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House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
May 2, 2017.

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

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

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

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

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

U.S. NEEDS A NEW POLICY ON TIBET

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, in 2002, Congress passed the Tibetan Policy Act to support the aspirations of the Tibetan people to safeguard their distinct identity. The law laid out steps to protect the distinct religious, cultural, and linguistic identity of Tibet and to press for improved respect for the human rights of the Tibetan people—a dialogue between His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Chinese Government, the immediate and unconditional release of Tibetan prisoners of conscience, establishing a U.S. consular office in Lhasa, and requesting that the 11th Panchen Lama be allowed to pursue his religious studies without Chinese Government interference.

Mr. Speaker, these were basic, commonsense steps, yet 15 years later there is little progress. The Chinese-Tibet dialogue has been suspended since 2010.

There are hundreds of Tibetan prisoners of conscience. Many are monks. Some like Tenzin Delek Rinpoche have died in custody.

There is still no U.S. consular office in Lhasa, a major problem for U.S. officials trying to respond to emergencies like the 2015 earthquake that trapped dozens of our citizens in the Tibetan Autonomous Region. And the Chinese Government, officially atheist, has declared that it will decide who will be reincarnated as the next Dalai Lama.

Mr. Speaker, I want to express my concern for the well-being of the missing 11th Panchen Lama, the second highest leader in the Tibetan religion. Twenty-two years ago, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima was detained by Chinese authorities when he was just 6 years old and just 3 days after the Dalai Lama declared him to be the reincarnated Panchen Lama. Today, he is one of the world's longest serving political prisoners. China has refused to provide any details of his whereabouts.

Let me be clear. The Chinese Government does not have the right or the authority to name the reincarnated religious leaders of Tibet, not the Panchen Lama and not the next Dalai Lama.

Mr. Speaker, I constantly receive reports from Tibet of human rights abuses and affronts to basic human dignity, like the demolition of buildings and forced eviction of religious people from the famous Buddhist Institute of Larung Gar or the restrictions that keep Tibetans from traveling around their own country, much less abroad.

We need to rethink U.S. policy toward Tibet. For years, China has faced no consequences for its failure to respect the fundamental rights of the Tibetan people. This must change.

Along with a bipartisan group of Members of Congress, I have introduced H.R. 1872, the Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act. This bill imposes consequences for just one aspect of China's bad behavior: its restrictions on travel to areas in China where ethnic Tibetans live.

U.S. diplomats, journalists, and tourists have to get a special permit to enter the Tibet Autonomous Region, and travel to other Tibetan areas is also tightly controlled. But under H.R. 1872, no senior leader responsible for designing or implementing travel restrictions to Tibetan areas would be eligible to enter the United States.

The rationale for the bill is simple. The basis of diplomatic law is mutual access and reciprocity. But while the Chinese enjoy broad access to the United States, the same is not true for U.S. diplomats, journalists, or tourists going to Tibet, including Tibetan Americans trying to visit their place of origin. This is simply unacceptable. If China wants its citizens and officials to travel freely in the U.S., Americans must be able to travel freely in China, including Tibet.

Allowing travel to Tibet is only one step China needs to take. It must also remove the obstacles to freedom of movement for Tibetans within China and abroad. China can't have it both ways. Either Tibetans are Chinese citizens or they are not. If they are, they must enjoy the same rights and privileges as other Chinese citizens.

China also must permit His Holiness the Dalai Lama to return to Tibet for a visit if he so desires. He is a man of peace who will soon turn 82 years old.

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He should be able to visit his homeland.

China also should demonstrate true respect for the human rights and religious freedom of the Tibetan people. A first step would be to permit an independent international investigation into the July 2015 death, in custody, of revered lama Tenzin Delek Rinpoche.

On our side, the new Trump administration needs to appoint the Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues as quickly as possible. To make progress, we need someone in charge. They must insist that China restart the dialogue to lead a negotiated agreement in Tibet.

They should develop a list of Chinese officials subject to sanction under the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act. No one responsible for torture and extrajudicial killings or for significant corruption should benefit from coming to our country and doing business here.

They should publicly engage the Dalai Lama and the democratically elected leader of the Tibetan people. The State Department should take every opportunity to benefit from the Dalai Lama's knowledge and decades of reflections.

The Secretary of State should highlight the democratic practices of the Tibetan people and meet personally with the Sikyong, Dr. Lobsang Sangay, and the administration should also engage other governments to create a group of friends of Tibet. It is time to pursue a coordinated international action in support of the Tibetan people.

Mr. Speaker, time may be running out for the Tibetan people. All those who say they believe in the rights of Tibetans must move beyond words to concrete actions.

I urge my colleagues to cosponsor H.R. 1872, the Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act, and to support additional measures to protect all that is unique about Tibet and its people.

SUPPORTING TIBET

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about something that I hold near and dear to my heart: the plight of the people of Tibet and of His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

The forced exile of His Holiness is a source of profound sorrow for the people of Tibet. For over 60 years, the Communist regime in Beijing has refused to allow this kind, compassionate man to come home, while systematically persecuting the Tibetan people, denying them even the most basic human rights and freedom, and implementing policies designed to wipe out the culture of Tibet.

In 2007, I authored legislation that paved the way for Congress to award the Congressional Medal of Honor to the Dalai Lama. A decade later, I am concerned that issues in Tibet are being pushed to the sidelines, a mistake that could have profound consequences not only for Tibet, but for the entire Asian Continent.

Known as the ''Roof of the World,'' the Tibetan plateau is the source of many of Asia's major rivers, making the Chinese regime's threat to Tibet's stability a strategically important security issue for the entire region.

Last month, I was proud to join Congressman MCGOVERN in sending a letter in support of the appointment of a Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues at the State Department. I am also proud to cosponsor Mr. MCGOVERN's bill, the Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act, which is designed to help stop China's destabilizing behavior in Tibet by revoking the visa of any Chinese official found to be responsible for restricting the access of U.S. citizens to Tibet.

Last week, I had the pleasure of meeting with Richard Gere, an activist who helps to bring more attention and awareness to this very important matter. As His Holiness has said: ''In the practice of tolerance, one's enemy is the best teacher.''

It is essential, Mr. Speaker, that we in Congress advocate on behalf of the people of Tibet and join forces to combat the Chinese regime's increasing aggression.

ISRAEL'S 69TH INDEPENDENCE DAY

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, today marks the democratic Jewish State of Israel's 69th Independence Day.

For the Jewish people to have not only survived the Holocaust and the Nazi effort to eradicate them from the planet and then to establish a state of their own in their historical and biblical homeland is nothing short of a miracle. And in just seven decades, not only has Israel arisen, it has thrived, becoming one of the world's great democracies and the epicenter of high tech all over the world.

I am frequently asked: Why Israel? Why do I so strongly support Israel and the U.S.-Israel alliance? It is because, in Israel, I see a nation and a people who share the same ideals and the same values that we in America have: two societies committed to freedom, committed to democracy, and that understand the need to protect those ideals. Simply put, Mr. Speaker, defending Israel's right to exist is defending the values that we cherish so greatly and our way of life that we hold dear.

So to Prime Minister Netanyahu and to the people of Israel, I wish you all the very best on all that you have accomplished and achieved, and may the Jewish state be blessed with peace and security for many years to come.

I also want to extend a heartfelt thank-you to the Falic family—Simon, Jana, and Tila Falic—for their kind invitation to celebrate this momentous occasion in south Florida. I know how deeply the Falics care for the U.S.-Israel alliance and just how much they have done for that partnership as well as for south Florida's Jewish community, so I am sure that those events were great. Thank you to the Falic family.

I wish all who celebrated this morning at the Hebrew Academy in Miami Beach, located in my congressional district, a very happy new year. I know that last night's ceremony to commemorate Israel's Memorial Day meant so much to the community. How special is it, Mr. Speaker, that Israel commemorates their fallen the night before they celebrate what their fallen helped to establish and to protect?

I hope that all of my colleagues will join me in sending our friends in Israel warm wishes today.

Mazel tov.

CONGRESS' COMMITMENT TO GOVERN

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, yesterday evening I began my remarks by saying, ''Say it is not so''; and I rise again this morning, as we begin our journey on ensuring that the government does not shut down and again rebutting TrumpCare that is so devastating, to say, ''Say it is not so.''

This morning we rose to headlines of the President of the United States saying that the government needs a shutdown in September. I am glad Democrats recognize that we do not represent just Democrats. We represent the entire Nation, and we owe them a commitment to govern, and that is what we will do.

We now will face another attempt to repeal the Affordable Care Act, ObamaCare. I am glad that Democrats have come together around common sense and the responsibility of serving not only the healthy, but the sick.

Last evening, in a very emotional testimony, one of our late-night hosts who entertains America every night, gave an emotional statement about his infant son who was receiving heart surgery. In his tears, his excitement for the success, but also his pain that people who did not have money, as we debate this frivolous healthcare bill, will be subject to the dangers and the devastation and the potential death of a child they love.

Say it is not so.

And I remember when we started the Affordable Care Act, as a member of the Judiciary Committee—all committees were involved in this process. I remember us holding Democratic hearings to listen to families who were suffering and were the brunt of not having health insurance:

The father who had a medical student son who was interning in Atlanta who had to drive with great fury to pick him up to be able to take him back to Washington, D.C., when he had an immediate attack of an appendix,

laying him on his back seat because the insurance that the young man had only covered him in the city of Washington, D.C., where he was going to medical school.

Or I remember the mother whose son was a drug abuser—but a lawyer, got himself back on track but suffered from hepatitis—whose son died in the emergency room because he did not have the medical coverage as he was getting his life back to help stabilize him, died in that medical condition and in that emergency room.

Those are just a few stories of those who died because they did not have health insurance pre the Affordable Care Act.

□ 1015

Now, today we come with a bill that is going to eviscerate the sick people with preexisting diseases—it is not like the Affordable Care Act—and literally throw them under the bus. Because what they are doing is taking away essential services and saying that there is no room at the inn for those with preexisting conditions, such as diabetes, asthma, allergic conditions, heart disease, cancer, leukemia, or a baby that is born with a heart defect.

It is tragic that the bill they are putting on the floor is taking away essential services, like mental health, substance abuse, hospitalization, maternity; and they are throwing them to the States. If your State will do it, so what. I live in a State—as we all do, we love our State—they are facing fiscal crisis.

Do you think they are going to take the sickest?

No, they are not.

Twenty-four million people will still lose their insurance. Hardworking families will have no health insurance. Those with preexisting conditions, under the Trump plan, still remain in the darkness of corners, not helped, and ready to die.

What family wants to subject their loved one to a place where they have no hope?

Then, of course, there is the horrific age tax. The premiums for those between age 50 and 64, hardworking Americans, just because they have reached a certain age, their premiums will shoot through the roof. These are people who have made and built this country with their hands and their minds, our mothers and fathers, and even ourselves. How tragic it is to be able to have these kinds of conditions. Then, of course, it will shorten the life of the Medicare trust and literally implode that.

This is governing?

I don't think so. I don't think so. And I, for one, am not going to stand for it because it is important that our people understand that we govern as Democrats.

As we put this bill on the floor to keep from closing this government, let me just say to you quickly that we have upped the NIH—the National Institutes of Health—with $2 billion. We have preserved the yearlong Pell, and we have funded housing so people don't have to be thrown out of housing.

Mr. Speaker, Democrats know how to govern and save this country. I don't know what this person is doing at all.

CONGRATULATING PENN STATE ON CHILD MALTREATMENT STUDIES CENTER

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, roughly 2 million children experience maltreatment each year in the United States. Children who experience maltreatment face the possibility of a lifetime struggle with mental, emotional, behavioral, and physical health difficulties.

Thankfully, the National Institutes of Health recognizes the need for critical research on the topic and solicited a competitive process to fund an academic institution to study this for the first time ever.

Proudly, it chose Penn State University. Penn State was selected based on scientific merit to establish the Center for Healthy Children. It will receive a grant of $7.7 million over 5 years, and Penn State has committed $3.4 million in funding, bringing the total to more than $11 million.

Mr. Speaker, this is the first national center for child maltreatment studies. The award announcement came in April during National Child Abuse Prevention Month. The research generated will impact lives nationwide and throughout the world.

Penn State president, Eric Barron, noted that they recruited the best and the brightest researchers to work on this issue. The faculty will conduct cutting-edge research focused on the detection, treatment, and prevention of child abuse, and for training the next generation of scientists and child advocates.

Leading the research project is Jennie Noll, professor of human development and family studies at Penn State College of Health and Human Development and director of the Child Maltreatment Solutions Network. A team of distinguished researchers will work with Noll on the project.

Noll said:

''It is an incredible honor to be selected by the NIH as an organization that has the capacity to make a tangible impact on the lives of children. I'm inspired to be working with this incredibly talented group of world-renowned researchers as we forge this vital path ahead.''

Mr. Speaker, more than 1,500 U.S. children die annually from child abuse. That number is similar to the mortality rate from all forms of pediatric cancer combined. Roughly 40 percent of child maltreatment deaths result from abusive head trauma. That is heartbreaking, and it is wrong.

