a belt-fed, gas-operated medium machine gun firing 7.62mm NATO rounds. The M204B variant is a tripod or vehicle-mounted configuration. The highest level of information that could be disclosed through the sale and testing of this end-item is UNCLASSIFIED.

4. M1151 HMMWV. The M1151 is an expanded capacity armor carry vehicle HMMWV variant that is smoke- and gun-ready. Designed as an armor carrier, the M1151 provides for the mounting and firing of various weapon systems that are ring-mounted with a 360 degree arc of fire. The highest level of information that could be disclosed through the sale and testing of this end-item is UNCLASSIFIED.
5. Garmin Fortrex 401 Navigation Set: Global Positioning System (GPS). The Garmin Fortrex is a commercial GPS solution for individual navigation which utilizes GPSSelective availability (S/A) mode only. This is a commercial-off-the-shelf item. The level of information that could be disclosed through the sale and testing of this end-item is UNCLASSIFIED.

6. RF-7800V Very High Frequency (VHF) Disembodied Radio. The RF-7800V is a multi-purpose, exportable radio system that can be configured for VHF handheld/dismounted, 50W vehicle, or 50W base station use. The system incorporates 128 and 256-bit Harris proprietary and Advanced Encryption Standard (AES) keys and does not utilize SEC/ NATO waveforms. The system has an integrated GPS receiver which is GPS capable only. This radio is not used by the U.S. military and the highest level of information that could be disclosed through the sale and testing of this end-item is UNCLASSIFIED.

7. Tactical Quiet Generator Set. The 3KW Tactical Quiet Generator Set—Mobile Electric Power (MEP) 831A (60Hz) is a mobile electrical generator that runs on JP/Diesel fuel. These items are no longer in service with the U.S. military, but are offered as refurbished articles to Foreign Military Sales (FMS) customers. The highest level of information that could be disclosed through the sale and testing of this end-item is UNCLASSIFIED.

8. All other support and non-MDE equipment. On this case, there is no technology transfer concerns. The highest level of information that could be disclosed through the sale and testing of this end-item is UNCLASSIFIED.

9. All equipment and support listed on this transmittal are authorized for release and export to the Government of Iraq.

DEFENSE SECURITY
COOPERATION AGENCY,
Arlington, VA.

Hon. BOB CORKER,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 17-03, concerning the Air Force's proposed Letter of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of the Republic of Iraq for defense articles and services estimated to cost $1.06 billion. After this letter is delivered to your office, a news release will be issued to notify the public of this proposed sale.

Sincerely,

J.W. RIXEY,
Vice Admiral, USN, Director
Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 17-03
Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Government of Iraq.
(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase:

Major Defense Equipment (MDE): None.
Non-MDE: Pilot training; maintenance training; contractor logistical services support for C-172, C-208, and T-6 aircraft for up to five (5) years to include contractor aircraft modification; aircraft ferry; and miscellaneous parts, along with training base operation support, life support and security, and other related elements of program support.

Military Department: Air Force (XT-NAA).

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: N/A.

(vi) Sales Commission, Fee, etc., Paid, Offered, or Agreed to be Paid: None.

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: None.


*As defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

The Government of Iraq has requested a possible sale of pilot training; maintenance training; and contractor logistical services support for C-172, C-208, and T-6 aircraft for up to five (5) years to include contractor aircraft modification; repair and spare parts; publications; aircraft ferry; and miscellaneous parts, along with training base operation support, base life support, security, construction and other related elements of program support. The estimated total value is $1.06 billion.

(i) Prospective Purchaser: The Government of Iraq.
(ii) Total Estimated Value: Non-MDE: Design, construction, and procurement of key airfield operations, command and control, readiness, sustainment, and life support facilities for the Al Mubarak Airbase in Kuwait. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) will provide project management, engineering services, technical support, and infrastructure assessments, surveys, planning, programming, design, acquisition, program management, construction management, and other technical services for the construction of facilities and infrastructure for the airbase. The overall project includes, among other features, a main operations center, hangars, training facilities, C-208s, support facilities, and other infrastructure required for a fully functioning airbase.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

The proposed sale will contribute to the foreign policy and national security of the United States by helping to provide for a stable, sovereign, and democratic Iraq, capable of being a partner in coalition and protecting Iraqi territory, and thereby supporting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq.

The Government of Kuwait has requested a possible sale of navigation support costs. The proposed sale will contribute to the foreign policy and national security of the United States by helping to provide for a stable, sovereign, and democratic Iraq, capable of being a partner in coalition and protecting Iraqi territory, and thereby supporting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq.

The proposed sale of this training and support services will improve Iraq's ability to train its pilots and maintenance technicians. By training its own pilots and maintenance technicians in-country, Iraq will decrease its overseas training requirements, significantly reduce its training costs, and enhance its ability to take over the sustainment of its equipment while avoiding difficulties associated with this support. In addition to its primary mission—pilot training and maintenance training for Iraqi Air Force personnel—this proposal also includes contractor logistical support for the trainer aircraft, as well as possible future construction and base operation support costs.

The proposed sale of this training and support will not alter the basic military balance in the region.

The principal contractor is Spartan College of Aeronautics and Technology, Tulsa, OK. At this time, there are no known offsets agreements proposed in connection with this potential sale.

Implementing this proposed sale will require the assignment of approximately four U.S. Government representatives and 50 contractor representatives to Iraq.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale. All training and support listed on this transmittal are authorized for release and export to the Government of Iraq.

DEFENSE SECURITY
COOPERATION AGENCY,
Arlington, VA.

Hon. BOB CORKER,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 16-80, concerning the Army Corps of Engineers' proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Kuwait for a construction project estimated to cost $319 million. After this letter is delivered to your office, we plan to issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale.

Sincerely,

J.W. RIXEY,
Vice Admiral, USN, Director
Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 16-80
Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Government of Kuwait.
(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase:

Non-MDE: Design, construction, and procurement of key airfield operations, command and control, readiness, sustainment, and life support facilities for the Al Mubarak Airbase in Kuwait. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) will provide project management, engineering services, technical support, and infrastructure assessments, surveys, planning, programming, design, acquisition, program management, construction management, and other technical services for the construction of facilities and infrastructure for the airbase. The overall project includes, among other features, a main operations center, hangars, training facilities, C-208s, support facilities, and other infrastructure required for a fully functioning airbase.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

The proposed sale of this training and support services will improve Iraq's ability to train its pilots and maintenance technicians. By training its own pilots and maintenance technicians in-country, Iraq will decrease its overseas training requirements, significantly reduce its training costs, and enhance its ability to take over the sustainment of its equipment while avoiding difficulties associated with this support. In addition to its primary mission—pilot training and maintenance training for Iraqi Air Force personnel—this proposal also includes contractor logistical support for the trainer aircraft, as well as possible future construction and base operation support costs.

The proposed sale of this training and support will not alter the basic military balance in the region.

The principal contractor is Spartan College of Aeronautics and Technology, Tulsa, OK. At this time, there are no known offsets agreements proposed in connection with this potential sale.

Implementing this proposed sale will require the assignment of approximately four U.S. Government representatives and 50 contractor representatives to Iraq.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale. All training and support listed on this transmittal are authorized for release and export to the Government of Iraq.
force for political stability and economic progress in the Middle East. The facilities being constructed are similar to other facilities built in the past by USACE in other Middle Eastern countries. These facilities replace existing facilities and will provide autonomous airbase operations to the Kuwaiti Air Force. The airbase will ensure the continued readiness of the Kuwait Air Force and allow for the continued education of current and future Kuwaiti Air Force personnel. The construction of this airbase will enable Kuwait to enhance the operational effectiveness of its military and promote security and stability throughout the region.

Kuwait will have no difficulty absorbing this additional capability into its armed forces. The proposed sale of this infrastructure and support will not alter the basic military balance in the region. USACE is the principal organization that will direct and manage this program. USACE will provide services through both in-house personnel and contract services. The estimated number of U.S. Government and contractor representatives to be assigned to Kuwait to implement the provisions of this proposed sale will be determined as a result of program definition.

There are no known offset agreements proposed in connection with this potential sale. There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale. All military sales and services listed in this transmittal are authorized for release and export to the Government of Kuwait.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

REMEMBERING SHAWN GILBERT
• Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the life of Shawn Gilbert. Shawn was a prominent member of Montana’s Little Shell Tribal community who tragically lost his battle with cancer last January. Even in his final days, Shawn maintained a positive attitude, and all who knew him fondly remember the constant smile on his face. As is the Montana way, Shawn loved the great outdoors. He enjoyed snowmobiling, four-wheelers, and promoting security and stability throughout the State with an impressive display of discipline and grit when they exceeded expectations and won the State title with a score of 95—representative of a nearly seamless program.

The Lewiston cheer program is much more than a team of exceptional student-athletes. These talented and aspiring young people have contributed to a cheer dynasty that inspires young athletes and is recognized as a premier program throughout the State. The pride felt for the program, team members, and the Lewiston community at large shows the level of dedication and ambition that has led to so many impressive successes.

I wish to join the city of Lewiston and the entire Maine community in congratulating the Lewiston High School competition cheerleading team for their well-earned recognition. The program has built a legacy of success, instilling core values of hard work, perseverance, and sportsmanship and imbues all that is significant about participation and competition in sport at any level. For this and so much more, the Blue Devils competition cheer team are true champions.