So I congratulate Penn State University for leading the effort nationally to fully research this critical issue. Together, we can help all children see a better future.

THANKING JONI L. IVEY FOR HER SERVICE TO THE CITIZENS OF VIRGINIA'S THIRD CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

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

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a remarkable woman who has dedicated the last 40 years of her life to serving the citizens of the Commonwealth of Virginia—my friend, closest adviser, and chief of staff, Joni Ivey.

Joni was born and raised in Newport News, Virginia. She grew up in Newsome Park and was one of seven children of Willie and Carnetta Ivey. She graduated from Carver High School in 1971, the last graduating class of the segregated high school that was closed when local schools were racially integrated. Joni went on to attend Christopher Newport University and graduated from Norfolk State University.

I first met Joni in 1976, when she was working on Reverend Henry Maxwell's unsuccessful campaign for the Newport News City Council. I was impressed with her work ethic, her dedication to her community, and her political acumen. I was so impressed that I asked her to serve on my first campaign for the House of Delegates in 1977. That started a 40-year friendship and working relationship that took us to the House of Delegates after that election to the Virginia Senate in 1983, and ultimately to the United States Congress in 1993.

Joni has served alongside me every step of the way and has been a selfless, behind-the-scenes public servant for the citizens of Virginia. Serving the public and helping those most in need has always driven her. Her passion in this regard has helped ground me and our staff to focus on what we can do every day we are fortunate enough to be in a position to make better the lives of those we serve.

Joni's commitment to this ideal is not just at work. Joni spends nearly every waking moment of her free time outside of the office helping others, either through her involvement in her church, Ivy Baptist Church in Newport News, or work with the local NAACP where she once served as branch president, by tutoring young people in Newport News, working with the local food bank, or through her service in The Links, Incorporated. Joni has always given back to her community.

Even with all that she does in her community, she always has time for her family. She is a proud aunt to her nieces and nephews, a dedicated daughter to her mother, and a caring sister to her siblings.

Over the last 40 years, she has also mentored hundreds of members of our staff and helped guide them in their careers. Thanks in part to her leadership with my office, a vast majority of our current and former permanent staff members got their start in our office as interns or fellows and grew into talented and instrumental staffers. Joni showed them how they could make a real difference working in government. Her dedication to our staff has helped make me a more effective legislator, and I am forever grateful for that.

Mr. Speaker, Joni LaVerne Ivey retires from her service to the United States House of Representatives and to my office this week. This will be a hard-earned and well-deserved retirement, and I know that she will remain as active in Newport News and around Hampton Roads as she is now, but perhaps a little less restrained now that she no longer has to worry about me or our office.

I know Joni has never sought public recognition for her hard work, but on behalf of our entire current and former staff and the citizens of the Third Congressional District of Virginia, I thank her for her dedicated and selfless service to our community, our Commonwealth, and our Nation.

STRENGTHENING THE PEACE CORPS

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, at the young age of 23, Nick Castle knew he had a higher calling. So directly following his graduation, he headed overseas to China to teach English, volunteering in the Peace Corps.

Sadly, Nick became seriously ill after becoming an ambassador abroad. He was the victim of an inefficient, underequipped, and unresponsive Peace Corps-led medical team in China.

After he reported that he was ill, he was prescribed a broad antibiotic. Nick quickly began to experience drastic weight loss, but he was reassured he was okay. As the weeks progressed, he was confined to his bed, too ill to even stand up. But his doctor never recommended that he go to the hospital.

After experiencing dangerously low blood pressure, Nick was finally sent to a hospital. As the ambulance made its way to him, it got lost on the winding roads in the remote area of China. Before the ambulance could get Nick to the hospital, he stopped breathing. Nick died a few weeks later in early 2013.

A 2014 Peace Corps Inspector General report found that Nick was the victim of medical negligence. ''Failures and delays in treatment'' were exposed, ultimately leading to Nick's death. Investigations revealed that the Peace Corps medical team misdiagnosed his illness.

This heartbreaking death of a young man serving our country and the world could have been avoided had the Peace Corps staff been properly trained, equipped, and had a responsive team.

Unfortunately, Nick's case is representative of a broader problem: Peace Corps volunteers struggle to access quality medical treatment when they are abroad in remote areas of the world. And when they return to America, then they face a red-taped, bureaucratic nightmare.

They are covered by the Peace Corps for 3 months while they wait on the Department of Labor to determine that their illnesses or injuries are service-related. But the Department often takes much longer than 3 months to make that determination, forcing those Peace Corps volunteers to pay out of pocket for costly medical expenses. When attempting to get medical coverage through the Department of Labor, many are faced with costly personal expenses.

So, Mr. Speaker, Congressman KENNEDY and I have sponsored H.R. 2259, the Sam Farr Peace Corps Enhancement Act. Sam Farr was a Peace Corps volunteer and a Member of Congress. This act seeks to improve and strengthen the health, safety, and well-being of current and returning Peace Corps volunteers. It requires that Peace Corps volunteers have access to a qualified Peace Corps medical officer and medical facilities while they are at posts overseas. And when those volunteers return home, it extends their Peace Corps coverage for up to 6 months while they wait on the Department of Labor to determine coverage. It enhances access to health care for returning Peace Corps volunteers as well, and it expands and improves provisions of the Kate Puzey Peace Corps Volunteer Protection Act, enhancing the ability to assist and protect volunteers that have experienced sexual assault, among other issues, while in lands across the seas.

Mr. Speaker, Peace Corps volunteers are America's angels abroad. They are some of the best that we have. They are the spirit of humanitarian assistance. They work in remote areas of the world helping others—areas of the world that many Americans can't find on a map.

So America must make sure to take care of these amazing people when they serve in lands far away so that there are no more deaths like Nick Castle's.

And that is just the way it is.

RECOGNIZING PENN MEDICINE'S MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS

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

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the incredible actions of a group of individuals in my community.

On April 3, 2017, an amazing physician and amazing mother, Amy Reed, experienced what should have been a catastrophic cardiac arrest at Penn Medicine's community radiology center in Yardley, Pennsylvania. Yet, because of the amazing efforts of a series of professionals, Amy survived this event.

I would like to recognize the following individuals:

The advanced life support paramedics from the Yardley-Newtown area, Mr. Mark Horner and Mr. Chris Adams;

St. Mary Medical Center's cardiac surgeon, Dr. Veluz, and the entire cardiac surgery, anesthesia, and perfusion team at the St. Mary Medical Center in Langhorne, Pennsylvania;

The PennSTAR trauma critical care air rescue helicopter crew, Ms. Shiloh Kramer, Mr. John Goddard, and Mr. George Huey;

Cardiac critical care nurses, Ms. Coleen Nicolosi, Ms. Darian Parkinson, and Ms. Laura Glorioso-Moyer, who took intensive care of Dr. Reed in her initial resuscitation.

Thereafter, a corps of highly specialized surgical critical care nurses played an intensive role in her ongoing recovery. Mr. David Alfano, Ms. Carrie Brewster, Ms. Rachael Coyle, Ms. Catherine DeLaurentis, Mr. Michael Duca, Ms. Christina Felix, Ms. Cortney Johnson, Ms. Anita McAlee, Ms. Erin McCormick, Mr. Sebastian Romagnano, Ms. Lina Sivadasan, Ms. Christine Steffon, Ms. Joann Vernon, Ms. Gina Vizzarri, Ms. Meghan Welsh, and Ms. Danielle Wright all are to be commended for their professionalism and extreme skill in recovering Dr. Reed and giving her a second chance at life.

After 5 days in a coma, Amy has emerged and is neurologically intact. The actions of these professionals led to Amy's life being saved. Their conduct can only be characterized as heroic.

Amy is loved by family and many friends in Bucks County, and by many thousands more across the United States for her role as a champion and a spokeswoman for women's health and patient safety. And because of the efforts of the medical professionals who saved her life, I have the opportunity to continue working with Amy to advance her crucial mission.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 31 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

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

PRAYER

Reverend Ric Metzgar, Sr., The Church of God, Essex, Maryland, offered the following prayer:

My heavenly Father, You are the composer of my life. Thank you for orchestrating my direction today.

I recognize You as the source of life and love. Hear the prayers of this House, both for the good of the Nation and the good of humanity and around the world. Help this House to discern Your will in our day.

Strengthen all of us and help us to show forth the fruits of Your spirit of love, joy, peace, and generosity as we go about our work. Grant us a spirit of compassion and cooperation.

We ask Your blessings for all those who have chosen to take up this difficult task of governing, not only those who are elected but also those who serve as staffers, interns, and volunteers here and around our great Nation.

We look to Your Scriptures that tell us ''Balance and scales belong to the Lord; all weights of justice belong to You.'' And as Jeremiah 29:7 exhorts us to:

> Seek the peace of the city and our Nation. Pray to the Lord for it; for in its peace, you will have peace.

May the peace that passes all understanding guide our hearts and our minds in the days to come.

This we pray in Your matchless name, thanking You for being the architect of our lives.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER. The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

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

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. KENNEDY 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.

WELCOMING REVEREND RIC METZGAR, SR.

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. RUPPERSBERGER) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to introduce and welcome to Washington, Maryland State Delegate Ric Metzgar, a friend for a long time, Second District resident, who has been representing eastern Baltimore County in the Maryland General Assembly since 2015. He has been serving his community far longer.

Delegate Metzgar has lived in Essex for most of his life, graduating from Kenwood High School before attending Northwest Bible College. His father worked for the Glenn L. Martin airplane community, and his mother owned a drycleaning business.

Delegate Metzgar managed a local car dealership and a diner, and, as an ordained minister, he has served as a ministry leader and Sunday school director for several local churches. He founded Gateway Pastors and Churches Association.

In Annapolis, Delegate Metzgar serves on the Health and Government Operations Committee as well as the Maryland Veterans Caucus. His volunteer efforts within his community are unending.

Delegate Metzgar has long served as chair of the Essex Christmas parade and co-chair of the massive Essex Day Festival. He is a member of the board of directors for the Heritage Society of Essex and Middle River.

Delegate Metzgar is married with two children and two grandchildren. I am honored to call Delegate Metzgar a friend and constituent of the Second Congressional District of Maryland, and I offer sincere thanks on behalf of this entire body for his delivery of today's opening player.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky). The Chair will entertain up to 15 further requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

NATIONAL SMALL BUSINESS WEEK

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, this week marks National Small Business Week, a time to recognize the remarkable contributions small businesses make creating jobs.

In South Carolina, small businesses represent 99 percent of our State's businesses, employing 47 percent of our citizens. I am grateful for the input from the National Federation of Independent Business, NFIB, led by Ben Homeyer; the State Chamber of Commerce led by Ted Pitts; and local chambers from Barnwell to Blythewood and from North Augusta to northeast Columbia, promoting every corner of the district.

When I meet with members of the small-business community of South Carolina, I learn how government regulations and government overreach threaten their businesses and reduce job opportunities.

I support President Trump's commitment to creating jobs and how, in only 100 days, his administration has proven to be a champion of small business by cutting harmful regulations and outlining tax reform.

I appreciate the leadership of the small-business administrator, Linda McMahon, and her advocacy for the 29 small businesses nationwide.

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

NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH FUNDING

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

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, President Trump wanted to cut $1.2 billion from the National Institutes of Health and the National Cancer Institute. Instead, Congress will exert its independence by rejecting the President's cut and will instead increase National Institutes of Health's funding by $2 billion.

My community of Buffalo, New York, is home to America's first cancer center, Roswell Park Cancer Institute. Roswell Park is a national leader in NIH-funded research for immunotherapy.

Immunotherapy uses drugs and vaccines to unleash the cancer-killing potential of the body's own immune system. Immunotherapy has the potential for longer remission and is an alternative to debilitating chemotherapy.

Because of this congressional action, Roswell Park Cancer Institute's clinical trials and immunotherapy will continue, and the potential for tens of millions more in NIH research funding over the next 5 years is a reality.

This is good for the good that it will do in advancing this promising research and is good for Buffalo and the continued growth of the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus.

VETERANS ADMINISTRATION WHISTLEBLOWER

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, according to Kuauhtemoc Rodriguez,

called K-Rod, a VA employee at the medical center in Phoenix, Arizona—yes, that famous VA hospital—he has been threatened and harassed by the VA for speaking up about excessive wait times for vets to see doctors.

In October of 2016, the VA's inspector general released a report of misconduct on the Phoenix hospital based on information provided by Mr. Rodriguez. Mr. Rodriguez alleged that more than 90 veterans had been waiting over 400 days to see a doctor, 5 of whom died before they could see the doctor. These accusations are very disturbing.

But Mr. Rodriguez' discovery did not earn him a medal or a plaque, just threats and harassment by the VA. They even moved his desk to a closet.

There are many folks at the VA who genuinely care about our veterans in this country, like K-Rod, but there seems to be a culture problem at the VA that must be addressed from the top down.

Fix the problem rather than attack whistleblowers. No veteran should ever wait to see a doctor for over a year. That is shameful.

And that is just the way it is.

FULLY CODIFYING CIVIL RIGHTS PROTECTIONS FOR THE LGBTQ COMMUNITY

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

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, I stand proudly today with my colleagues to reintroduce the Equality Act, a bill that would finally fully codify civil rights protections for the LGBTQ community.

It is unthinkable to me that this bill finds opposition in this Chamber, where we stand less than a mile from a sacred American promise that is etched in stone above the doors of the Supreme Court: ''Equal justice under law.'' There is no asterisk. There is no condition or compromise. No caveat. It is a promise that is afforded to each of us; that no one—man, woman, political candidate, or President—can look us in the eye and say that you do not count or you are unworthy.

Some of the most shameful moments of our Nation's history have come when we have broken that promise, when we say that everyone matters except you. Every life counts except yours.

It is time for this body to take a stand and say everyone counts in this country today, on our watch today.

ACKNOWLEDGING THE IMPORTANT ROLE SMALL BUSINESSES PLAY IN OUR COMMUNITIES

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today during Small Business Week to acknowledge the important role small businesses play in our communities nationwide. I am proud to be the product of a small-business family.

Small businesses are responsible for creating 63 percent of new jobs, and they employ more than 47 percent of the employees in the private sector.

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is also marking the week with events hosted by the Small Business Development Center. From workshops to webinars, there is information for those looking to start a small business and those looking to grow their businesses. Even long-time small-business owners can get advice on how to continue to thrive or find a renewed sense of direction.

Pennsylvania Small Business Week recognizes the significant contributions of our small businesses and highlights the resources available to support their growth in the Keystone State.

The Nation has celebrated Small Business Week each year since 1963. I would like to congratulate all the small-business owners for the role they play in employing our neighbors, serving our communities, and creating two out of every three new jobs in the United States.

HONORING THE BROTHERS OF KAPPA ALPHA PSI

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

Mr. LAWSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the brothers of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Incorporated, during their annual James ''Biff'' Carter Kappas on Capitol Hill Legislative Policy Conference.

Each year, donning their crimson blazers, they come to Capitol Hill to raise awareness around many of the key issues facing the African-American and other communities in this country.

Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity represents over 150,000 members from all 50 states, several U.S. territories, and six countries around the globe. These distinguished men of achievement are leaders in their respected communities, in the boardrooms, classrooms and academia, public service, and every field of human endeavor.

Today, it is with great humility and commitment to improving our communities that my brothers in the bond come to Washington for the Kappas on Capitol Hill Legislative Policy Conference.

As I see the brothers in their red blazers walk these hallowed halls, bringing their professional expertise, wisdom gained through experience, and passion for their communities to Washington, my heart beams with pride.

Mr. Speaker, now, more than ever, we need leaders in our communities to raise their voices to raise awareness about the issues that are confronting our communities back home. Today, I am proud of my brothers in Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Incorporated, for coming to Congress today to ensure that we never forget how decisions on issues like health care, higher education, job creation, and veteran benefits are affecting our communities at home.

RECOGNIZING 93Q MORNING DJ KEVIN KLINE

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

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I have had many heroes since I moved to Houston: Neil Armstrong, Earl Campbell, Nolan Ryan. My newest hero is a good friend, 93Q morning disc jockey Kevin Kline.

Kevin and his wife, Trish, have watched a teenage friend, Chelsey, die from cancer. They turned that pain into extreme good. They started the Snowdrop Foundation to stop kids dying from cancer like Chelsey. They have used long runs to raise over $1 million for Snowdrop.

Movie hero Forrest Gump ran for 3 years, 2 months, and 15 days. Recently in Italy, our real-life hero Kevin ran for 178.5 miles in 47 hours and 28 minutes.

Naval aviators are given call signs. Tom Cruise was Maverick. I was Pistol. By the powers vested in me by the 93Q's Tim Tuttle and Erica Rico, Kevin Kline's on-air call sign is now and forever Gump Man.

I hope Gump Man is smiling. I know Chelsey and her friends are smiling in heaven.

□ 1215

NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH FUNDING

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

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, recently I met with leaders of the San Diego medical research community who had a unified message: We need to end the cuts in research that have slowed medical innovation for the last decade.

This year I was proud to lead the bipartisan effort, along with over 200 of my colleagues, to push for an additional $2 billion in funding for the National Institutes of Health.

This is a very personal issue. Almost all of us know someone who is struggling with a disease where NIH funding is used to find a cure. That person could be a mother, father, family friend, or even more heart-wrenching, a child.

I am thrilled that the spending bill before us this week avoids the cuts proposed by President Trump and actually increases NIH funding by $2 billion. We have seen what can happen when leadership takes a bipartisan approach: top priorities like medical research actually get funded.

This isn't the bill that I would have written, but it is a compromise that I am very happy to vote for. Let's hope that Speaker RYAN has learned from this experience and will work with us on health care, on transportation, and other priorities moving forward.

TRIBUTE TO MAJOR JOHN JACOBSON

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

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember the life of a true American hero, a dedicated veteran, and a successful businessman.

Major John Jacobson enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1940 and fought in World War II, where he served as quartermaster to General George Patton.

After his military career, he moved to Kansas and built a Fortune 500 company and became a leader in the meatpacking industry.

After retiring and moving to coastal Alabama in 1999, Major Jacobson became a local celebrity. Mr. Jack, as he was affectionately known, spent much of his time working with local veterans organizations where he would speak with school groups about World War II and the sacrifice our veterans make.

Sadly, he recently passed away at the age of 106, making him one of the country's oldest World War II veterans.

Mr. Speaker, all you need to know about Major Jacobson is that he lived his life by a simple motto: Another day to live is another day to serve.

To his family, thank you for sharing Mr. Jack with all of us. He made our community, the United States, and the world a better place.

ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF THE MODERN STATE OF ISRAEL

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

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 69th anniversary of the founding of the modern State of Israel. Like our own country, our friend and ally has a deep commitment to meeting human needs around the world.

Throughout its history, Israel has been a leader in humanitarian assistance. Israel established the very first field hospital in Haiti after the devastating earthquake in 2010 and rebuilt villages ravaged by cyclones in Fiji. Israel sent over 100 tons of supplies to aid Indonesia and Sri Lanka after the 2004 tsunami, and dispatched doctors to Greece to care for refugees fleeing the horrors of war in Syria.

When Israeli soldiers reported wounded Syrians arriving at their border, medics from the Israeli military were dispatched and over 3,000 Syrians were treated by Israeli doctors.

Today, as we celebrate Israel's proud history and the bond between our nations, we are reminded of the importance of looking beyond our own borders and our proud shared history of welcoming those fleeing persecution from all around the globe. We renew our shared commitment to helping those in need in every corner of the world.

COMMUNITY BANKS: THE HUB OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

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

Mr. ARRINGTON. Mr. Speaker, community banks are an integral part of Main Street America, making up over 50 percent of banks and rural communities like the ones I represent. They are indeed the hub of economic activity for west Texas. They employ nearly 20,000 folks in my district and provide vital services to families, small businesses, and ag producers.

Why in the world do we want to hamstring them with onerous and unnecessary regulations that make it harder for them to serve their communities?

That is exactly what I believe we have done with Dodd-Frank.

Each day that goes by, another community bank goes out of business. As many of my colleagues have pointed out, Dodd-Frank didn't end too big to fail, but it did create too small to succeed.

Dodd-Frank didn't protect consumers. It created new layers of bureaucracy, paperwork, confusion, and limited services for consumers.

Mr. Speaker, it is time that Congress act on this opportunity to pass the CHOICE Act before it is too late for our community banks and for our rural communities to choose between relationship banking and transactional banking.

COMBATING OPIOID CRISIS

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

Ms. TSONGAS. Mr. Speaker, Police Chief William Taylor of my hometown of Lowell, Massachusetts, said:

''Each day two to three people overdose from opioids in Lowell. . . . The introduction of illicit fentanyl has been the game changer. . . . ''

In 2015, Massachusetts ranked second nationally per capita in deaths from synthetic opioids like fentanyl, which can be up to 50 times stronger than heroin. But Massachusetts is far from alone. Between 2014 and 2015, nationwide deaths involving synthetic opioids tragically rose 72 percent.

That is why I partnered with Representative BRIAN FITZPATRICK to introduce the INTERDICT Act, which would provide U.S. Customs and Border Protection with enhanced chemical screening devices and scientific support to detect and intercept synthetic opioids like fentanyl.

I thank Representative FITZPATRICK and our Senate counterparts for their partnership, and I urge all our colleagues to support the INTERDICT Act.

To effectively combat the nationwide opioid crisis requires a comprehensive, cooperative, fully funded effort. The INTERDICT Act would be a powerful tool in eliminating synthetic opioids from the equation.

KAPPA DAY ON THE HILL

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

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, more than ever before, we need leaders from across the Nation to raise our voices, elevate our awareness, and come to Washington, as stated in the First Amendment, to petition the government for a redress of our grievances.

Now, more than ever, we need the people most affected by the decisions that are being made in this hallowed place, the people's House, and at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue to make sure that this representative government is indeed being held accountable for both its actions and inactions.

On this special day, I am proud of my brothers in Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, and I am honored to welcome them back to Washington for their annual visit.

I stand with my brothers to ensure that we never forget how our decisions on issues like health care, education, housing, jobs, voting rights, and even the use of military force are more than just political or policy judgments. They have life-and-death consequences for real people in the communities that we represent and across this great country as well.

I thank my Kappa brothers for their steadfast friendship, support, and devotion to advancing freedom and equality for every American.

KAPPAS ON THE HILL

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

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize my brothers of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Incorporated, during the annual James ''Biff'' Carter Kappas on the Capitol Hill Legislative Policy Conference. I knew Biff Carter personally.

Each year, Kappas from all over the country flock to Capitol Hill to raise awareness around the key issues that are affecting our communities. These men are leaders in religious, business, legal, academia, and community service institutions, as well as others.

Mr. Speaker, I have committed my life to public service for over 52 years. I have been honored to serve my constituents in this esteemed body. But one of my proudest moments in public service is when I committed myself to a life of honorable achievement in

every field of human endeavor—the day I joined Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Incorporated.

Today I am proud as I see brothers in their red blazers walk these hallowed Halls, bringing their professional expertise and wisdom gained through experience and passion for their communities to Washington, D.C., the Nation, and the world.

REMEMBERING FORMER BOULDER CITY MAYOR ROBERT STANLEY FERRARO

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

Ms. ROSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember and commemorate the life of Robert Stanley Ferraro, a pillar in our community and one of the longest serving public officials in Nevada history who passed away last week at the age of 81.

Robert Ferraro served on the Boulder City Council for 31 years and was Boulder City's first elected mayor, and successfully stood for election nine times. He knocked on every voter's door and provided leadership to one of the most unique communities in our State.

Bob led the effort to maintain Boulder City's character as a special community and to be the clean, green Boulder City that many of my constituents call home and thousands visit each year.

He was named Nevada Public Official of the Year in 1986, Community Leader of the Year in 2001, and led a life that was a true American success story coming from humble beginnings to being one of the great civic leaders of our State.

Bob will be greatly missed, and my thoughts and prayers are with his family and friends today.

HONORING THE LIFE OF REVEREND DR. NORMAN LEE ROBINSON

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

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Reverend Dr. N.L. Robinson, the longtime pastor of Mount Olive Baptist Church who passed away last Friday.

Reverend Robinson proudly served our Nation in the Army during World War II and was honorably discharged on November 25, 1945. It was during his time of service that he found spiritual enlightenment in Jesus Christ and his passion to serve the community.

After leaving the Army, Reverend Robinson worked for the Dallas Housing Authority from 1946 until he retired in 1976.

A graduate of the Southern Bible Institute of Dallas, Dr. Robinson began his ministry at St. John Missionary Baptist Church in Grand Prairie in 1962, and he was also the pastor very briefly at the Lucille Baptist Church in Palmer, Texas, before jointing Mount Olive in 1966.

Under his guidance, Mount Olive grew to become a 12,000-member church. I will tell you, Mr. Speaker, that everybody, from the workers that built the cars at the General Motors plant in Arlington to one of the past mayors of Arlington, has been a member at that church throughout time.

I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the life of Reverend N.L. Robinson, whose spiritual leadership touched so many lives in the Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington community.

□ 1230

SMALL BUSINESSES ARE THE ECONOMIC ENGINES OF OUR ECONOMY

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

Ms. ADAMS. Mr. Speaker, small businesses are the economic engines of our economy.

There are over 800,000 small businesses in North Carolina, generating $800 million annually, accounting for half of all private sector employment in our State, and regularly creating more than 20,000 jobs a year.

We have seen a 38 percent increase in minority-owned businesses in the last decade, and across the U.S., 85 million people rely on 25 million small businesses for employment.

As vice ranking member of the Small Business Committee and ranking member on the Investigations, Oversight and Regulations Subcommittee, I recognize the impact that small businesses have on our communities. Lawmakers must continue to encourage innovation and support legislation that allows local companies to grow.

I am proud to introduce the Score Act of 2017 during the 54th annual National Small Business Week, legislation that authorizes the SCORE program, connecting experienced businessowners with budding entrepreneurs for advice and mentorship, and it ensures its funding for at least 3 years.