RECOGNIZING GARBAGE TO GARDEN
• Mr. KING. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the work of Tyler Frank and his award-winning company Garbage to Garden—a curbside composting service that was founded in Portland, ME. In August 2012, Tyler Frank was living in Portland and started a compost pile, but didn’t have the space in his urban surroundings. He and his roommates wondered why they couldn’t put compost out on the curb like they do with their trash and recycling, and with that, Garbage to Garden was born. Tyler set up a table on Congress Street during a First Friday Artwalk, and by the end of the day, 17 Portland residents had signed on to his composting project. Today one in seven Portland households participates in Garbage to Garden. Tyler and his partners have expanded their service to eight other Maine communities and three communities in Massachusetts.

Tyler was able to create a unique and effective composting company, and with more than 8,000 households, schools, restaurants, and businesses using their services, they are the most successful curbside composting company in the country. Tyler has created a sustainable and local experience. Food scraps are composted by Benson Farms in Gorham, and all food waste can be incorporated into Garbage to Garden’s compost, which is then used to wash the composting buckets. Using clean composting buckets is a key part of Garbage to Garden’s process, eliminating the “ick factor” that turns many people off from composting. Garbage to Garden even offers free service to those who volunteer for the company or for one of their partner organizations. Every day, Garbage to Garden diverts 20 tons of food scraps from landfills, and over a 3-year period, the average household will divert 1 ton of food waste from landfills.

Garbage to Garden is a shining example of what can happen when you have a little determination, a great idea, and passion to make a difference. Tyler is an excellent example of a hard-working Mainier who is making a difference in our state and beyond. I look forward to following the company’s continued growth and remarkable service to Maine communities. Thank you, Tyler, for all you have already done for the greater Portland community and our great State of Maine. We are lucky to have people like you working to better our communities.

NEW JERSEY HIGH SCHOOL ARMED SERVICE ENLISTMENT
• Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the following New Jersey high school seniors for their commendable decision to enlist in the U.S. Armed Forces:
  • Craig Ackley
  • Bryan Adame
  • Aldo Aguayo Flores
  • Alba Aguyao
  • Dalton Alltmart
  • Janae Albright
  • Michael Vincent Alvar
  • Michael Luis Alvarez
  • Jose Alvarez
  • Juan Alvarez
  • Alexander Alvarez Escobar
  • Andre Ascura
  • Daniel Ayala
  • Elijah Baez
  • Justin Baez
  • Jose Bell
  • David Boudreau
  • Frederick Bauer
  • Sergio Bautista Benitez
  • Joseluis Bejarano
  • Alejandro Bejarano Valencia
  • Nathan Bell
  • Joseph Bell,

Mr. President, today I wish to honor the following New Jersey high school seniors for their commendable decision to enlist in the U.S. Armed Forces: Craig Ackley, Bryan Adame, Aldo Aguayo Flores, Alba Aguyao, Dalton Alltmart, Janae Albright, Michael Vincent Alvarrez, Michael Luis Alvarez, Jose Alvarez, Juan Alvarez, Alexander Alvarez Escobar, Andre Ascura, Daniel Ayala, Elijah Baez, Justin Baez, Jose Bell, David Boudreau, Frederick Bauer, Sergio Bautista Benitez, Joseluis Bejarano, Alejandro Bejarano Valencia, Nathan Bell, Joseph Bell,
It is thanks to the dedication of untold numbers of patriots like these that we are able to meet here today, in the U.S. Senate, and openly debate the best solutions to the many and diverse problems that confront our country. It is thanks to their sacrifices that the United States of America remains a beacon of hope and freedom throughout the world. We owe them, along with all those who serve our country, a deep debt of gratitude.

RECOGNIZING DESTINATIONS INN

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, our country has been built upon a bedrock of guiding principles which has molded the character of many Americans. Hard work, risk-taking, and perseverance are some of the characteristics that have helped so many of our Nation’s citizens achieve the American Dream. Continually on the cutting edge of innovation, America’s entrepreneurs share an inspiring creative spirit. As chairman of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, it is my pleasure to recognize one such entrepreneur, Larry Fisher, and his small business, Destinations Inn, as the Senate Small Business of the Month for April 2017.

With a lifelong understanding of business, Mr. Fisher has built many successful businesses, including the critically acclaimed Black Swan Inn. In 1997, Mr. Fisher transformed the unique 1933 English Tudor into a luxury themed suite lodging facility catering to couples, tourists, and business travelers who are looking for a unique experience.

After the success of the Black Swan Inn, the Fishers purchased and opened a sister hotel located in Idaho Falls in 2010, the Destinations Inn. The building was built in 1905 and has served as host of the Destinations Inn.

Fisher has been a mainstay in his community since his early years. Mr. Fishers acquired the building in 1997, Mr. Fisher transformed the unique 1933 English Tudor into a luxury themed suite lodging facility catering to couples, tourists, and business travelers who are looking for a unique experience.

The Destinations Inn reopened as a premier luxury hotel and began to host guests from all over the world. When the Fishers acquired the building in 2010, they used their skills in artistry and contracting to transform the hotel into a world-class themed suite lodging facility. Each of the 14 suites within the Destinations Inn is creatively tailored to encapsulate an imaginative atmosphere. Combining creativity and vision, Larry and Debbie Fisher have created a business environment where creativity and ideas thrive. The Fishers exemplify professionalism and entrepreneurial passion through the success of the Destinations Inn.

Larry and Debbie Fisher have been a mainstay in their community since his early years. Mr. Fisher currently serves on numerous boards and committees, including the Pocatello Development Authority, Grand Tierra, Council of Black Scouting of America, and Portneuf Valley Interfaith Fellowship. Recognized for his commitment to the community, Mr.
Fisher was a recipient of a number of awards, including Parade of Homes Best Show, Builder of the Year, Bridge Builder Award from the Grand Teton Council of the Boy Scouts of America, voted as best lodging property several years by the community, TripAdvisor Hall of Fame Award for 5 years, a merit of excellence, and the Community Black Belt Volunteer Award. Mr. Fisher has dedicated his life to serving his customers and the community. It is my honor to recognize Larry and Debbie Debro of the employees of Destinations Inn who have done so much for their community. You make our State proud, and I look forward to watching your continued growth and success.

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Ms. Ridgway, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

In executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

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–1272. A communication from the Secretary of Defense, transmitting a report on the approved retirement of Vice Admiral Philip H. Cullom, United States Navy, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–1273. A communication from the Acting Deputy Secretary of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Federal Grain Inspection Service Annual Report for 2016 and the Uniform Resource Locator (URL) (RIN 0859–CH01) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 13, 2017; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–1275. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “An Amendment to the Export Administration Regulations” (RIN 0694–AE95) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 13, 2017; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–1276. A communication from the Chief Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Suspension of Community Eligibility (Pierce County, WA, et al.)” ((44 CFR Part 64) (Docket No. FEMA–2016–0001)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 13, 2017; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–1277. A communication from the Chief Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Suspension of Community Eligibility (Otsego County, NY, et al.)” ((44 CFR Part 64) (Docket No. FEMA–2016–0002)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 13, 2017; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–1278. A communication from the Assistant Director for Legislative Affairs, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled “Flood Emergency Protections for Non-Federal Development (RIN 1814–AE87) (Docket No. CFPB–2016–0050)” received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 13, 2017; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–1279. A communication from the Assistant Director for Legislative Affairs, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled “Financial Assistance for Individuals at Risk of Home Loss Due to a Flood” (RIN 1814–AE89) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 13, 2017; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–1280. A communication from the Assistant Director for Legislative Affairs, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled “Fair Lending Report of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau’s for-cause removal provision; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–1289. A communication from the Assistant Director for Legislative Affairs, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled “Flood Assistance for Non-Federal Development (RIN 1814–AE86)” received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 13, 2017; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–1290. A communication from the Acting Solicitor General, General Law, Ethics, and Regulation, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Final Flood Elevation Determinations; Carroll County, MS” (Docket No. FEMA–2016–0002) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 13, 2017; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–1291. A communication from the Acting Solicitor General, General Law, Ethics, and Regulation, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Fair Lending Report of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau’s for-cause removal provision; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–1292. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel, General Law, Ethics, and Regulation, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Under Secretary (Terrorism and Financial Intelligence), Department of the Treasury, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 7, 2017; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–1293. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel, General Law, Ethics, and Regulation, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Director of the Mint, Department of the Treasury, received during adjournment of the Senate in the office of the President of the Senate on April 11, 2017; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–1294. A communication from the Chief Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Suspension of Community Eligibility (Loudoun County, VA, et al.)” ((44 CFR Part 64) (Docket No. FEMA–2016–0002)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 13, 2017; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–1295. A communication from the Chief Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Suspension of Community Eligibility (Jackson County, MO, et al.)” ((44 CFR Part 64) (Docket No. FEMA–2016–0002)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 13, 2017; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–1296. A communication from the Chief Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Suspension of Community Eligibility (Davidson County, TN, et al.)” ((44 CFR Part 64) (Docket No. FEMA–2016–0002)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 13, 2017; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–1297. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel, General Law, Ethics, and Regulation, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Assistant Secretary (Financial Institutions), Department of the Treasury, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 13, 2017; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–1298. A communication from the Acting Solicitor General, General Law, Ethics, and Regulation, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau’s for-cause removal provision; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–1299. A communication from the Assistant Director for Legislative Affairs, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled “Fair Lending Report of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau’s for-cause removal provision; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–1300. A communication from the Secretary of the Navy, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Fiscal Year 2016 and the Uniform Resource Location (URL) (RIN 0005–AJ39) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 13, 2017; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