Small businesses make the American Dream possible, and I am committed to standing up and speaking out on their behalf.

KAPPAS DAY ON THE HILL

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

Mr. MCEACHIN. Mr. Speaker, I, too, rise today to recognize my brothers of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Incorporated, during the annual James ''Biff'' Carter Kappas on Capitol Hill Legislative Policy Conference.

Each year, my brothers come to Capitol Hill with their crimson blazers to raise awareness around the key issues that affect our communities.

I had the privilege of joining this noble clan of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Incorporated, right here in Washington, D.C., at American University, where we chartered the Kappa Chi chapter of the Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity. It was in the fall of 1980 that I was allowed to cross the burning sands and commit myself to a life of honorable achievement in every field of human endeavor.

Mr. Speaker, today I am proud because now, more than ever, we need the leaders in our communities to raise their voices, raise awareness, and come to Washington, D.C., as advocates on behalf of their communities, as it says in the First Amendment, ''to petition the government for a redress of their grievances.''

I am proud of the brothers of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Incorporated, for coming to Congress today, as they do each spring.

DISCRIMINATION IS WRONG

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

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, today I am proud to help bring forth the Equality Act, with 194 original cosponsors on both sides of the aisle. The principle behind the Equality Act is simple: discrimination is wrong, no matter what form it takes, no matter who it targets.

This is a principle that Americans overwhelmingly choose to embrace and live by. We see it in the way we treat our LGBT employees, friends, neighbors, and family. It is apparent in the outpouring of joy and celebration we witnessed at the Supreme Court's historic marriage equality ruling 2 years ago.

But sadly, our laws have not yet caught up with our values. It is still legal in a majority of States to fire somebody just because they are gay. That is not just a theoretical concern. It means real harm and real hardship for countless Americans.

For LGBT Americans who are fired or turned away from a doctor's office or told they are not wanted in their neighborhood, many of them have nowhere to go for legal recourse. We are better than that as a nation. It is time we showed that.

We are a nation that prides ourselves on our commitment to equality under the law. So I call upon this Congress to pass the Equality Act and put an end to legal discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender Americans once and for all.

RESIGNATION AS MEMBER OF COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following resignation as a member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, May 2, 2017.

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

DEAR SPEAKER RYAN: Respectfully, I write to tender my resignation as a member of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce. It has been an honor to serve in this capacity.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

STEVEN D. RUSSELL,
Member of Congress.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the resignation is accepted.

There was no objection.

ELECTING A MEMBER TO CERTAIN STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the House Republican Conference, I offer a privileged resolution and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 303

Resolved, That the following named Member be, and is hereby, elected to the following standing committees of the House of Representatives:

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE: Mr. Estes of Kansas.

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS: Mr. Estes of Kansas.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1180, WORKING FAMILIES FLEXIBILITY ACT OF 2017; PROVIDING FOR PROCEEDINGS DURING THE PERIOD FROM MAY 5, 2017, THROUGH MAY 15, 2017; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 299 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 299

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 1180) to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to provide compensatory time for employees in the private sector. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. In lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Education and the Workforce now printed in the bill, an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 115-15 shall be considered as adopted. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended, are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill, as amended, and on any further amendment thereto, to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce; and (2) one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

SEC. 2. On any legislative day during the period from May 5, 2017, through May 15, 2017—

(a) the Journal of the proceedings of the previous day shall be considered as approved; and

(b) the Chair may at any time declare the House adjourned to meet at a date and time, within the limits of clause 4, section 5, article I of the Constitution, to be announced by the Chair in declaring the adjournment.

SEC. 3. The Speaker may appoint Members to perform the duties of the Chair for the duration of the period addressed by section 2 of this resolution as though under clause 8(a) of rule I.

SEC. 4. It shall be in order at any time on the legislative day of May 4, 2017, or May 5, 2017, for the Speaker to entertain motions that the House suspend the rules as though under clause 1 of rule XV. The Speaker or his designee shall consult with the Minority Leader or her designee on the designation of any matter for consideration pursuant to this section.

SEC. 5. The requirement of clause 6(a) of rule XIII for a two-thirds vote to consider a report from the Committee on Rules on the same day it is presented to the House is waived with respect to any resolution reported through the legislative day of May 5, 2017.

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

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. POLIS), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 299 provides for the consideration of H.R. 1180, the Working Families Flexibility Act. This resolution provides for a closed rule since no amendments were submitted to the Rules Committee.

Mr. Speaker, the workforce of the 21st century is a lot different from the workforce of the thirties and forties when many of our Nation's labor laws were first written. As such, many of these laws are outdated and out of touch with the realities facing today's workers.

For example, in nearly half of two-parent households, both Mom and Dad work full time. That is up from roughly 30 percent in 1970. Meanwhile, millennials now represent the majority of the workforce.

Given the changes in the workforce, there are new challenges related to the work-family balance. From children's field trips, to taking care of an elderly family member, to a single parent juggling different tasks while their spouse is on a military deployment, the demands are greater than ever. That is where the Working Families Flexibility Act comes in.

This commonsense bill would improve the quality of life for many hard-working men and women by removing outdated Federal restrictions imposed solely on the private sector.

Already, workers in the public sector at the Federal, State, and local level have the ability to take comp time in lieu of overtime pay if they prefer. This bill would give that same option to workers in the private sector.

Here is how it would work. An employee and their employer would come together and mutually agree to enter an arrangement where the employee would receive time and a half in time off or comp time instead of time-and-a-half overtime pay. In other words, employees would have the choice between paid time off and cash wages for working overtime.

As I mentioned, this provision is already available for workers in the public sector. That is because, in 1985, Congress amended the Fair Labor Standards Act to give public sector employees greater flexibility. In fact, in a report filed by the House Education and the Workforce Committee more than 30 years ago, our Democratic colleagues wrote that this change in law recognized the ''mutual benefits'' of comp time for State and local governments and outlined the ''freedom and flexibility'' comp time would offer public sector workers.

Shouldn't workers in the private sector be entitled to the same freedom and flexibility given to government workers?

Now, I know some of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle will say this bill is somehow bad for workers. That could not be further from the truth. Let me clear up some of the false information put out by union bosses and special interest groups.

First, this proposal is completely voluntary. Both an employee and an employer would have to agree to a comp time agreement, and their agreement would have to be put in writing.

Second, no employer can coerce or intimidate their employees into taking comp time. An employee who feels they have been mistreated can file a charge with the Department of Labor, at no cost, or they can bring their own legal action. Employers who take advantage of their employees would face the same penalties as they would for other wage violations.

Now, as a labor and employment attorney, I have been a part of these kind of legal matters in the past, and I can honestly say that no sensible employer would take advantage of an employee and risk double damages, exorbitant attorney fees, and a legal battle with the Federal Government.

Third, employees have control over when to use their comp time, as long as reasonable notice is given and the request doesn't unduly disrupt the workplace. This is the same standard used in the public sector, and it is the same standard used under the Family and Medical Leave Act. I imagine it is also

the same standard used in each of our congressional offices.

Fourth, this bill includes a 5-year sunset that would require Congress to come back and reaffirm this law after reviewing the impact of comp time. This would give us the ability to change the law based on the real-world impact.

Fifth, the bill would set the maximum comp time accrual amount at 160 hours, which is less than what is allowed in the public sector. This provision was actually included after Democrats expressed concerns that workers would accrue too much comp time.

Sixth, an employee has the right to cash out their comp time at any time and for any reason. This is a decision that the employee alone can make. Additionally, at the end of the year, employees would receive a cash payment for any unused hours.

Finally, this is not a far-fetched or radical idea. In fact, President Bill Clinton had his own comp time proposal during his Presidency.

So this bill is great for workers and actually gives them greater choice and flexibility in the workplace. In fact, our committee, the Committee on Education and the Workforce, heard a real-life example of how comp time would make life easier for families during a recent hearing on the bill. We heard about a clerical worker for a mental health company who recently found out she was pregnant and was putting in a lot of overtime during a transition to a new computer system. This mom-to-be simply wanted to waive the overtime pay and, instead, be credited the time for maternity leave.

As her human resources professional testified: ''I had to explain to her that we were unable to do so because it was against the law. It was difficult conveying this message to this single mom-to-be who felt she should be allowed the option to choose for herself whether to take the overtime pay or paid leave when her child was born.''

□ 1245

That is why this bill is necessary, for people like this working mom. That is how this bill will make a real difference.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I know comp time won't work for every worker or family, so if an employee wants to continue receiving time-and-a-half overtime pay, then they can continue to do so and this bill will have no impact on them. But this bill would create a new option for employees to better meet the needs of the 21st century workforce. Workers today want and need the type of freedom and flexibility that this bill provides. This bill would allow a working mom or dad to put in a little extra time at work in order to have that time off to attend a child's baseball game, dance recital, or field trip. This is all about freedom, flexibility, fairness, and choice.

Certainly, more work and changes will be needed as we adapt to the workforce of the 21st century, and I look forward to learning more about proposals from my colleagues on the other side of the aisle. But the simple fact that there are other proposals out there should not stop us from passing this commonsense bill to give working families the flexibility they need and deserve.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support House Resolution 299 and the underlying bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Over the last several months, I have heard from thousands of my constituents over the phone, by email, and record numbers at townhalls. Frankly, the overwhelming message is frustration with the Trump administration and Republicans in Congress—no calls to pass this bill, which every group that advocates for workers' rights and unions opposes. The people in my district say that, to the contrary, Republicans continue to put the priorities of the few over the priorities of hard-working Americans.

People are frustrated that, instead of working with Democrats, Republicans are focused on gutting healthcare coverage, increasing premiums, and stripping away workers' rights. People in my district, across my State, and across the country are worried. The members of our immigrant community—our neighbors, family, and friends—will continue to be demonized by the President of the United States. So while I don't expect this kind of rhetoric or policies to change overnight, I feel it is important to share these concerns with this body.

Now, earlier this week, frankly, I was encouraged. There were some signs of positivity. Congressional Democrats and Republicans announced a bipartisan funding bill through the end of the year that shows a bright spot of what we can do together when we try. I hope we can all agree that a government shutdown would be catastrophic. In my district alone, I am reminded of the devastating impact of congressional inaction when I hosted a townhall in Estes Park just last week. The government shutdown in 2013, right during tourist season, cost our small and vibrant town nearly half a million dollars in tax revenue and millions of dollars in sales, threatening the existence of many Main Street businesses that rely on that tourism revenue and keeping Rocky Mountain National Park open. Estes Park sits at the entrance of Rocky Mountain National Park, and Rocky Mountain National Park was closed for most of the 16-day shutdown a few years ago.

But somehow, despite those obvious economic indicators in jobs, Donald Trump tweeted just this morning that our country ''needs a good shutdown.''

What does that even mean?

We need a good shutdown like we need a root canal. It would put people in my district out of work and cost the private sector millions of jobs.

But I am hopeful now that we will avoid a shutdown; that, thankfully, the spending bill, through 2017, prohibits funding on a new border wall. It minimizes cuts to the Environmental Protection Agency, allowing them to continue their work to keep our air and our water clean; and Planned Parenthood will continue to receive Federal funding.

Now, that being said, of course, that budget isn't perfect, and we will have the chance to debate it on the floor. The Republicans insist on massive government deficit spending for increased military spending that digs our mountain of debt for the next generation even bigger. The tax-and-spend Republicans continue to spend hand over fist and increase the deficit at the cost of the next generation of Americans.

Now, the bill before us, the Working Families Flexibility Act, is another example of Republicans putting ideology and special interests over the needs of workers and American families. The trend isn't new. It comes out of the typical playbook we have seen for decades.

In fact, this very bill has been introduced multiple times over the past 22 years, never with any success. Nearly identical bills were introduced in 1995, 1997, 1999, 2001, 2003, 2008, 2009, 2013, 2015, and now 2017. That is 10 times over 22 years. Each time, the bill never becomes law, and it won't become law now either. But that is how the Republicans want to spend their time in this body when we actually have important things to discuss that could become law, like fixing our broken immigration system.

This bill somehow claims to provide employees with more flexibility, but the only flexibility are for the bosses. Instead of receiving overtime, workers would receive comp time; so their paychecks won't get anything out of extra time worked. It is important to note that this legislation applies to the private sector and only to employees subject to overtime provisions in the Fair Labor Standards Act. The current overtime threshold is set at just under $24,000, so only employees that make less than $24,000 are affected by this bill. We have tried mightily to increase that threshold to keep up with inflation, but we have met resistance by the Republicans every step of the way.

In 2017, the Federal poverty level for a family of four is about $24,000. So we are talking about only giving overtime to families that are below the poverty level. These families rely on that overtime to pay their bills, to pay their rent, and to put food on the table. These are the families who would benefit most from receiving overtime pay. In fact, a recent study by the Economic Policy Institute showed that 40 percent of people making less than $22,500 a year worked some overtime hours and needed that income to get by. This same 40 percent are the very people

who would lose out under the Republican bill today.

My Republican colleagues claim that no one is forcing workers to accept comp time instead of overtime pay, and comp time is technically optional. But this argument represents how out of touch Republicans are with the real-life workforce conditions and actual working families.