April 25, 2017
Syria that was declared in Executive Order 13388 of May 11, 2004; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–1291. A communication from the Secretary of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the export to the People’s Republic of China of items not detrimental to the U.S. space launch industry; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–1292. A communication from the Chairman, Board of Administration and Programs Division, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of ‘‘Migratory Bird Subsistence Harvest in Alaska; Harvest Regulations for Migratory Birds in Alaska During the 2017 Season’’ (RIN1018–BB51) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 11, 2017; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–1293. A communication from the Wildlife Biologist, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a rule entitled ‘‘Endangered and Threatened Wildlife’’ (RIN1018–BB29) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 11, 2017; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–1294. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel, General Law, Ethics, and Regulation, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of General Counsel, Department of the Treasury, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 11, 2017; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–1295. A communication from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of General Counsel, Department of the Treasury, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 11, 2017; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–1296. A communication from the Special Agent in Charge of the Branch of Investigative Enforcement, Fish and Wildlife Service, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ‘‘Civil Penalties: 2017 Inflation Adjustments for Civil Monetary Penalties’’ (RIN1018–BB97) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 11, 2017; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–1297. A communication from the Chief of the Policy, Performance, and Management Programs Division, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ‘‘Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Reclassification of the West Indian Manatee From Endangered to Threatened’’ (RIN1018–BB71) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 11, 2017; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–1298. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel, General Law, Ethics, and Regulation, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Secretary, Department of the Treasury, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 11, 2017; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–1299. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel, General Law, Ethics, and Regulation, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of General Counsel, Department of the Treasury, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 11, 2017; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–1300. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel, General Law, Ethics, and Regulation, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Under Secretary (Financial Markets), Department of the Treasury, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 11, 2017; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–1301. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel, General Law, Ethics, and Regulation, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of General Counsel, Department of the Treasury, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 11, 2017; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–1302. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel, General Law, Ethics, and Regulation, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Secretary, Department of the Treasury, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 11, 2017; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–1303. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel, General Law, Ethics, and Regulation, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Secretary, Department of the Treasury, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 11, 2017; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–1304. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel, General Law, Ethics, and Regulation, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Member, Internal Revenue Service Oversight Board, Department of the Treasury, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 11, 2017; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–1305. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel, General Law, Ethics, and Regulation, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Member, Internal Revenue Service Oversight Board, Department of the Treasury, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 11, 2017; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–1306. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel, General Law, Ethics, and Regulation, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of General Counsel, Department of the Treasury, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 11, 2017; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–1307. A communication from the Director, Office of Regulations and Reports Clearance, Social Security Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ‘‘Anti-Harassment and Hostile Work Environment Case Tracking and Records System’’ (RIN0960–AH25) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 14, 2017; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–1308. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ‘‘Proposed Revenue Procedure for Requesting Consent to Change a Method of Accounting’’ (Notice 2017–17) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 13, 2017; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–1309. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ‘‘Notice on Windsor-Related Estate, Gift and Generation-Skip Transfer Issues’’ (Notice 2017–15) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 13, 2017; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–1310. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ‘‘2017 Automobile Price Inflation Adjustment’’ (Rev. Proc. 2017–29) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 13, 2017; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–1311. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ‘‘Relief from Section 4975 of the Internal Revenue Code’’ (Announcement 2017–4) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 13, 2017; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–1312. A communication from the Chairman, Board of Administration and Programs Division, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ‘‘Small Business/Self Employed Fast Track Settlement’’ (Rev. Proc. 2017–26) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 13, 2017; to the Committee on Finance.


EC–1314. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ‘‘Proposed Revenue Procedure Concerning Advance Pricing Agreements’’ (Notice 2017–16) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 13, 2017; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–1315. A communication from the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ‘‘Foreign Military Sales or Export of Defense Articles and/or Defense Services’’ (OSS–2017–0378); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–1316. A communication from the Chairman, Office of the President of the Senate on April 15, 2017; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–1317. A communication from the Chairman, Office of the President of the Senate on April 16, 2017; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–1318. A communication from the Director, Office of Management, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of the Department’s annual report concerning military assistance and military exports (OSDS–
EC–1349. A communication from the Acting Director, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Agency’s fiscal year 2016 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FAQ Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1351. A communication from the Director of Legislative Affairs, Office of the Director of Legislative Affairs, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Office’s fiscal year 2016 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FAQ Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1352. A communication from the Acting Director, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Agency’s fiscal year 2016 annual report relative to the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FAQ Act); to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1353. A communication from the Director, Office of Communications and Legislative Affairs, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission’s Annual Sunshine Act Report for 2016; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–1354. A communication from the Director, Office of Legislative Affairs, Office of the Director of National Intelligence, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to two (2) National Security Letters (NSLs) issued by the Director of National Intelligence, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 10, 2017; to the Committee on Intelligence.

EC–1355. A communication from the Acting Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department’s Annual Privacy Report for the period October 1, 2013 through September 30, 2016; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–1356. A communication from the Director, Administrative Office of the United States Courts, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Uniform Resource Locators (URLs) for two (2) websites - “2016 Annual Report of the Director of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts” and “Judicial Business of the United States Courts” - to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–1358. A communication from the Associate General Counsel for General Law, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, two (2) reports relative to vacancies in U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, Department of Homeland Security, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 13, 2017; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–1359. A communication from the Chief of Special Projects, Office of Regulation Policy and Management, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “VA Dental Insurance Program” (RIN2900–AP91) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 11, 2017; to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs.

EC–1360. A communication from the Office Program Manager, Office of Regulatory Policy, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Release of VA Records Relating to H.R. (H.R. 2900–AP7)” received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 6, 2017; to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs.


EC–1362. A communication from the Associate Chief of the Mobility Division, Wireless Telecommunications Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Amendment of the Commission’s Rules Relating to the Concept of a Radio Telephone Service” (WT Docket No. 12–40; WT Docket No. 10–112; WT Docket No. 16–138; RM No. 1115; RM No. 11608) (FCC 17–27) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 6, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1363. A communication from the Associate Chief of the Mobility Division, Wireless Telecommunications Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, a rule entitled “Promoting Technological Solutions to Combat Contraband Wireless Device Use in Correctional Facilities” (G(N Docket No. 13–111) (FCC 17–25) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 7, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1364. A communication from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Expanding the Broadband Spectrum Opportunities of Spectrum Through Incentive Auctions; Amendment of Parts 73 and 74 of the Commission’s Rules to Establish Rules for Digital Television Translator Stations; Channel Sharing by Full Power and Class A Stations Outside the Broadcast Television Spectrum Incentive Auction Context” (GN Docket No. 12–288; MB Docket No. 03–185; MB Docket No. 15–137) (FCC 17–29) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 7, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1365. A communication from the Deputy Administrator, Office of Engineering and Technology, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Structure and Practices of the Video Relay Service Program” (ET Docket No. 14–14) (FCC 17–33) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 11, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1366. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, a rule entitled “Takes of Marine Mammals Incidental to Specified Activities; Taking Marine Mammals Incidental to Space Vehicle and Missile Launch Operations” (RIN2060–BG25) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 11, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1367. A communication from the Assistant Secretary for Logistics and Management, U.S. Postal Service, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Amendments to Regulations Governing Service Contracts and NOV Services” (RIN2577–AC53) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 6, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1368. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Office of Aviation Safety, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives: Safran Helicopter Engines, S.A. Turboshaft Engines” (RIN2138–AA36) (Docket No. FAA–2016–7850) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 6, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1369. A communication from the Acting Chief of the Policy and Rules Division, Office of the Secretary, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled Amendment of Parts 2, 15, 80, 90, 97, and 101 of the Commission’s Rules to Implement the Final Acts of the World Radiocommunication Conference (Geneva, Switzerland, November 20, 2015–February 17, 2017) and Related Rule Updates” (ET Doc. No. 15–99) (ET Doc. No. 14–14) (FCC 17–33) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 11, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1370. A communication from the Attorney Advisor, Office of General Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy for the position of Maritime Administrator, Department of Transportation, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 11, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1371. A communication from the Attorney Advisor, Office of General Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy for the position of Maritime Administrator, Department of Transportation, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 18, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1372. A communication from the Attorney Advisor, Office of General Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy for the position of Maritime Administrator, Department of Transportation, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on April 18, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.
pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy for the position of Administrator, Federal Highway Administration, Department of Transportation, received during adjournment of the Senate on April 18, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–1378. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, Office of General Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy for the position of General Counsel, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, Department of Transportation, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President on April 18, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petition or memorial was laid before the Senate and was referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM–16. A concurrent resolution adopted by the Legislature of the State of North Dakota urging the United States Congress, under Article V of the United States Constitution, to call for a constitutional convention limited to proposing amendments to the United States Constitution which impose fiscal restraints on the federal government, limit the power and jurisdiction of the federal government, and limit the terms of office of the several state and federal officials and for members of Congress; and be it further

Resolved, that this application constitutes a continuing application in accordance with Article V of the United States Constitution until the legislatures of at least two-thirds of the several states have made applications on the same subject; and be it further

Resolved, that the Legislative Assembly adopts this application expressly subject to the following reservations, understandings, and declarations:

1. An application to the Congress of the United States to call an amendment convention pursuant to Article V of the United States Constitution confers no power to Congress other than the power to call such a convention. The power of Congress for proposing amendments consists solely of the authority to name a reasonable time and place for the initial meeting of a convention.

2. Congress shall perform its ministerial duty of calling an amendment convention of the states only upon the receipt of applications from the legislatures of the states for the substantially same purpose as this application from two-thirds of the legislatures of the several states.

3. Congress does not have the power or authority to determine any rules for the governing of a convention for proposing amendments called pursuant to Article V of the United States Constitution. Congress does not have the power to set the number of delegates to be sent by any state to such a convention, nor does it have the power to name delegates to such a convention. The power to name delegates remains exclusively within the authority of the legislatures of the several states.

4. By definition, an amendment convention of the states means that states shall vote on the basis of one state, one vote.

5. A convention for proposing amendments convened pursuant to this application must be limited to consideration of the topics specified herein and no other. This application is made with the understanding that an amendment that in any way seeks to amend, modify, or repeal any provision of the Bill of Rights is not authorized, and that any convention limited to such a convention shall not have the power to name delegates remains exclusively within the authority of the legislatures of the several states.

6. Pursuant to Article V of the United States Constitution, Congress may determine whether proposed amendments must be ratified by the legislatures of the several states or by special state ratifying conventions. The Legislative Assembly recommends Congress select ratification by the legislatures of the several states and programming:

7. The Legislative Assembly may provide further instructions to its delegates and may recall its delegates at any time for a breach of duty or a violation of the instructions provided; and be it further

Resolved, that the Secretary of State forward copies of this resolution to the President and Secretary of the Senate and the Speaker and Clerk of the House of Representatives of the Congress, each member of the United States Congressional Delegation from North Dakota, and the presiding officers of each house of the legislatures of the several states, requesting their cooperation.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

April 25, 2017
C O N G R E S S I O N A L  R E C O R D — S E N A T E
S2527
By Mr. HATCH, from the Committee on Finance, without amendment:

S.J. Res. 41. An original joint resolution providing for an exception to the limitation on the employment of certain persons as the United States Trade Representative.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. MCCAIN for the Committee on Armed Services:

Navy nominations beginning with Rear Adm. (lb) Richard A. Brown and ending with Rear Adm. (lb) John W. Tammen, Jr., which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on March 21, 2017.

Navy nominations beginning with Capt. Kevin M. Jones and ending with Capt. Thomas J. Moreau, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on March 21, 2017.

Marine Corps nominations beginning with Brig. Gen. Patrick J. Hermesmann, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on March 21, 2017.

Marine Corps nominations beginning with Col. Michael S. Martin, to be Brigadier General.

Marine Corps nominations beginning with Col. James H. Adams III and ending with Col. Christian F. Wortman, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on March 21, 2017.


Army nomination of Rear Adm. David H. Lewis, to be Vice Admiral.

Army nomination of Rear Adm. Mathias W. Winter, to be Vice Admiral.

Army nomination of Rear Adm. Steven L. Padowitz, to be Rear Admiral.

Army nomination of Rear Adm. (lb) John P. Polowczyk, to be Rear Admiral.

Army nominations beginning with Rear Adm. (lb) Gordon D. Peters, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on March 27, 2017.

Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. President, for the Committee on Armed Services I report favorably the following nomination lists which were printed in the Records on the dates indicated, and ask unanimous consent, to save the expense of printing, to make the same a part of the Senate Record:

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

Air Force nomination of Raymond C. Jones III, to be Major.

Air Force nomination of Christopher E. Austin, to be Colonel.

Air Force nominations beginning with Robert D. Houghteling and ending with Carl H. Spears, Jr., which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on March 27, 2017.

Air Force nominations beginning with Lisa Ann Banyasz and ending with Julie L. Wible, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on March 27, 2017.

Air Force nominations beginning with Lori J. Roher and ending with Christine F. Buhler, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on March 27, 2017.

Air Force nominations beginning with James A. Crider, to be Colonel.

Air Force nominations beginning with Jose E. Barrera and ending with David H. Zonies, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on March 27, 2017.

Air Force nominations beginning with Kristin L. Ader and ending with Christopher C. Vannatta, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on March 27, 2017.

Air Force nominations beginning with Gregg Michael Caggianelli and ending with William Scott Wiecher, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on March 27, 2017.

Air Force nominations beginning with Patrick W. Albrecht and ending with Stephen S. Yoon, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on March 27, 2017.

Air Force nomination of Stephen N. Luker, to be Major.

Air Force nominations beginning with Tyler J. Banachowski and ending with Marita N. Zgari, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on March 27, 2017.

Air Force nominations beginning with Joni A. Abbott and ending with Danielle C. Yuen, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on March 27, 2017.

Air Force nominations beginning with Michael J. Alfaro and ending with Sara M. Wilson, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on March 27, 2017.

Air Force nominations beginning with Jessica L. Abbott and ending with Heath D. Wright, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on March 27, 2017.

Air Force nominations beginning with Corey R. Anderson and ending with Andrew J. Stogiel, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on March 27, 2017.

Air Force nominations beginning with Edward Anderson and ending with Ramon Yambo Arias, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on March 27, 2017.

Air Force nominations beginning with Patrick M. Albritton and ending with Ray A. Zuniga, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on March 27, 2017.

Air Force nominations beginning with Neil R. Copeland and ending with Olivia M. Vaughan, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 6, 2017.

Air Force nominations beginning with Robert P. McCoy, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Air Force nominations beginning with Jacob P. Absalon and ending with G010456, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on March 27, 2017.

Air Force nominations beginning with Mark P. Adams and ending with G010388, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on March 27, 2017.

Air Force nominations beginning with Amir A. Abuskeel and ending with D010352, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on March 27, 2017.

Air Force nominations beginning with Vanessa R. Asmus and ending with D030307, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on March 27, 2017.

By Mr. HATCH, from the Committee on Finance, without amendment:

Air Force nominations beginning with Thomas Benjamin Williams, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 6, 2017.

Air Force nominations beginning with Aimee L. Altvar and ending with David A. Wiltse, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 6, 2017.

Air Force nominations beginning with William R. Babers and ending with Maureen Schelle Wood, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 6, 2017.

Air Force nominations beginning with Hector L. Colonconol and ending with Kevin L. Lockett, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 6, 2017.

Air Force nominations beginning with Beth M. Baykan and ending with William T. Wilson, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 6, 2017.

Air Force nominations beginning with Michael A. Blackburn and ending with Jason S. Wrachford, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 6, 2017.

Air Force nomination of Scott C. Aping, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Air Force nomination of Patricia L. George, to be Colonel.

Air Force nomination of Adam J. Points, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Air Force nomination of Larry G. Workman, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Air Force nomination of Robert J. Dunlap, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Air Force nomination of Wayne O. Dehaney, to be Colonel.

Air Force nomination of Johnathan T. Parchem, to be Colonel.

Air Force nominations beginning with Jacob P. Absalon and ending with G010456, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on March 27, 2017.

Air Force nominations beginning with Mark P. Adams and ending with G010388, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on March 27, 2017.

Air Force nominations beginning with Amir A. Abuskeel and ending with D010352, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on March 27, 2017.

Air Force nominations beginning with Vanessa R. Asmus and ending with D030307, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on March 27, 2017.

Air Force nominations beginning with Amir A. Abuskeel and ending with D010352, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on March 27, 2017.

Air Force nominations beginning with Thomas Benjamin Williams, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 6, 2017.

Air Force nominations beginning with Aimee L. Altvar and ending with David A. Wiltse, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 6, 2017.

Air Force nominations beginning with William R. Babers and ending with Maureen Schelle Wood, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 6, 2017.

Air Force nominations beginning with William R. Babers and ending with Maureen Schelle Wood, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 6, 2017.
Army nominations beginning with Paul J. E. Auchenleech and ending with D013628, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on March 27, 2017.

Army nominations beginning with Rachel A. Acciacca and ending with Lauren E. White, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on March 27, 2017.

Army nominations beginning with Christopher J. Brown, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Army nominations beginning with Daniel B. King and ending with Todd E. Wainman, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on March 27, 2017.

Army nominations of John J. Botterto, to be Major.

Army nomination of Eugene L. Thomas III, to be Major.

Army nomination of John T. Bleigh, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Army nomination of Jeffrey D. Buck, to be Colonel.

Army nomination of Michael W. Precauskis, to be Colonel.

Army nominations beginning with Candy Boparai and ending with Lincoln F. Williams, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 4, 2017.

Army nominations beginning with Charles J. Haselby and ending with Jason T. Ramspott, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 4, 2017.

Army nomination of Alexander M. Willard, to be Major.

Army nomination of Christopher K. Berthold, to be Major.

Army nomination of Preston H. Leonard, to be Major.

Army nomination of Nicole E. Ussery, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Army nomination of Michael D. Basker, to be Colonel.

Army nomination of Bridget V. Kmetz, to be Colonel.

Army nominations beginning with Vedner Bellot and ending with James Robinson, Jr., which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 4, 2017.

Army nomination of Brian R. Hariki, to be Colonel.

Army nominations beginning with Jonathan L. Bouriaque and ending with David A. Langer, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 4, 2017.

Army nominations beginning with Timothy L. Baer and ending with Gerald R. White, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 4, 2017.