In practice, the power differential between employers and employees means that many employees would feel obligated to accept comp time instead of overtime pay, even if that is not what works best for them. Especially in nonunion workplaces, employees could feel pressure to go along with their employers' demand or risk not even being offered overtime or comp time in the future.

Now, Republicans have also made the argument that public sector workers receive comp time. They are right. But that is not apples to apples. Public sector union membership is around 34 percent, and public sector employees have vast protections that private sector employees lack. As an example, public sector workers can't be fired except for good cause, and they have administrative appeal rights. They can't be discriminated against based on their desire to take overtime pay instead of comp time. Nonunionized private sector workers can be legally discriminated against in assigning their hours based on their decisions to take comp time versus overtime pay.

If the Republicans want to enlarge this discussion to include providing additional workplace protections to workers in the private sector, we are happy to have that discussion both on the committee where I serve with my colleague, Mr. BYRNE, as well as on the floor of the House.

Republicans somehow argue that this bill provides flexibility for workers to get time off, but I will remind my colleagues that nothing in the current Fair Labor Standards Act prevents employers from offering time off right now. In fact, the Fair Labor Standards Act allows the ultimate flexibility. Employers can already provide paid or unpaid leave on sick days, maternity, and paternity under the FLSA. They don't need this legislation to provide them flexibility. They just need to do the right thing.

This bill also ignores the fact that not all businesses are successful. Before coming to Congress, I started several businesses. I know this firsthand. A statistic is that 59 percent of restaurant businesses go out of business within 3 years. I am zero for two. I tried starting two restaurants. They both failed. Maybe that means if I try again someday, I will be finally due for a success.

But what is important is that when something goes out of business, we don't leave the employees in the lurch. What you are effectively doing here by deferring the overtime pay into potential future time off, if the company goes out of business, that employee would have to get in line with other creditors and risk never being paid. That is not a theoretical risk. The majority of new businesses don't last 10 years. They go out of business. Depriving people of the payment for the work they have done already is not the right way to treat workers in those businesses, and it is not their fault when the bad decision is made by their bosses.

In our committee markup of the bill, my Democratic colleagues offered a number of amendments to improve the legislation. Representative BONAMICI offered an amendment that would allow comp time to earn interest before workers' use. Under the current way this bill is written, low-wage workers are being asked to give an interest-free loan to the company. That doesn't make sense. The amendment didn't pass. If employees receive overtime pay, they should receive interest on it as well.

Representative WILSON offered an amendment that would exempt workers who are earning less than 2½ times the minimum wage, so the employees earning the very least wouldn't be subject to the law and could actually rely on their overtime pay. Again, that amendment was rejected by Republicans.

Representative BLUNT ROCHESTER on the committee offered an amendment that would limit the bill so only workers eligible for at least 7 days of paid sick leave receive comp time. Yet, again, Republicans rejected this amendment.

In total, committee Democrats offered eight amendments to try to improve this bill. Every single one was rejected.

Instead of bringing forward the same, tired, 22-year-old policies that I certainly don't hear my constituents requesting, Democrats have offered real solutions that benefit working families. Working families would benefit from an increase in the overtime salary threshold. Last year, the Department of Labor proposed an increase to that threshold, and 248,000 workers in Colorado alone would have benefited under that rule.

Democrats continue to write bills that provide commonsense solutions. We have offered legislation that would provide up to 12 weeks of partial-paid parental leave. Only 14 percent of the workforce has paid family leave through their employers. As a parent of a 5- and a 2-year-old, I know how important that is to be able to spend time with your newborn kids.

Democrats have also introduced a bill that would allow employees to earn up to 7 sick days per year. That would be a tremendous help to the 4 in 10 private sector employees who don't have access to any paid sick leave at all under current law.

Democrats have also offered legislation to combat pay discrimination. In 2017, women working full time are still paid 80 cents on the dollar compared to what men make. Democrats have offered legislation that I am proud to cosponsor that would address that kind of pay disparity. Those are the kinds of bills that the American people need, that workers need, and that we need to help lift people out of poverty and into the middle class.

Today, House Democrats introduced the Equality Act. I was proud to join so many of my colleagues in a bipartisan bill to prohibit discrimination based on gender identity and sexual orientation. Sadly, in many States, it is still legal to fire someone just because they are gay. The Equality Act would finally extend Federal workplace discrimination protections to LGBT Americans in all 50 States and the territories.

Finally, House Democrats will soon be introducing the bill that would raise the minimum wage. In my home State of Colorado, voters chose to raise the wage last November, and many other States have minimum wages higher than the Federal minimum wage. But it shouldn't come down to what State you live in to determine if you even earn enough to put food on the table and pay your rent. It is long past time we update the Federal minimum wage, and the Raise the Wage Act would do just that.

Yet, again, we are offering many solutions that we would love to discuss and love to vote on, and, instead, the Republicans are offering a bill to strip existing rights away from workers.

Mr. Speaker, the bill before us represents the same old policies the Republicans have offered for decades. They have never succeeded, and they won't succeed now. This time around, they are offering a bill that might be great for some of the bosses, but it undermines the lives of hardworking Americans that keep our country going.

Mr. Speaker, I oppose the Working Families Flexibility Act and the rule before us, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, the gentleman referred to an old playbook being used here. He is right. It is an old playbook. It is a playbook that was used by House Democrats in 1985, by President Bill Clinton during the 1990s. This is not a partisan playbook. This is actually—or used to be, actually—a bipartisan idea to give workers flexibility in the use of their time. That doesn't sound radical to me. It is not radical at all.

What has changed is Democrats used to be for this, and now, for whatever reason, they are not. They would rather lock workers into these restrictive arrangements where you have working mothers, like the one I used in my initial remarks, who can't get their flexible time off that they want because we do not allow them to do that under the Federal Labor Standards Act.

Comp time is just not technically optional, as my friend said, under this

law. It is optional by law. It is a voluntary thing by law. There is no question about that. Employers cannot coerce or intimidate an employee to do that under this law. It is strictly prohibited, and there are serious legal repercussions for an employer who attempts to do that.

There are no differences in the protections for someone under this bill and the protections that public employees have when they seek to have this sort of flextime under the laws that pertain to them. It is the same protection. So it doesn't matter whether you are in the private sector or the public sector; under this bill, you are going to be protected.

□ 1300

Let me tell you something, as someone who has practiced in this area. It is not an idle threat to an employer to face a regulatory proceeding from the Wage and Hour Division of the Department of Labor or to face a private lawsuit. Those are a big deal. If you lose, you have to not only pay double damages, you have got to pay the employees' attorneys fees, which can be significant. No sensible employer is going to go out there and intimidate and coerce and think they can get away with it. They can't.

Wages, under our bankruptcy laws, are the first priority of what is paid out during the winding up of a bankruptcy proceeding. Before any other creditor is paid, wages get paid. In my experience, I don't remember wages ever not being paid in a bankruptcy. That is always assumed. They get taken care of quickly. Most employers do the right thing.

My friend talked about employers needing to do the right thing. Most employers do the right thing. Just like I know my colleague, when he had a business in the private sector, did the right thing by his employees. Most employers do. Yet too often in this body, we act as if the assumption is that employers are going to do the wrong thing, and then we come down with this heavy-handed overregulation, punitive approach that restricts the freedom of both employers and—let's get back to it—the workers themselves to work these things out.

This is a commonsense solution to a real problem in the new workplace of the 21st century, where most moms and dads are working and where we have this new millennial generation that wants flexibility. They expect it. When you go to them and tell them: Oh, you can't have it because it is a Federal law, they don't understand.

I have got to tell you, Mr. Speaker, I don't understand. Yes, I understand that this law was put together in the 1930s. Maybe it made sense for the workplace in the thirties, but it doesn't make sense for the workplace of the 21st century.

I am disappointed in my colleagues who used to be in favor of these sorts of flexible arrangements and no longer favor it, but I get that. I hope that the rest of us will use our common sense and use what we all know is really happening in the workplace today and support this very important bill.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I have a document from 1997 from then-President Bill Clinton who opposed a bill that is basically identical to this one in its current form. The President said he would veto this bill, if passed, because he said this bill purports to give working families greater flexibility, but, in reality, it grants employers more rights at the expense of working people.

I hope my friends on the other side of the aisle stop using President Clinton's good name in vain in passage of a bill that is nearly identical to the one that he threatened to veto.

Of course, Democrats want to talk about flexibility. President Clinton, myself, and Democrats of the Education and the Workforce Committee are happy to do that, if there is a way to provide workers with real choices to protect workers against employee abuse in making their decisions, but the current bill, and the same bill that President Clinton opposed, fails in that regard and fails to give employees the rights that they deserve to exercise their comp time.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. ADAMS).

Ms. ADAMS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. POLIS) for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to express my strong opposition to H.R. 1180.

H.R. 1180 encourages overwork by encouraging workers to spend more time at work in order to earn paid time off, which employers may or may not allow them to use in the future.

Many hardworking families throughout the 12th District of North Carolina need overtime pay just to make ends meet each month. They should not be compelled by their employer to accept comp time when their monthly budget depends on how much overtime they receive in their paycheck. Overtime pay can be the difference between paying for sending a child to college or going into debt. Parents who earn an hourly wage need overtime, not comp time, to care for their families.

Nothing in the Working Families Flexibility Act strengthens existing workplace protections or promotes workplace flexibility. That is why I offered an amendment last week when H.R. 1180 was considered in committee to exempt comp time arrangements from mandatory arbitration agreements.

This amendment would have ensured protections for employees that H.R. 1180 seek to take away. Unfortunately, the majority decided not to support my amendment or any other amendments offered by my fellow Democrats on the Education and the Workforce Committee.

Instead of today's bill, the House should consider legislation that would create good jobs with family sustaining wages and benefits. I strongly oppose H.R. 1180, and I encourage by colleagues to vote ''no'' on this bill.

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

My colleague from North Carolina and I worked together on many things, and I have great respect for her, but I think her argument ignores a very important fact about this bill, and that is that you can't be coerced into doing this. You have to do it voluntarily.

If you would rather get your time and a half in pay, that is your decision. You are going to get it. The law requires that. There is nothing that forces anybody to get that.

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

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD the Statement of Administration Policy from President William Jefferson Clinton from 1997, in which President Clinton lays out the criteria, by and large, which is still the criteria under which Democrats would support a comp time flexibility bill, had the Republicans been at all serious about actually passing one into law rather than just passing a symbolic bill that they have passed for 22 years.

[From the American Presidency Project, John T. Woolley & Gerhard Peters, Santa Barbara, CA]

WILLIAM J. CLINTON: STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY: H.R. 1—WORKING FAMILIES FLEXIBILITY ACT OF 1997, MARCH 19, 1997

(HOUSE) (BALLENGER (R) NC AND 99 OTHERS)

The President will veto H.R. 1 if it is passed in its current form. The President will not sign H.R. 1, or any other comp time legislation, unless it adheres to three fundamental principles: (1) real choice for workers; (2) real protection against employer abuse; and (3) preservation of workers' rights.

H.R. 1 purports to give working families greater flexibility. In reality, it grants employers more rights at the expense of working people:

H.R. 1 fails to offer workers real choice. In particular, H.R. 1 would allow an employer to decide when a worker could use his or her compensatory time-off by disapproving such time-off if the employer claims it would ''unduly disrupt'' its operations. In addition, H.R. 1 would permit an employer to ''cash out'' a worker's earned compensatory time over 80 hours.

H.R. 1 fails to protect workers against employer abuse. For example, H.R. 1 offers inadequate protections for vulnerable workers and part-time, seasonal, and temporary employees, including garment and construction workers, and those who are employed in industries with histories of Fair Labor Standards Act violations. H.R. 1 also fails to prohibit employers from substituting compensatory time-off for paid vacation or sick leave benefits. Furthermore, H.R. 1 lacks meaningful remedies for workers when employers penalize them for electing to receive overtime pay in lieu of compensatory time-off. In addition, H.R. 1 contains inadequate worker safeguards in cases where an employer goes bankrupt or out-of-business.

H.R. 1 fails to preserve workers' rights. Workers who take compensatory time-off

can be forced to work additional overtime in the same week—even on the weekend—without being paid overtime premium pay.

The Administration supports the substitute amendment to be offered by Representative George Miller, although procedural obstacles in the House have prevented the amendment from addressing all of the important issues that need to be treated, including expansion of Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). The Administration strongly believes that any legislation to authorize compensatory time under the Fair Labor Standards Act should be linked to expansion of the FMLA. Expanding the FMLA to give working families greater flexibility to foster the education of their children or provide routine health care for their children or elderly relatives will go a long way toward achieving the stated goals of H.R. 1.

The Miller amendment, however, would ensure real employee choice, by adding crucial provisions not found in H.R. 1. For example, employers that adopt comp time programs would have to make comp time available to similarly-situated employees on a fair and non-discriminatory basis. Working families are guaranteed real protection against possible comp time abuse through the Miller amendment.