Army nomination of James V. Crawford, to be Colonel.

Army nomination of Mohammed S. Aziz, to be Major.

Army nomination of Seth C. Lydem, to be Major.

Army nomination of Christopher C. Ostby, to be Colonel.

Army nomination of Calvin E. Fish, to be Colonel.

Army nomination of Aaron E. Lane, to be Major.

Army nomination of Damien Boffardi, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Army nomination of Randy D. Dorsey, to be Colonel.

Army nominations beginning with Benjamin R. Smith and ending with Stalin R. Subramanian, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 4, 2017.

Army nomination of Mark W. Hopkins, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Army nominations beginning with Thomas R. Matelski and ending with Joshua H. Walker, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 4, 2017.

Army nomination of Mark B. Howell, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Army nomination of Julio ColonGonzalez, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Army nominations beginning with Jason N. Bullough and ending with Gerald A. Nunn, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 4, 2017.

Army nomination of Jennifer A. McAtee, to be Colonel.

Army nomination of Nina R. Copeland, to be Major.

Army nomination of Calvin E. Townsend, to be Major.

Army nomination of Scott A. McDonald, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Army nomination of Thomas P. Lukins, to be Major.

Army nomination of Scott M. McFarland, to be Colonel.

Army nomination of Jeffrey A. Miller, to be Colonel.

Army nomination of Joseph M. Kloozno, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Army nomination of Brandi A. Schuyler, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Army nomination of David J. Kaczmarek, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Army nomination of Jonathan A. Johnson, to be Major.

Army nominations beginning with James A. Benson and ending with William M. Yanek II, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 4, 2017.

Army nomination of Crystal J. Smith, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Army nomination of Dana R. Love, to be Major.

Army nomination of Douglas A. McKewan, to be Colonel.

Army nomination of David M. Wallace, to be Colonel.

Army nomination of Lisa M. Patton, to be Colonel.

Army nomination of Basil J. Catanzaro, to be Colonel.

Army nominations beginning with Daniel R. Algeiro and ending with Jessica M. Wall, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 4, 2017.

Army nominations beginning with Anis A. Abueid and ending with Craig A. Zooliner, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 4, 2017.

Army nominations beginning with Daniel W. Annunziata and ending with Leah R. Parrott, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 4, 2017.

Army nominations beginning with Anis A. Abueid and ending with Craig A. Zooliner, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 4, 2017.

Army nominations beginning with Daniel W. Annunziata and ending with Leah R. Parrott, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 4, 2017.

Army nominations beginning with Anis A. Abueid and ending with Craig A. Zooliner, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 4, 2017.
Navy nominations beginning with Jorge R. Balares, Jr. and ending with Brandon M. Zoss, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 6, 2017. Navy nomination of Mary E. Linneil, to be Lieutenant Commander.

Navy nominations beginning with Spencer M. Burke and ending with Brianna S. Whitemore, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 4, 2017.

Navy nomination of Mary E. Linneil, to be Lieutenant Commander.

Navy nominations beginning with Kirk J. Huppensteel and ending with John M. Ruggero, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 4, 2017.

Navy nomination of Evita M. Salles, to be Lieutenant Commander.

Navy nomination of John P. H. Rue, to be Captain.

Navy nominations beginning with Michael W. Ameche and ending with Joshua J. Whitlow, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 6, 2017.

Navy nominations beginning with Rachel E. Carter and ending with Kevin D. Keith, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 6, 2017.

Navy nominations beginning with Mauru Bisceotti III and ending with Adam J. Susmarsi, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 6, 2017.

Navy nomination of Donald V. Wilson, to be Commander.

Navy nomination of Michael A. Winslow, to be Lieutenant Commander.

Navy nominations beginning with Horacio G. Tan and ending with Derrick A. Thomas, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on April 6, 2017.

Navy nomination of Natalie C. O. Gilliver, to be Lieutenant Commander.

Navy nomination of John F. Sharpe, to be Commander.

Navy nomination of Roam S. Mommsen, to be Lieutenant Commander.

By Mr. Hatch for the Committee on Finance:

Robert Lighthizer, of Florida, to be United States Trade Representative, with the rank of Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee’s commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

(Nominations without an asterisk were reported with the recommendation that they be confirmed.)

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 Mrs. Ernst (for herself and Ms.寅宗): S. 925. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the ability of health care professionals to treat veterans through the use of telemedicine, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs.

By Mrs. Ernst (for herself and Mr. Grassley): S. 926. A bill to authorize the Global War on Terror Memorial Foundation to establish the National Global War on Terrorism Memorial as a commemorative work in the District of Columbia, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. Leahy (for himself and Mr. Grassley): S. 927. A bill to allow acceleration certificates for the Patents for Humanity Program to be transferable; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. Murray (for herself, Mr. Boozman, Mr. Baldwin, Mr. Blumenthal, Mr. Brown, Ms. Cantwell, Ms. Duckworth, Mr. Markley, Ms. Warren, Mrs. Gillibrand, Ms. Hirono, Mr. Sanders, Mr. Whitehouse, Ms. Hassan, Mr. Wyden, Mr. Merkley, Mr. Schatz, Mr. Murphy, Mr. Leahy, Mr. Casey, Mr. Franken, Ms. Duckworth, and Mr. Durbin): S. 928. A bill to prohibit, as an unfair or deceptive act or practice, commercial sexual orientation conversion therapy, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mrs. Shaheen: S. 929. A bill to authorize the HUBZone program; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

By Mr. Flake (for himself, Mr. Cotton, and Mr. King): S. 930. A bill to require the Administrator of the Western Area Power Administration to establish a pilot project to provide information to small businesses and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. Gardner (for himself and Mr. Bennet): S. 931. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 4910 Brighton Boulevard in Denver, Colorado, as the “George Sakato Post Office”; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Ms. Daines (for himself, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Perdue, Mr. Paul, and Mr. Lee): S. 932. A bill to amend the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 to provide that any estimate prepared by the Congressional Budget Office or the Joint Committee on Taxation shall include costs relating to servicing the national public debt, and for other purposes; to the Committee of Appropriations; to the Committee on Finance; placed on the calendar.

By Mr. Enzi (for himself and Mr. Nelson): S. 936. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the rules relating to loans made from a qualified employer plan, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance; referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. Cornyn (for himself, Mrs. Capito, Mr. Daines, Mr. Cassidy, Mr. Rubio, Ms. Baldwin, Mr. Durbin, Mr. Boozman, Mr. Murkowski, Mr. Markey, Mr. Durbin, Mr. Markony, Mr. Stabenow, and Mr. Menendez): S. 936. A bill to designate certain National Forest System land and certain public land under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of the Interior in the States of Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming as wilderness, wild and scenic rivers, wilderness, and wildland recovery areas, and biological connecting corridors, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. Casey (for himself, Mr. Blunt, Mrs. Gillibrand, Mr. Inhoffe, Mr. Markon, Mr. Rounds, and Ms. Klobuchar): S. 937. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for a refundable adoption tax credit; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. Peters (for himself, Ms. Collins, Mr. Carper, and Mr. Reed): S. 938. A bill to require notice of cost-free Federal procurement technical assistance in connection with registration of small business concerns in procurement systems; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. Cruz: S. 939. A bill to reserve any amounts forfeited to the United States as a result of the criminal prosecution of Joaquin Archivaldo Guzman Loera (commonly known as “El Chapo”), or of other felony convictions involving the trafficking of controlled substances into the United States, for security measures along the Southern border, including the completion of a border wall; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. Enzi (for himself and Mr. Nelson): S. 940. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the rules relating to loans made from a qualified employer plan, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance; referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. Tester: S. 941. A bill to withdraw certain National Forest System land in the Emigrant Crevices area located in the Custer Gallatin National Forest, Park County, Montana, from the mining and mineral leasing laws of the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. Hatch: S. J. Res. 41. An original joint resolution providing for an extension of the appointment of certain persons as the United States Trade Representative; from the Committee on Finance; placed on the calendar.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. Cornyn (for himself, Mrs. Capito, Mr. Daines, Mr. Cassidy, Mr. Rubio, Ms. Baldwin, Mr. Durbin, Mr. Boozman, Mr. Murkowski, Mr. Markey, Mr. Durbin, Mr. Markony, Mr. Stabenow, and Mr. Menendez): S. Res. 138. A resolution honoring National Former Prisoner of War Recognition Day on April 9, 2017, and commemorating the 75th anniversary of the fall of Bataan; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. Wyden (for himself, Mr. Rubio, Mr. Boozman, and Mr. Durbin): S. Res. 139. A resolution condemning the Government of Iran’s state-sponsored persecution of its Baha’i minority and its continued violation of the International Covenants on Human Rights; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. Isakson (for himself and Ms. Stabenow): S. Res. 140. A resolution declaring National Observer’s Day; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.
At the request of Mr. CRAWFORD, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) was added as a cosponsor 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.

At the request of Mr. CARL, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY), the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BERNSTEIN), the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN), and the Senator from New Hampshire (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) were added as cosponsors of S. 445, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to ensure more timely access to home health services for Medicare beneficiaries under the Medicare program.

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. RUSSEL), the name of the Senator from Washington (Ms. KINNICK), and the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARR) were added as cosponsors of S. 470, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to enhance the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit and make the credit fully refundable.

At the request of Mr. CRAWFORD, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 497, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for timely access to home health services for Medicare beneficiaries under the Medicare program.

At the request of Mr. CANTWELL, the names of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON) and the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 652, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize the project for early detection, diagnosis, and treatment regarding deaf and hard-of-hearing newborns, infants, and young children.

At the request of Mr. CANTWELL, the names of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY), the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL), and the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) were added as cosponsors of S. 632, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize a program for early detection, diagnosis, and treatment regarding deaf and hard-of-hearing newborns, infants, and young children.

At the request of Mr. DONELLY, the names of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE) and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) were added as cosponsors of S. 722, a bill to impose sanctions with respect to Iran in relation to Iran’s ballistic missile program, support for acts of international terrorism, and violations of human rights, and for other purposes.

At the request of Mr. DONELLY, the names of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE) and the Senator from Washington (Ms. Klobuchar) were added as cosponsors of S. 722, a bill to impose sanctions with respect to Iran in relation to Iran’s ballistic missile program, support for acts of international terrorism, and violations of human rights, and for other purposes.

At the request of Mr. CANTWELL, the names of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. MORAN) and the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 569, a bill to amend the Clean Air Act with respect to the ethanol waiver for Reid vapor pressure limitations under such Act.

At the request of Mr. PERDUE and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) were added as cosponsors of S. 744, a bill to amend the Fair Credit Reporting Act to delay the inclusion in consumer credit reports and to establish requirements for debt collectors with respect to medical debt information of veterans due to inappropriate or delayed billing payments or reimbursements to the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

At the request of Mr. KAINES, the names of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. MCGUIRE) and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ) were added as cosponsors of S. 569, a bill to amend the Clean Air Act with respect to the ethanol waiver for Reid vapor pressure limitations under such Act.

At the request of Mr. DONELLY, the names of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE) and the Senator from Washington (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) were added as cosponsors of S. 722, a bill to impose sanctions with respect to Iran in relation to Iran’s ballistic missile program, support for acts of international terrorism, and violations of human rights, and for other purposes.

At the request of Mr. DONELLY, the names of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE) and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) were added as cosponsors of S. 744, a bill to amend the Fair Credit Reporting Act to delay the inclusion in consumer credit reports and to establish requirements for debt collectors with respect to medical debt information of veterans due to inappropriate or delayed billing payments or reimbursements to the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

S. 611

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 611, a bill to amend the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act to meet the needs of homeless children, youth, and families, and honor the assessments and priorities of local communities.

S. 632

At the request of Mrs. COONS, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ-Masto) was added as a cosponsor of S. 632, a bill to amend title 28 of the United States Code to authorize the appointment of additional bankruptcy judges; and for other purposes.

S. 652

At the request of Mr. KAINES, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 652, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize a program for early detection, diagnosis, and treatment regarding deaf and hard-of-hearing newborns, infants, and young children.

S. 717

At the request of Mr. SULLIVAN, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 717, a bill to promote pro bono legal services as a critical way in which to empower survivors of domestic violence.

S. 720

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 720, a bill to amend the Export Administration Act of 1979 to include in the prohibitions on boycotts against allies of the United States boycotts fostered by international governmental organizations against Israel and to direct the Export-Import Bank of the United States to oppose boycotts against Israel, and for other purposes.

S. 722

At the request of Mr. CORKER, the names of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUMENTHAL), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO), the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL), and the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY) were added as cosponsors of S. 722, a bill to impose sanctions with respect to Iran in relation to Iran’s ballistic missile program, support for acts of international terrorism, and violations of human rights, and for other purposes.

S. 744

At the request of Mr. DONELLY, the names of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE) and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) were added as cosponsors of S. 744, a bill to amend the Fair Credit Reporting Act to delay the inclusion in consumer credit reports and to establish requirements for debt collectors with respect to medical debt information of veterans due to inappropriate or delayed billing payments or reimbursements to the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.
PERDUE was added as a cosponsor of S. 754, a bill to support meeting our Nation’s growing cybersecurity workforce needs by expanding the cybersecurity education pipeline.  

S. 832  
At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETTIT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 832, a bill to enhance the transparency and accelerate the impact of programs under the African Growth and Opportunity Act and the Millennium Challenge Corporation, and for other purposes.  

S. 869  
At the request of Mr. PAUL, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 869, a bill to repeal the violation of sovereign nations’ laws and privacy matters.  

S. 872  
At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 872, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to make permanent the extension of the Medicare hospital (MDH) program and the increased payments under the Medicare low-volume hospital program.  

S. 878  
At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 878, a bill to establish privacy protections for customers of broadband internet access service and other telecommunications services.  

S. 901  
At the request of Ms. HIRONO, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 901, a bill to prohibit any reduction in the amount of the per diem allowance to which members of the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps or civilian employees of the Department of Defense are entitled based on the duration of temporary duty assignments or official travel, and for other purposes.  

S. 923  
At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 923, a bill to exempt certain financial institutions from regulations issued under the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act.  

S. CON. RES. 12  
At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the names of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. ROY) were added as cosponsors of S. Con. Res. 12, a concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that those who served in the bays, harbors, and territorial seas of the Republic of Vietnam during the period beginning on January 9, 1962, and ending on May 7, 1975, should be presumed to have served in the Republic of Vietnam for all purposes under the Agent Orange Act of 1991.  

S. RES. 99  
At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOUZMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 99, a resolution recognizing the 11 African-American soldiers of the 333rd Field Artillery Battalion who were massacred in Wereth, Belgium, during the Battle of the Bulge in December 1944.  

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS  
By Mr. LEAHY (for himself and Mr. Grassley), S. 927—A bill to allow acceleration certificates awarded under the Patents for Humanity Program to be transferable; to the Committee on the Judiciary.  

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, tomorrow, April 26, is World Intellectual Property Day, an opportunity for people around the world to appreciate and learn about the role of intellectual property rights in promoting innovation. Our Founders believed that the right to enjoy the benefit of one’s own inventions was so important to the progress of science that they included it in the Constitution. More than 200 years later, limited exclusive rights for inventors continue to incentivize the research and development and make the United States the global leader in innovation.  

In the spirit of this year’s theme, “Innovation—Improving Lives,” I am proud to partner with Senator Grassley to reintroduce the Patents for Humanity Program Improvement Act. Since 2012, the Patents for Humanity Program of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, PTO, has honored patent holders whose inventions apply cutting-edge technologies to meet global challenges in medicine, nutrition, sanitation, energy, and living standards. The winning inventors receive a certificate to accelerate future PTO processes, such as a reexamination or additional patent applications. The Patents for Humanity Program provides an innovative and important incentive for talented innovators to use their expertise and intellect to enhance the public good.  

The winners of the Patents for Humanity Program who were massacred in Wereth, Belgium, during the Battle of the Bulge in December 1944.

S. 932  
Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,  

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.  
This Act may be cited as the “Budgetary Accuracy in Scoring Interest Costs Act of 2017” or the “BASIC Act.”  

SEC. 2. CBO AND JCT ESTIMATES TO INCLUDE DEBT SERVICING COSTS.  
(a) In General.—The Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 621 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 402 the following:  

"ESTIMATES TO INCLUDE DEBT SERVICING COSTS—SEC. 403. Any estimate prepared by the Congressional Budget Office under section
Whereas the productive peace between the United States and Japan has produced a model of reconciliation between former combatants;

Whereas, in 2009, the Government of Japan offered an apology to the United States prisoners of war for the damage and suffering of the prisoners of war in Imperial Japan;

Whereas, in 2013, the Government of Japan established a program for former prisoners of war and their families to visit Japan and the former prisoner of war camps; and

Whereas the Baha'i community, the largest non-Muslim religious minority in Iran, long has been subject to particularly severe religious freedom violations. The government views Baha’is, who number at least 300,000, as ‘heretics and consequently they face repression on the grounds of apostasy.’;

Whereas the Baha'i community, the largest non-Muslim religious minority in Iran, long has been subject to particularly severe religious freedom violations. The government views Baha’is, who number at least 300,000, as ‘heretics and consequently they face repression on the grounds of apostasy.’;


Whereas in 2010, the Government of Japan offered an apology for its historic apology for the maltreatment of United States prisoners of war by Imperial Japan;

Whereas every day Parkinson's disease affects an estimated 10,000 individuals in the United States; and
Whereas the symptoms of Parkinson's disease vary from person to person and may include:

1. tremors;
2. slowness of movement and rigidity;
3. difficulty with balance and gait;
4. disturbance of swallowing;
5. cognitive impairment and dementia;
6. mood disorders; and
7. a variety of other nonmotor symptoms;

Whereas volunteers, researchers, caregivers, and medical professionals are working to improve the quality of life for individuals living with Parkinson’s disease and their families; and
Whereas increased research, education, and community support services are needed—
1. to find more effective treatments; and
2. to provide leadership for individuals living with Parkinson’s disease: Now, therefore, be it
Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) condemns the Government of Iran’s state-sponsored persecution of its Bahá’í community and its continued violation of the International Covenants on Human Rights;
(2) calls on the Government of Iran to immediately release the 7 imprisoned Bahá’í leaders, the 7 imprisoned Bahá’í educators, and all other prisoners held solely on account of their religion;
(3) calls on the President and Secretary of State, in cooperation with responsible nations, to immediately condemn the Government of Iran’s continued violation of human rights; and
demands the immediate release of prisoners held solely on account of their religion; and
(4) urges the President and Secretary of State to utilize available authorities to impose sanctions on officials of the Government of Iran and other individuals directly responsible for serious human rights abuses, including abuses against the Bahá’í community of Iran.