Furthermore, the Miller amendment would preclude employers from using comp time to modify or reduce existing paid leave plans. It would entitle employees choosing comp time to get regular statements of their accrual and use of comp time; put a reasonable limit on the number of hours of comp time that can be accrued; and allow employees to seek damages when they incur costs because an employer wrongfully denies them use of the comp time they earned. The Secretary of Labor would have the authority to bar employers with a pattern and practice of comp time abuse from continuing to offer comp time. H.R. 1 has none of these protections. These are all improvements to H.R. 1 that guarantee the legislation enhances rather than decreases flexibility for America's working families.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. BROWN).

Mr. BROWN of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Colorado (Mr. POLIS) for yielding.

I rise today in opposition to this so-called Working Families Flexibility Act, a bill that would hurt, not help, working people.

This bill would ensure workers have less time, less flexibility, and less money. Under this proposal, workers would forego the overtime they earn today in exchange for comp time in the future, except workers can't choose when they can use that time.

There is nothing stopping a boss from denying a worker from using their comp time to care for a sick child or attend a school event. The only thing that this bill does is provide more flexibility for bosses, while taking away hard-earned overtime pay that many workers rely on to make ends meet.

This is an attempt to undermine hard-fought, 80-year-old worker protections guaranteed by the Fair Labor Standards Act. If Congress wanted to give working families more flexibility, we should give them earned paid sick days, combat pay discrimination, give them a say in their work schedules, and raise the minimum wage. These are the policies that working families truly need to thrive.

They are popular, commonsense ideas that, unlike this bill, don't force workers into choosing between time and money. Families depend on both. Let's work together to support real flexibility for working families.

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

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. DINGELL).

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the rule and underlying bill, and I thank my colleague from Colorado for yielding.

Contrary to its name, the Working Families Flexibility Act provides no flexibility for working families but makes it harder to plan financially at a time when wages have stagnated and American workers are working harder than ever.

The 40-hour workweek is a long established American way of life—a way of life won by hardworking American men and women. This legislation aims to undermine the Fair Labor Standards Act and the 40-hour workweek by handing even more power over to employers by giving them the right to not pay for overtime hours.

This legislation amounts to a handout for large American companies at the expense of their workers. Hardworking Americans can't afford to loan their bosses overtime pay for months at a time. Employees would also find themselves at a disadvantage if they wanted to get paid for overtime instead of opting for comp time. Companies would find it in their financial interest to select comp time workers instead of workers who want overtime pay. This isn't the flexibility that American workers need.

The bill is right about one thing: American workers do deserve an update to the FLSA. If they really want to talk about helping American working families gain more flexibility in the workplace, Congress should be taking up bills on paid sick days, paid family and medical leave, and a real increase in wages.

I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' on this bill.

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

Mr. Speaker, I think my friends on the other side of the aisle don't understand how this works. An employee comes to their supervisor or the person who runs the HR office in the company and says: I would like to get some comp time in return for the overtime I am getting ready to work because I have got a specific reason to want to use it. The employer says: Okay, when do you want to get the overtime and when do you want to take the comp time? They work that out.

The employer has the responsibility for having the system and the paperwork for showing that they have complied with the law. From an employer's point of view, that is an extra burden. It is really not in the interest of an employer to do this. An employer would really prefer to say: Look, I don't want to have to do this, because if I make a mistake, I am going to get in trouble with either a private lawsuit or the Department of Labor. So it is really better for the employer not to have this option because it is not going to be an option in which they can make a mistake.

This is for that employee to get the comp time so they can have some flexibility in their schedule. That is who it is for. If they don't want to use it, they don't have to use it. They can still be paid the time and a half that they are paid today. No one can coerce them. The law says you can't do that, and there are real penalties for it.

To the contrary, when we are hearing that somehow this is something for the employers, no, it is not. This is for the workers—the new workers of the 21st century, who sometimes I think we have forgotten about when we have these debates in this body.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, while we are debating a rule for a bill that would strip workers of their overtime pay, since President Trump took office, dangerous bills like this are more likely to become law.

Just a few weeks ago, President Trump signed a bill into law that strips the American people of our online privacy, allowing internet service providers to sell yours and my sensitive information to the highest bidder without our permission.

This information includes location, financial and health data, information about our children—even pictures of our children—Social Security numbers, web browsing history, app usage history, content of communication: emails, video chats. It is simply wrong.

For this reason, when we defeat the previous question, I will offer an amendment to the rule to bring up Representative JACKY ROSEN's bill, H.R. 1868, which would reinstate the Federal Communication Commission's internet privacy rule.

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

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

There was no objection.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, sometimes you need a redo or a retake. When this body narrowly passed the bill that President Trump signed that took all of our private data and allowed internet service providers to sell it without our permission, it was a mistake. Hopefully enough Members of this body have since realized it is a mistake and they will now change their vote and support defeating the previous question

allowing for immediate consideration of Representative ROSEN's bill to protect our privacy.

As we know, broadband access through internet access providers is a critical way to have access to a world of information and commerce, but the price of that access should not be all of your private information, including your kids' photographs and birthdays and your Social Security number.

Under the bill that became law, everything you enter on the internet on any site, regardless of their privacy policy, would be owned by your broadband provider and be able to be sold by your broadband provider without your consent.

That is simply wrong for America; it is wrong for consumers; it is wrong for innovation. It casts a shadow over the entire internet ecosytem, which not only has brought so much enjoyment to so many but has created millions of jobs in my district and across our country.

□ 1315

If we can defeat the previous question, we can do a redo on this bill. We can pass H.R. 1868, which would reinstate a rule that has broad, popular support. I haven't heard a single constituent of mine say that they don't want their broadband privacy protected, and I have had hundreds of them say that they do want their broadband privacy protected.

I am hoping that, since my Republican friends have now had the chance to have townhalls and to listen to their constituents, they will agree that we should reinstate the Federal Communications' internet privacy rule to protect our privacy subject to the terms of use; information can be sold if you consent for it to be sold, but without your consent, all the information you enter on the internet should not be the property of the broadband provider for their use and for sale. It is common sense. The vast majority of the American public agrees. I think it is time to call the question on Congress to see if we can get Congress to agree.

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

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

I would say to my colleague and to the House, I did indeed have 11 townhalls 2 weeks ago after the bill he references passed. It didn't come up one time because the American people understand what that was all about, that there were two different Federal agencies battling over something, and it didn't even solve the problem. The agency that put that regulation out didn't have the authority to do it, and it didn't solve the problem. The American people are sick and tired of agencies that don't have the authority to go out there and they do something, and it doesn't solve the problem.

If we want to get to the issue that my friend wants to get to, which I think is important, we ought to get to, let's work together in a bipartisan fashion and come up with a bipartisan, comprehensive bill that addresses that. I would really like to be a part of that.

But that is not what we are here today about. We are here today about this bill to provide flexibility to working people in the 21st century, particularly millennials.

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

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

I am surprised that people in Alabama weren't clamoring to protect their online privacy at the gentleman's townhall meetings. I will certainly take him at his word. Perhaps it is because they were so concerned with Republican attempts to increase their healthcare insurance rates by 15 to 20 percent, Republican attempts to raise their taxes, and Republican spending that will increase the deficit by $12 billion in this continuing resolution that were brought before us. Maybe they were so overwhelmed by the Republican efforts to get rid of their health care, increase the deficit, spend more money, and take away their rights that they didn't get down their list of concerns to broadband privacy.

Certainly in my district, Mr. Speaker, dozens of constituents in my townhalls—both Republican and Democratic constituents—brought this issue up as a way of arguing how out of touch House and Senate Republicans are to say that, at this time in our Nation's history, what we need is less privacy, not more. I think that there are a lot of things that people are concerned about, and that is certainly one of them.

This debate is about that, frankly, Mr. Speaker, because, if we defeat the previous question, I will be bringing forth Ms. ROSEN's bill. Members of this House will have an opportunity to vote on bringing up Ms. ROSEN's bill to protect our broadband privacy.

Mr. Speaker, the more work, less pay bill before us is yet another example by Republicans to roll back workers' rights under the guise of doing the opposite. Again, if the Republicans have a sincere desire to actually enhance and improve workers' rights, then we are all for that. The labor movement is for that. Let's talk about that. But don't pretend like you have the voices and concerns of workers in mind when workers' advocacy groups say you are stripping away their rights. We are happy to have that discussion.

In many ways, the veto statement from President Clinton in 1997 still lays out as relevant, today, some of the very criteria the Democrats would want to see in a bill that we could support that would empower workers to choose additional comp time, a concept that many Democrats support.

I wish we were working to protect American families today. But instead of collaborating with Democrats to produce a bill that actually accomplishes the stated goal of increasing worker flexibility, instead, the Republicans have chosen to move forward with their 22-year-old bill that weakens the 40-hour workweek, that President Clinton threatened to veto, that hasn't become law and won't become law, just perhaps as a check-off box rather than to do anything to actually empower workers to choose comp time instead of overtime. They are just checking the box for the big bosses and moving on to the next item without seeing this through into law.

There are a lot of bipartisan bills this body could be taking up this week. Frankly, one of them is Representative ROSEN's bill that I will be bringing up when we defeat the previous question, but, sadly, this bill is not one of them. I am very disappointed that even in the majority, even in the governing capacity, even controlling the House, the Senate, and the Presidency, Republicans are wasting time on what we around here call messaging bills rather than real bills to address issues that Americans want us to work on, like bringing down the cost of college, fixing our broken immigration system, rebuilding our crumbling roads and bridges, or reforming our complicated tax system to make it more friendly for growth in our country.

Mr. Speaker, I support legislation that puts the needs of workers first, but this bill before us does the opposite. This legislation lifts up the big bosses with the hope that a worker may or may not see a benefit down the line without interest if the company stays in business. It is the wrong way to go about it. I oppose the rule. I oppose the underlying bill. I urge a ''no'' vote.

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

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

I thank Congresswoman ROBY for being the sponsor of this bill and bringing it forward. As a young woman herself, she understands what's going on in the workplace with people her age and how they try to juggle all the demands of their time. She has come up with a very commonsense approach to how we can deal with this in a way that makes sense for everybody.

We just heard a lot about the labor movement and big bosses. I got transported back in my mind. You would have thought we were in the 1930s and 1940s. I don't know if my colleague from Colorado has been paying attention, but union membership is at its lowest level since the 1940s right now because, even after 8 years of the most pro-union administration in decades, union membership continues to fall, and it continues to fall because workers in America aren't buying what they are selling because a lot of what they are selling is exactly what we hear is the opposition to this bill, which is: Let's limit people; let's restrict people; let's come up with all these things to tell them what they can't do instead of telling them what they can.

What the American people want, what I heard in my townhall meetings, they want the government off their back so that they can make their own choices and live their lives the way they want to live them. This is really true with the millennial generation.

I have four children who are adults right now. They are millennials. They really want to have flexibility in their lives, and this bill, Congresswoman ROBY's bill, gets a little way toward that. I don't see why we would be against trying to give not just young workers, but all workers, that flexibility.

I have heard the arguments, and I have heard them several times now. I have just got to tell you, they make no sense to me. Perhaps they are something that made sense 50, 60, 70 years ago, but they don't make any sense in 2017. It is a different time. It is a different day. Let's give the workers of America some freedom and flexibility because that is what they really want.

Mr. Speaker, I again urge my colleagues to support House Resolution 299 and the underlying bill.

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

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 299 OFFERED BY MR. POLIS

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

SEC. 6. Immediately upon adoption of this resolution the Speaker shall, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1868) to provide that providers of broadband Internet access service shall be subject to the privacy rules adopted by the Federal Communications Commission on October 27, 2016. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Energy and Commerce. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such .amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions. If the Committee of the Whole rises and reports that it has come to no resolution on the bill, then on the next legislative day the House shall, immediately after the third daily order of business under clause 1 of rule XIV, resolve into the Committee of the Whole for further consideration of the bill.

SEC. 7. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H.R. 1868.

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

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

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

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

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on May 2, 2017, at 11:26 a.m.:

That the Senate passed S. 371.

With best wishes, I am,

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

The House will resume proceedings on postponed questions at a later time.

DISASTER DECLARATION IMPROVEMENT ACT

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1665) to ensure that the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency considers severe local impact in making a recommendation to the President for a major disaster declaration, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1665

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 ''Disaster Declaration Improvement Act''.

SEC. 2. LOCAL IMPACT.

In making recommendations to the President regarding a major disaster declaration, the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency shall give greater weight and consideration to severe local impact or recent multiple disasters. Further, the Administrator shall make corresponding adjustments to the Agency's policies and regulations regarding such consideration. Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this section, the Administrator shall report to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate on the changes made to regulations and policies and the number of declarations that have been declared based on the new criteria.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from

Pennsylvania (Mr. BARLETTA) and the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 1665, as amended.

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

There was no objection.

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

The purpose of H.R. 1665 is to ensure that, in making a recommendation to the President for a major disaster declaration, the Administrator of FEMA looks at the intensity of the impact in a localized area as well as the impact on other recent disasters.

My colleagues from Illinois are to be commended for working so persistently on this bipartisan piece of legislation. Their Illinois districts have been impacted by several devastating disasters, but each time the communities were told that the damage was not severe enough to warrant Federal disaster assistance.