SENATE RESOLUTION 140—SUPPORTING THE DESIGNATION OF APRIL 2017 AS “PARKINSON’S AWARENESS MONTH”

Mr. ISAKSON (for himself and Ms. STARENOW) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. Res. 140

Whereas Parkinson's disease is a chronic, progressive neurological disease and is the second most common neurodegenerative disease in the United States; and
Whereas there is inadequate data on the incidence and prevalence of Parkinson’s disease, but the disease affects an estimated 1,000,000 individuals in the United States and its prevalence is expected to more than double by 2040; and
Whereas, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Parkinson’s disease is the 14th leading cause of death in the United States; and
Whereas every day Parkinson’s disease affects approximately 1,500 people per month; and
Whereas there are currently 90 Bahá’ís in prison in Iran;
Whereas the Government of Iran is party to the Comprehensive International Covenants on Human Rights and is in violation of its obligations under such Covenants;
Whereas section 185 of the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act of 2010 (P.L. 111–195) authorizes the President to impose sanctions on individuals “responsible for or complicit in, or responsible for, supporting or controlling, or otherwise directing, the commission of serious human rights abuses against citizens of Iran or their family members on or after June 12, 2009;” and
Whereas the Iran Threat Reduction and Syria Human Rights Act of 2012 (P.L. 112–193) amends and expands the authorities established under the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act of 2010 (P.L. 111–195) to sanction Iranian human rights abusers: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates April 2017 as “Parkinson’s Awareness Month”; (2) supports the goals and ideals of Parkinson’s Awareness Month; (3) continues to support research to find better treatments and a cure for Parkinson’s disease; (4) recognizes the individuals living with Parkinson’s disease who participate in vital clinical trials to advance the knowledge of the disease; and (5) commends the dedication of organizations, volunteers, researchers, and millions of individuals across the United States working to improve the quality of life for individuals living with Parkinson’s disease and their families.

SENATE RESOLUTION 141—CONGRATULATING THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA WOMEN’S BASKETBALL TEAM FOR WINNING THE 2017 NATIONAL COLLEGIATE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION DIVISION I WOMEN’S BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT CHAMPIONSHIP

Mr. SCOTT (for himself and Mr. GRAHAM) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. Res. 141

Whereas, on April 2, 2017, at American Airlines Center in Dallas, Texas, the University of South Carolina Gamecocks won the national title game for the National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I Women’s Basketball Tournament over the Mississippi State Bulldogs by a score of 67 to 55; Whereas the University of South Carolina Gamecocks women’s basketball team won the 2017 Southeastern Conference championship; Whereas the University of South Carolina Gamecocks women’s basketball team was coached by Dawn Staley, a 1996 Olympian who was elected to carry the United States flag at the opening ceremony of the 2004 Summer Olympics, was elected to the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame in 2013, and is the new head coach of the United States women’s national basketball team, joins

Carolyn Peck as the only 2 African-American female heads to lead a national Collegiate Athletic Association Division I basketball team to a national title; Whereas this is the first National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I Women’s Basketball Tournament Championship for the University of South Carolina Gamecocks women’s basketball team, who finished the season with 33 wins and 4 losses; Whereas A’ja Wilson, who is from Columbia, South Carolina, and an alumna of Heathwood Hall Episcopal School, was named Southeastern Conference player of the year and the National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I Women’s Basketball Tournament Championship most valuable player; Whereas the University of South Carolina has been a leader on the Southeastern Conference Academic Honor Roll for last 10 years; Whereas, each year, University of South Carolina student-athletes support approximately 100 events and organizations for a total of more than 5,000 hours of service; Whereas A’ja Wilson received First Team All-America recognition from the Women’s Basketball Coaches Association; và

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) congratulates the University of South Carolina women’s basketball team for winning the 2017 National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I Women’s Basketball Tournament Championship; and
(2) recognizes the achievements of—
(A) the team’s players, coaches, and staff, whose hard work and dedication helped the University of South Carolina women’s basketball team win that Championship; and
(B) the dedicated faculty and staff of the University of South Carolina for building an educational environment that has helped University of South Carolina student-athletes to thrive.

SENATE RESOLUTION 142—COMMEMORATING THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE TRAGIC EVENTS AT VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY ON APRIL 16, 2007

Mr. Kaine (for himself and Mr. Warner) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. Res. 142

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the 32 victims who lost their lives as a result of the tragic events at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (referred to as “Virginia Tech”) on April 16, 2007, Ross A. Alameddine, Christopher James Bishop, Brian R. Bluhm, Ryan Christopher Clark, Austin Michelle Cloyd, Jacqueline Couture-Novak, Kevin P. Granata, Matthew Gregory Gwaltney, Caitlin Millar Hammaren, Jeremy Michael Herbstritt,

(2) recognizes the 17 individuals who survived the shooting and supports the continued recovery of those survivors from physical and psychological wounds;

(3) offers condolences to the families and friends of the victims;

(4) expresses hope that the memory of each victim will live on; and

(5) recognizes——

(A) the resilience of the Virginia Tech community in the decade following the tragedy of April 16, 2007; and

(B) that the perseverance of the Virginia Tech community serves as an example to communities that experience similar tragedies.

SENATE RESOLUTION 143—SUPPORT FAIR AND EQUITABLE GRAZING TREATMENT FOR EXPORTS OF UNITED STATES WHEAT PRODUCTS TO CANADA

Mr. TESTER submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Finance:

S. Res. 143

Whereas Canada is the second-largest goods trading partner of the United States, with $755,000,000,000 in goods traded between the 2 countries in 2015, as the United States exported $280,000,000,000 in goods to Canada and imported $295,000,000,000 in goods from the 2 countries in 2015, as the United States

Whereas the efficient and equitable flow of agricultural goods across the border is a critical component of the trade relationship between the United States and Canada;

Whereas wheat is the third-most widely grown wheat; produced in Canada, and approximately 1/2 of the wheat produced in the United States is exported;

Whereas Canadian law requires wheat imported from the United States to be graded and marketed by the Canadian Grading Board, which automatically designates as feed quality, the lowest possible designation, regardless of the actual quality or the variety of the wheat product;

Whereas United States Federal law allows wheat imported from Canada to be graded under the same system as domestically grown wheat;

Whereas unfair devaluation practice puts United States agricultural producers at a distinct disadvantage when attempting to access Canadian wheat markets;

Whereas the treatment by Canada of United States wheat products is likely a violation of trade agreements and is to the detriment of United States agricultural producers; and

Whereas the strong economic ties between the United States and Canada are extremely important, and well served when a level playing field exists across all industries: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Senate that——

(1) wheat grading practices in Canada should——

(A) grade wheat produced in Canada in the same manner as wheat produced in the United States; and

(B) be fair to agricultural producers in the United States; and

(2) the President should—

(A) examine whether the wheat grading laws of Canada adhere to trade agreements; and

(B) insist on full access for United States exporters of wheat to the Canadian market.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

The Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, April 25, 2017, at 9:45 a.m., in open session, to receive testimony on policy and strategy in the Asia-Pacific.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

The Committee on Finance is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, April 25, 2017, at 10 a.m., in 215 Dirksen Senate Office Building, to consider the nomination of Robert Lighthizer, of Florida, to be United States Trade Representative.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, April 25, 2017, at 9:45 a.m., to hold a hearing entitled “The Crisis in Libya: Next Steps and U.S. Policy Options.”

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Senate Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, April 25, 2017, at 10 a.m., in room SD-226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled “Intellectual Property—Drivers of Innovation: Balancing Our Lives Healthier, Safer, and more Productive.”

COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Select Senate Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, April 25, 2017, from 2:15 p.m.—4:00 p.m., in room SH-219 of the Senate Hart Office Building to hold a closed hearing.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that my intern Nicholas Piwonka be granted privileges of the floor for the remainder of the day.

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

RESOLUTIONS DISCHARGED

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that applicable committees be discharged from further consideration of and the Senate now proceed to the immediate consideration of the following resolutions en bloc: S. Res. 105, S. Res. 122, S. Res. 128, S. Res. 129, S. Res. 130, S. Res. 131, and S. Res. 133.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolutions en bloc.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, today I wish to ask my Senate colleagues to join me in designating April 2017 as National Congenital Diaphragmatic Hernia Awareness Month. Congenital Diaphragmatic Hernia, also known as CDH, is a birth defect that occurs when the fetal diaphragm fails to fully develop, allowing abdominal organs to move into the chest cavity and preventing lung growth. When the lungs do not develop properly during pregnancy, it can be difficult for the baby to breathe after birth, or the baby is unable to take in enough oxygen to stay healthy. Congenital diaphragmatic hernia is a birth defect that occurs in 1 out of every 2,500 live births worldwide. Only about 50 percent of CDH cases are diagnosed in utero. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CDC, estimates that CDH affects 1,600 babies in the U.S. each year. Every 10 minutes, a baby is born with CDH, adding up to more than 700,000 babies with CDH since 2000. According to the CDC, babies born with CDH experience a high mortality ranging from 20 to 60 percent, depending on the severity of the defect and the treatments available at delivery; yet most people have never heard of CDH.

Researchers are making great progress to determine the cause of this birth defect and to identify optimal treatment methods. In fiscal year 2017, the National Institutes of Health funded approximately $4 million in CDH research, an increase of $700,000 over fiscal year 2015. There is still much progress to be made, however. The cause of CDH remains unknown, and there currently is no cure. CDH survivors often endure long-term complications, such as congenital heart defects and developmental delays, and the average CDH survivor will face postnatal care of more than $100,000. Last month, members from the Association of Congenital Diaphragmatic Hernia Research, Awareness, and Support, also known as CHERUBS, visited my office. Among them were David and Allison Finger and their daughter Vivienne from Hyattsville, MD. Vivienne was born with CDH and had to spend 60 days in an intensive care unit after birth and had to have surgery to repair the hernia when she was only 3 weeks old. On March 18, 2017, Vivienne celebrated her second birthday and is doing very well. Babies like Vivienne, born with CDH, today have a better chance of survival due to early detection and research on treatment options.
The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 140) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to. (The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today’s Record under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

CONGRATULATING THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA WOMEN’S BASKETBALL TEAM FOR WINNING THE 2017 NATIONAL COLLEGIATE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION DIVISION I WOMEN’S BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT CHAMPIONSHIP

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 141, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 141) congratulating the University of South Carolina women’s basketball team for winning the 2017 National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I Women’s Basketball Tournament Championship.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered laid and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 141) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to. (The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today’s Record under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

COMMEMORATING THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE TRAGIC EVENTS AT VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY ON APRIL 21, 2007

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 142, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 142) commemorating the 10th anniversary of the tragic events at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University on April 21, 2007.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered laid and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.
THE FOLLOWING-NAMED CAREER MEMBERS OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE FOR PROMOTION INTO THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, AS A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, CLASS OF COUNSELOR:

HAVEN G. CRUZ–HUBBARD, OF MARYLAND
TIMOTHY J. DONNAY, OF VERMONT
JOSEPH L. DORSEY, OF VIRGINIA
PETER WILLIAM DUFFY, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
JOHN L. DUNLOP, OF VIRGINIA
MICHAEL JAMES EDY, OF MISSOURI
GABRIEL F. GRAU, OF FLORIDA
ALER GRUBBS, OF INDIANA
ANDREW DAVID HOLLAND, OF CALIFORNIA
KAREN R. HUNTER, OF FLORIDA
JENNIFER MARIE LINK, OF ILLINOIS
SANDRA K. MINKEL, OF NEVADA
DIANE B. MOORE, OF NEW YORK
MARGARET ELIZABETH ENIS SPEARS, OF MARYLAND
TANYA S. URQUIETA, OF SOUTH DAKOTA
ANN N. WILLIAMS, OF MARYLAND

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED CAREER MEMBERS OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FOR PROMOTION WITHIN THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, CLASS OF CAREER MINISTER:

DAVID A. ASHFORD, OF NEW YORK
JEFFERY S. AUSTIN, OF SOUTH CAROLINA
GREGORY A. BALL, III, OF FLORIDA
THERESA L. BOYTE, OF COLORADO
LEONIDES L. CARRIZO, OF FLORIDA
DARYA CHIRREZAD, OF CALIFORNIA
CYNTHIA R. DUERK, OF FLORIDA
RUSSELL A. DUNCAN, OF MARYLAND
CONRAD ESTRADA, OF NEW YORK
KELIN R. EVANS, JR., OF MISSOURI
JOHN P. GILMORE, OF FLORIDA
JOHN J. HUBEL, OF MARYLAND
JEREMY J. MCKIM, OF WYOMING
DAVID G. MUGDALE, OF FLORIDA
ROBERTO F. PANTALONI, OF FLORIDA
MARK C. RICHTOFF, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
SCOTT D. SAXE, OF PENNSYLVANIA
ROBERT T. TANAKA, OF OHIO
SHARON WILLIAMS, OF KANSAS
JEFFERY G. WILSON, OF OREGON

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate April 25, 2017:

ROD J. ROSENSTEIN, OF MARYLAND, TO BE DEPUTY ATTORNEY GENERAL.

WITHDRAWAL

Executive Message transmitted by the President to the Senate on April 25, 2017 withdrawing from further Senate consideration the following nomination:

TODD M. RICKETTS, OF ILLINOIS, TO BE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF COMMERCE.

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED MEMBERS OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE FOR APPOINTMENT AS A FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER, A CONSULAR OFFICER, AND A SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

DAVID GOSSACK, OF CALIFORNIA
SARAH KEMP, OF NEW YORK
KEITH KIBBE, OF MAINE

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED CAREER MEMBERS OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE FOR PROMOTION INTO THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, AS A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, CLASS OF COUNSELOR:

ALI ABDI, OF VIRGINIA
MICHAEL LEO CONLON, OF VIRGINIA
PAUL ALLEN SPENCER–MACGREGOR, OF VIRGINIA
W. GARTH THORBURN II, OF FLORIDA
ROBERT HENRY HANSON, OF WISCONSIN

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED MEMBERS OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FOR APPOINTMENT AS A FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER, A CONSULAR OFFICER, AND A SECRETARY IN THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

DAVID CHARLES MILLER, OF WASHINGTON
SCOTT S. NORDER, OF MINNESOTA

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED CAREER MEMBERS OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE FOR PROMOTION WITHIN THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, CLASS OF COUNSELOR:

STEPHEN ALLEY, OF TENNESSEE
ISABELLA CASCIARANO, OF VIRGINIA
WILLIAM CZA–ROWKI, OF CALIFORNIA
BRIAN MCBRIDE, OF VIRGINIA
MARY AILEEN NANDI, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
ALYCIA CAMILLE RICHARDSON, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

THE FOLLOWING-NAMED CAREER MEMBERS OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE FOR PROMOTION WITHIN THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, CLASS OF MINISTER–COUNSELOR:

FRED AZIZ, OF FLORIDA
DAWN BRUNO, OF FLORIDA
JULIE ANN CARDUCCI, OF FLORIDA
JAMES PRESTON CURTIS, OF GEORGIA
MINDI B. HERTZOG, OF FLORIDA
NEIL PAUL PICKETT, OF FLORIDA
MATTHEW QUIGLEY, OF MICHIGAN
NATHALIE SCHARF, OF FLORIDA

The following-named career members of the Foreign Service for promotion into the Senior Foreign Service, as a career member of the Senior Foreign Service of the United States of America, Class of Counselor:

Ali ABDI, of Virginia
Michael LEO CONLON, of Virginia
Paul ALLEN SPENCER–MACGREGOR, of Virginia
W. Garth THORBURN II, of Florida
Robert HENRY HANSON, of Wisconsin

The following-named members of the Foreign Service of the United States Department of Agriculture for appointment as a Foreign Service officer, a Consular Officer, and a Secretary in the Diplomatic Service of the United States of America:

David AsHFORD, of New York
Jeffery S. AUSTIN, of South Carolina
Gregory A. BALL, III, of Florida
Theresa L. BOYTE, of Colorado
Leonides L. CARRIZO, of Florida
Darya CHIRREZAD, of California
Cynthia R. DUERK, of Florida
Russell A. DUNCAN, of Maryland
Conrad ESTRADA, of New York
Kelin R. EVANS, JR., of Missouri
John P. GILMORE, of Florida
John J. HUBEL, of Maryland
Jeremy J. MCKIM, of Wyoming
David G. MUGDALE, of Florida
Roberto F. PANTALONI, of Florida
Mark C. RICHTOFF, of New Hampshire
Scott D. SAXE, of Pennsylvania
Robert T. TANAKA, of Ohio
Sharon Williams, of Kansas
Jeffery G. WILSON, of Oregon

The following-named career members of the Foreign Service of the United States Department of Commerce for promotion into the Senior Foreign Service, as a career member of the Senior Foreign Service of the United States of America, Class of Counselor:

Ali ABDI, of Virginia
Michael LEO CONLON, of Virginia
Paul ALLEN SPENCER–MACGREGOR, of Virginia
W. Garth THORBURN II, of Florida
Robert HENRY HANSON, of Wisconsin

The following-named members of the Foreign Service of the United States Department of Agriculture for appointment as a Foreign Service officer, a Consular Officer, and a Secretary in the Diplomatic Service of the United States of America:

David A. ASHFORD, of NEW YORK
JEFFERY S. AUSTIN, of SOUTH CAROLINA
GREGORY A. BALL, III, of FLORIDA
THERESA L. BOYTE, of COLORADO
LEONIDES L. CARRIZO, of FLORIDA
DARYA CHIRREZAD, of CALIFORNIA
CYNTHIA R. DUERK, of FLORIDA
RUSSELL A. DUNCAN, of MARYLAND
CONRAD ESTRADA, of NEW YORK
KELIN R. EVANS, JR., of MISSOURI
JOHN P. GILMORE, of FLORIDA
JOHN J. HUBEL, of MARYLAND
JEREMY J. MCKIM, of WYOMING
DAVID G. MUGDALE, of FLORIDA
ROBERTO F. PANTALONI, of FLORIDA
MARK C. RICHTOFF, of NEW HAMPSHIRE
SCOTT D. SAXE, of PENNSYLVANIA
ROBERT T. TANAKA, of OHIO
FRID WANG, of MARYLAND
SHARON WILLIAMS, of KANSAS
JEFFERY G. WILSON, of OREGON