In recent years, there has been more evidence of devastated small and rural communities not receiving disaster assistance in a fair manner compared to other larger communities and neighboring States. I know all too well how devastating this can be for those affected by disaster, as I am dealing with a similar issue in northeastern Pennsylvania.

In March, much of the area I represent was hit with a crippling snowstorm that dumped as much as 30 inches of snow or more. Municipalities had to exhaust much of their yearly budgets on snow removal efforts and emergency services. However, due to the fact that the statewide threshold needed for Pennsylvania to request reimbursement funding from the Federal Government was not met, local municipalities were left with massive holes in their budgets.

This bill helps ensure the severe, remote, and localized impact endured by communities like those in Pennsylvania and Illinois get due consideration and they get the help they need when disaster strikes. The House adopted similar language last year when it passed the FEMA Disaster Assistance Reform Act.

Again, thank you to the gentleman and gentlewoman from Illinois for working with the subcommittee on this legislation to address the concerns of their constituents and other communities in this situation. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1665, the Disaster Declaration Improvement Act, as amended, which will ensure that the severity and number of recent disasters are afforded greater weight by FEMA when making disaster declaration recommendations to the President.

This bill addresses an unfair situation where small and rural communities located in States with large populations are seemingly denied Federal disaster assistance because of the State's large population. We have seen instances where a storm inflicts similar damage in two communities of similar size located in different States, but the State with a lower population receives a disaster declaration while the State with a larger population does not receive the disaster declaration.

For example, in 2013, several counties in Illinois were hit by a tornado causing 6 deaths, at least 180 injured, and widespread damage. The same storm system produced tornadoes and caused damage in the smaller neighboring States of Missouri and Kentucky, both of which received disaster declarations, while the State of Illinois did not.

To be clear, the Stafford Act prohibits the denial of disaster assistance to a State or local community based on income or population. However, given some of the examples, it appears that that is precisely what is occurring. It is time for this to stop and to treat all small and rural communities fairly.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this measure, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. RODNEY DAVIS).

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman BARLETTA and Ranking Member JOHNSON. I also look over this House floor and thank my colleague, Mrs. BUSTOS, from Illinois, for joining me in this effort because, if you travel to my district or Mrs. BUSTOS' district in central and, in my case, southern Illinois and you ask my constituents about their opinion of FEMA's disaster declaration process, they are going to tell you that it is broken.

□ 1330

You don't have to look any further than the State of Illinois to see how FEMA's public assistance formula is failing hardworking families across this country because it simply does not put all communities on a level playing field.

In 2012, tornadoes devastated Harrisburg in southern Illinois, but the State was denied public assistance while Missouri and Kentucky received aid due to the damage inflicted by the exact same storm. Just a few short years ago, the towns of Gifford and Washington in central Illinois were denied public assistance as well, despite those communities suffering millions in damage. And just last year, Illinois was once again denied public assistance following extensive damage done in late December 2015 and early January 2016 caused by severe storms and flooding in the central and southern parts of our State.

Under existing regulations, FEMA currently takes into account several factors when determining the need for public and individual assistance. However, there is currently no standard to determine which factor is more important than another during the disaster declaration process. This leads to highly subjective and uncertain processes that leave States and communities in limbo for weeks as their application is considered.

By working with the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee last year during the markup of the FEMA Disaster Assistance Reform Act, we were successful in including important language based on legislation I introduced that requires the administrator of FEMA, when making recommendations to the President regarding a disaster declaration, to ''give greater weight and consideration to severe local impact.'' This bill ultimately passed out of the House under suspension last Congress, but, unfortunately, the bill died in the Senate.

This Congress, I have introduced this language again, along with my friend and colleague from Illinois (Mrs. BUSTOS), as the Disaster Declaration Improvement Act.

Passing this bill will have a real impact on States like Illinois, where a large portion of the population is concentrated in a small northeastern corner of our State. Because of the population density in the northern part of my State, rural parts, where I live and where I represent, are having to meet an arbitrarily high standard in order to qualify for a disaster declaration. Enacting this language is going to help level the playing field and help ensure rural areas are given a fair chance when disaster happens and help is needed.

During our March markup of this bill, we also added important language that strengthens the bill by way of an amendment offered by my friend, the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. GRAVES). This language also requires FEMA to place more consideration on recent multiple disasters, to take into account the cumulative impact such events can have. So I want to thank Chairman GRAVES for working with my office on including this language and for being a cosponsor of my bill.

I also want to express my personal gratitude to Chairman SHUSTER and Ranking Member DEFAZIO for working with us during the last Congress and this Congress, and for moving this bill so early. Again, I want to especially thank Chairman BARLETTA for being a cosponsor of this bill.

Mr. Speaker, central and southern Illinois just experienced another flooding event this past weekend. And while it is not yet clear what the damage is, it is clear that Congress must act to

ensure that folks get a fair shake if it is determined that Federal assistance is needed.

I urge a ''yes'' vote.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BUSTOS).

Mrs. BUSTOS. Mr. Speaker, I also want to thank my colleague, Congressman RODNEY DAVIS, for working with me to advance this long overdue legislation, which we call the Disaster Declaration Improvement Act.

This bill seeks to bring fairness to the Federal Emergency Management Agency's disaster declaration process.

Right now, if a tornado, a flood, or any other natural disaster strikes a small town, like many of the ones I represent in the State of Illinois, FEMA's current per capita formula leaves much of rural America behind. That is because FEMA's current disaster assessment rules fail to take into account localized impacts on Main Streets and agricultural communities throughout our Nation.

This has left hardworking families in Illinois and rural States throughout the United States without access to the Federal relief they so badly need under these circumstances.

For instance, in my district, the city of Pekin was denied FEMA disaster recovery funding following a deadly tornado that had winds up to 120 miles per hour that ripped through the town in November of 2013.

Gary and Selena Cleer were in church on that Sunday afternoon when this tornado hit. They took shelter along with the rest of the congregation in the hallway to protect themselves. Finally, and with God's blessing, they were able to drive safely home, and they didn't even recognize what was in front of them. Much of their roof was gone, their garage had been torn away, and their battered car lay among all of the rubble.

The tornado destroyed about 200 other structures in this town of only 35,000 people. But this community received no public assistance dollars—zero. This was a direct result of FEMA's disaster declaration formula, which, again, makes it unnecessarily difficult for Illinois' smaller communities to receive the help that they need.

Mr. Speaker, we are not asking for a handout for rural America. In fact, in the Midwest, we are as resilient as they come, but we are certainly asking for a fair shake and the opportunity for all of our families to get the help that they need in a time of crisis.

A few million dollars of damage can devastate a smaller town or a rural community. That is why FEMA must give greater weight to the local impact of a disaster when making these decisions about the need for Federal assistance.

Our bill fixes an unfair formula that hurts too many of our smaller towns and villages across Illinois and across America. This bill had been included in the FEMA Disaster Assistance Reform Act of 2015, but it sat in the Senate without any action. Today we are working together to pass it once again because we can't solve this problem by ignoring it. I urge our friends in the Senate to take action.

With new flooding, damaging roads and infrastructure in places like Pekin, Peoria, and in southern Illinois where my friend, MIKE BOST, serves and where RODNEY DAVIS serves, I urge my colleagues to join us in supporting this bill so that we can help ensure that hardworking families from the heartland have the support they need to get back on their feet after a disaster.

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST).

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend for yielding.

As we speak, communities in southern Illinois are contending with rising flood waters.

While we may not be able to prevent the water rising, there is a lot that we can do to help our communities rebuild following a disaster. Unfortunately, too many rural areas find that the help that they need is not there for them because of arbitrary Federal rules.

In my district, rural communities suffered significant damage from the 2015 holiday floods, but did not qualify for assistance because of these rigid rules. This legislation addresses these problems and ends the unfair treatment of rural areas.

It is better to ensure that FEMA gives greater weight to localized disasters when determining assistance.

I support the legislation authorized by my friend and Illinois colleague, RODNEY DAVIS, and cosponsored by CHERI BUSTOS, because the victims shouldn't be punished for living in a small town in a rural area.

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

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD).

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1665, the Disaster Declaration Improvement Act. I thank my colleagues, Mr. BARLETTA and Mr. RODNEY DAVIS, for their leadership on this important issue.

Rural areas are the heart of not only my district, but of America as a whole. They are the source of food and resources, and are home to millions of American families. When natural disasters come to these communities, we should be doing everything in our power to help them get back on their feet. Instead, the regulatory regime forces these areas to meet a higher and unfair threshold in order to get the FEMA resources that they need.

My district faced this problem back in 2013, after a tornado swept through Washington, Illinois, destroying nearly 1,000 homes. This was a massive loss, but FEMA's formula for public assistance kept Washington from getting the assistance it needed to repair the public infrastructure damaged by the storm. While individuals could get some relief for personal property, this damage to infrastructure affects every member of the community.

This is why I am a proud cosponsor and supporter of H.R. 1665, the Disaster Declaration Improvement Act. This bill will change and modernize FEMA's formula so that it is easier for rural areas and areas with lower population density to get the support and assistance they need after a disaster.

I urge my colleagues to vote for its passage today to ensure that all Americans, regardless of the town they live in, can know that help will be on the way after such tragic events happen.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. GRAVES).

Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I want to commend the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. RODNEY DAVIS) and the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BUSTOS) for coming together to work in a bipartisan manner to address a problem that affects not just Illinois, but affects, I think, all 50 States. It is an issue where we have watched FEMA, in many cases, make decisions that appear to be arbitrary in terms of declaring a disaster in some areas, not in others.

What this legislation does, very simply, is it requires that FEMA take into consideration the true localized impacts of a disaster. And in line with what the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. RODNEY DAVIS) noted earlier, we did an amendment in the committee that also looked at, or required, FEMA to consider multiple impacts in an area.

I am from south Louisiana. In the last several months, we have had police shootings, we have had one of the most costly floods in U.S. history, we have had tornadoes, and we have had another flood in north Louisiana. In fact, there were two floods, as I recall. One of them was a 500-year flood, and the second was a 1,000-year flood. It makes me question how old I am sometimes.

But what this does is it requires that FEMA look at localized impacts, and that they take into consideration the cumulative impacts of various disasters and incidents in an area. FEMA is not there and the Federal Government is not there to take care of every problem and every disaster that States and municipalities have.

But in many cases that we have seen historically, they have missed opportunities. I think we have seen incredible burdens borne by local governments, and they have had disasters that far exceeded their capabilities.

I want to, again, commend the gentleman and gentlewoman from Illinois for offering this commonsense legislation, and I urge all Members to support the bill.

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

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on H.R. 1665, as amended, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BARLETTA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1665, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

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

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

FEMA ACCOUNTABILITY, MODERNIZATION AND TRANSPARENCY ACT OF 2017

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1679) to ensure that the Federal Emergency Management Agency's current efforts to modernize its grant management system includes applicant accessibility and transparency, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1679

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 ''FEMA Accountability, Modernization and Transparency Act of 2017''.

SEC. 2. REQUIREMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency shall ensure the ongoing modernization of the grant systems for the administration of assistance under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.) includes the following:

(1) An online interface, including online assistance, for applicants to complete application forms, submit materials, and access the status of applications.

(2) Mechanisms to eliminate duplication of benefits.

(3) If appropriate, enable the sharing of information among agencies and with State, local, and tribal governments, to eliminate the need to file multiple applications and speed disaster recovery.

(4) Any additional tools the Administrator determines will improve the implementation of this section.

(b) IMPLEMENTATION.—To the extent practicable, the Administrator shall deliver the system capabilities described in subsection (a) in increments or iterations as working components for applicant use.

SEC. 3. NO ADDITIONAL FUNDS AUTHORIZED.

No additional funds are authorized to carry out the requirements of this Act. Such requirements shall be carried out using amounts otherwise authorized.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

□ 1345

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous material on H.R. 1679.

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

There was no objection.

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

The purpose of H.R. 1679, the FEMA Accountability, Modernization and Transparency Act of 2017, is to enhance FEMA grant applicants' access to information.

I commend my colleague from Louisiana for working so hard for the people of his State to tackle the challenges those communities and individuals have been facing in the wake of last August's floods and other disasters.

On average, FEMA distributes almost $6 billion a year in assistance to individuals, communities, and organizations impacted by disasters. That taxpayer money must be managed in an efficient and transparent way to prevent duplication and provide disaster survivors with needed access and visibility.

More efficient and transparent delivery of disaster assistance will help speed disaster recovery and reduce the administrative burden on applicants. This legislation requires the FEMA Administrator to include online access and information sharing as the agency modernizes its disaster grant delivery system.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I rise in support of H.R. 1679, the FEMA Accountability, Modernization and Transparency Act of 2017. Our State and local partners are the first responders to any emergency disaster or terrorist attack. They do an outstanding job, given their limited resources and irregular nature of the events to which they respond.

We need to make sure that our partners, States, local governments, first responders, and nonprofits have access to the latest equipment, technology, training, and other resources needed to address any gaps in preparedness and to ensure that they remain as responsive as possible in an emergency. To assist them in their efforts, the Department of Homeland Security provides several discrete types of preparedness grants to help our partners meet the core capabilities needed to prepare our Nation for any hazard.

FEMA's 2016 National Preparedness Report found that much more work is needed in areas such as cybersecurity, economic recovery, housing, infrastructure systems, and supply chain integrity and security in order to meet our goal of being prepared and resilient.

Despite the valuable benefits these grants provide, President Trump proposed to cut funding for these grants in his so-called skinny budget. President Trump has proposed prioritizing a border wall over the lives and safety of our residents. I am pleased to note that this week Congress will be voting on an omnibus fiscal year 2017 appropriations bill that funds these programs at sufficient levels.

Since 2015, FEMA has been modernizing its management of these grant programs by making information technology platforms more user friendly. As FEMA continues to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of its grants management, this bill will ensure that FEMA ensures that the system is more accessible and transparent to applicants.

The bill requires FEMA to include mechanisms to eliminate duplication of benefits and enable the sharing of information among agencies and with State, local, and tribal governments, where appropriate, while FEMA continues its modernization efforts.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this measure, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. GRAVES).

Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the subcommittee chairman and ranking member for their assistance, and I also want to thank our lead cosponsor, Mr. SIRES of New Jersey.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation is an unfortunate situation, that Congress actually has to step in. I want to give you a little bit of background.

In August of last year, we had once again what was known as the fourth most costly flood disaster in U.S. history. We had areas of south Louisiana that actually experienced over 32 inches of rain within about a 36-hour period. By comparison, the average American, as I recall, receives somewhere between 26 and 28 inches of rain in a year, and we received that in approximately 36 hours—an extraordinary rainfall event.

As you can imagine, in a 1,000-year flood event, you had thousands and thousands of people that were flooded, people living well outside of the floodplain. So, yes, there were thousands of people that were seeking assistance, trying to do everything from buy clothes to buy food, essential needs.

We assisted thousands of constituents trying to get information and answers from FEMA, but the way that

the process worked is that you had to call an 800 number. If someone answered, they would log on a computer system and update the constituent on what their status is: if they received the application, if additional information was needed, if they were approved or denied.

I, myself, on many occasions called the 800 number just to see how long it would take to get through. In some cases no one would answer. In other cases, the questions couldn't be answered.

It is a very simple situation here, Mr. Speaker. This bill simply requires that FEMA establish an online database that citizens of this country can access directly. I can go right now and I can look at hotel reservations; I can look at airline reservations, train reservations. You can do virtually anything online. You can pay your utility bills. You can call an Uber. But with FEMA, they had thousands of employees that were there to answer phones to simply log on to the system.

There is no need for that step to be there. It is more efficient to get people direct access. I would rather see those FEMA employees helping us recover.

So I will say it again. I am disappointed that this takes an act of Congress. This is common sense, and you are seeing this type of innovation and utilization of technology happen all across the marketplace. Unfortunately, Congress has to intervene here, albeit in a bipartisan way, to make sure that Americans are getting the service that they deserve and to make sure that our taxpayer dollars are being used in an efficient way.

Once again, I want to thank the subcommittee chairman, Mr. BARLETTA, Ranking Member JOHNSON, and I want to especially thank the lead cosponsor on this legislation, Mr. SIRES of New Jersey, who I know has gone through extraordinary challenges in New Jersey with the 2012 Hurricane Sandy impacts on his State.

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

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on H.R. 1679, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BARLETTA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1679.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

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

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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

ROBERT T. STAFFORD DISASTER RELIEF AND EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE ACT AMENDMENT

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1678) to amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act concerning the statute of limitations for actions to recover disaster or emergency assistance payments, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1678

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

SECTION 1. STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 705 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5205) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(1)—

(A) by striking ''Except'' and inserting ''Notwithstanding section 3716(e) of title 31, United States Code, and except''; and

(B) by striking ''report for the disaster or emergency'' and inserting ''report for project completion as certified by the grantee''; and

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (1) by striking ''report for the disaster or emergency'' and inserting ''report for project completion as certified by the grantee''; and

(B) in paragraph (3) by inserting ''for project completion as certified by the grantee'' after ''final expenditure report''.

(b) APPLICABILITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—With respect to disaster or emergency assistance provided to a State or local government on or after January 1, 2004—

(A) no administrative action may be taken to recover a payment of such assistance after the date of enactment of this Act if the action is prohibited under section 705(a)(1) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5205(a)(1)), as amended by subsection (a); and

(B) any administrative action to recover a payment of such assistance that is pending on such date of enactment shall be terminated if the action is prohibited under section 705(a)(1) of that Act, as amended by subsection (a).

(2) LIMITATION.—This section, including the amendments made by this section, may not be construed to invalidate or otherwise affect any administration action completed before the date of enactment of this Act.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 1678, as amended.

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

There was no objection.

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

The purpose of H.R. 1678 is to establish a statute of limitations for FEMA to recover disaster assistance payments. This bill would provide some finality in disaster assistance, and it would minimize administrative costs.

This is a bipartisan issue, and I appreciate my colleagues from Florida for their continued leadership on this issue.

H.R. 1678 reinstates the 3-year statute of limitations on FEMA's ability to reclaim funds when there is no evidence of fraud, waste, or abuse.

In my district, I have seen FEMA tell a community that a project is eligible for funding, allowing the town to move forward to complete a disaster recovery project, only to have FEMA change its mind years later and take the money back. Not only is this devastating to the community and to disaster recovery, but the administrative time and red tape involved in second-guessing is a waste of taxpayer dollars.

Again, my thanks to the gentlewoman from Florida and the gentleman from Florida for their continued work on this issue and for introducing this bill.

The House adopted similar language last year when it passed the FEMA Disaster Assistance Reform Act.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1678, as amended.

I am pleased and proud to yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. FRANKEL), the author and sponsor of this legislation.

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. JOHNSON for yielding, and I also want to thank Chairmen SHUSTER and BARLETTA and Ranking Members DEFAZIO and JOHNSON for their continued support.

I have had the honor of working on this legislation with my friends from Florida: Congressmen DAN WEBSTER, BRIAN MAST, and FREDERICA WILSON.

I have said this before and I am going to say it again: Florida knows hurricanes. In 2004 and 2005, Charley, Frances, Jeanne, Wilma, and Katrina tore through our State, leaving families stranded and property damaged.

I was the mayor of the city of West Palm Beach when we saw trees crash to the ground, ripping power lines and blocking flooded streets. Water systems were compromised, and our local governments, around the clock, did a miraculous job cleaning debris, fixing broken infrastructure, and getting life back to normal. It takes a lot to get it done.

When hurricanes strike, communities are ravaged, and so are their budgets. So I want to first thank FEMA for the funding assistance it provided Florida in a great time of need. With that said, FEMA is now asking some of our cities and counties to pay back money that was given for disaster relief projects that were approved more than 10 years ago.

There is no question that FEMA should do a responsible audit and make sure that money is used properly. However, the process should not be an endless journey into the Federal bureaucracy. Our local governments cannot afford to wait an infinite number of years for FEMA to do its assessment, especially when millions of dollars are at stake.

The current practice stymies our local governments' ability to plan their future budgets, and, unlike the Federal Government, they can't run a deficit. So this bill would make sure that the process is more evenhanded, giving FEMA adequate time to review its grant payments while allowing for the financial security of our local governments.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this very good legislation, and I urge the Senate to take action.

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MAST).

Mr. MAST. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my friend from Pennsylvania for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to recognize my committee colleagues from the great State of Florida, Ms. FRANKEL and Mr. WEBSTER, on promoting this important piece of legislation. I am very proud to be a cosponsor of this bill.

There is no question for Florida that the emergency management capabilities are among the best in the Nation, but some disasters are even beyond what we can handle and what we can handle in an effective and timely manner.

Right now in our State, we are battling wildfires across the State. We are on the eve of a brand-new hurricane season which happens year after year. These FEMA disaster relief programs are necessary, they are critical, and they are one of the most important responsibilities of the Federal Government to help States and their citizenry recover; but, unfortunately, there is an issue going on.

Many counties in south Florida are still fighting to this day with FEMA to defend the legitimacy of disaster relief aid that they received following one of the worst hurricane seasons in our State's history, where hurricane after hurricane after hurricane crossed the shores of Florida.

Mr. Speaker, victims of a disaster or a national emergency who may not even have shelter over their heads—or food or water or basic necessities—should not be victimized again by their own government just because they lack the paper trail from decades ago when they were undergoing this sort of devastation in their life. By reinstating a 3-year statute of limitations on the reclamation of funds, when there is no evidence of fraud, no evidence of waste, no evidence of abuse, this bill moves more of the onus for recordkeeping and combating fraud away from relief recipients and back to where it belongs, back on to FEMA, and during that time when it is most essential, immediately after the recovery process. Mr. Speaker, I think that is just common sense.

Once again, I fully support this bipartisan bill, and I commend Chairman SHUSTER and Chairman BARLETTA for their assistance in getting this important bill to the floor.

□ 1400

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

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 1678, which I rise in support of, is a bill that will clarify the existing statute of limitations for public assistance provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, or FEMA, to State, tribal, and local grantees.

Pursuant to the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, or the Stafford Act, FEMA provides public assistance grants to State, tribal, and local governments to assist in their recovery efforts after a disaster strikes.

Generally, FEMA approves the use for public assistance funds immediately after the disaster or while the project is being completed. This is the appropriate time to decide how a grantee should spend disaster funds.

Once the project is completed, the grantee submits documentation of completion to FEMA. However, in some instances, FEMA or the inspector general has reviewed projects many years or even a decade after the grantee has submitted project completion documents. At times, FEMA has changed its policy determination on the appropriate use of the funds, or the inspector general has second-guessed FEMA's decision on the appropriate use of the funds. FEMA then tries to recover project funds years later.

Under this bill introduced by Congresswoman FRANKEL, FEMA may still attempt to recover funds but must do so within 3 years after the project is completed. I commend Representative FRANKEL for her commitment to address this issue. She has worked tirelessly to bring this matter to the forefront.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the measure, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I again urge my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on H.R. 1678, as amended.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BARLETTA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1678, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

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

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on questions previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

Ordering the previous question on House Resolution 299;

Adopting House Resolution 299, if ordered; and

Suspending the rules and passing H.R. 1679.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1180, WORKING FAMILIES FLEXIBILITY ACT OF 2017; PROVIDING FOR PROCEEDINGS DURING THE PERIOD FROM MAY 5, 2017, THROUGH MAY 15, 2017; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on ordering the previous question on the resolution (H. Res. 299) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1180) to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to provide compensatory time for employees in the private sector; providing for proceedings during the period from May 5, 2017, through May 15, 2017; and for other purposes, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

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

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 233, nays 190, not voting 7, as follows:

[Roll No. 240]

YEAS—233

Abraham	Brat	Conaway
Aderholt	Bridenstine	Cook
Allen	Brooks (AL)	Costello (PA)
Amash	Brooks (IN)	Cramer
Arrington	Buchanan	Crawford
Babin	Buck	Culberson
Bacon	Bucshon	Curbelo (FL)
Banks (IN)	Budd	Davidson
Barletta	Burgess	Davis, Rodney
Barr	Byrne	Denham
Barton	Calvert	Dent
Bergman	Carter (GA)	DeSantis
Biggs	Carter (TX)	DesJarlais
Bilirakis	Chabot	Diaz-Balart
Bishop (MI)	Cheney	Donovan
Bishop (UT)	Coffman	Duffy
Black	Cole	Duncan (SC)
Blackburn	Collins (GA)	Duncan (TN)
Blum	Collins (NY)	Dunn
Bost	Comer	Emmer
Brady (TX)	Comstock	Estes (KS)

Farenthold
Faso
Ferguson
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Flores
Fortenberry
Foxx
Frelinghuysen
Gaetz
Gallagher
Garrett
Gibbs
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guthrie
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins (LA)
Hill
Holding
Hollingsworth
Hudson
Huizenga
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger
Knight
Kustoff (TN)
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
Lewis (MN)
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Marshall
Massie
Mast
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mitchell
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Murphy (PA)
Newhouse
Noem
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Pittenger
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Posey
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Rice (SC)
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney, Francis
Rooney, Thomas J.
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce (CA)
Russell
Rutherford
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smucker
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Taylor
Tenney
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Zeldin

NAYS—190

Adams
Aguilar
Barragán
Bass
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (MD)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capuano
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Correa
Costa
Courtney
Crist
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Demings
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Espaillat
Esty (CT)
Evans
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Gonzalez (TX)
Gottheimer
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hanabusa
Hastings
Heck
Higgins (NY)
Himes
Hoyer
Huffman
Jackson Lee
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones
Kaptur
Keating
Kennedy
Khanna
Kihuen
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster (NH)
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham, M.
Luján, Ben Ray
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn B.
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McEachin
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Halleran
O'Rourke
Pallone
Panetta
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Raskin
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Rosen
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Smith (WA)
Soto
Speier
Suozzi
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—7

Amodei
Chaffetz
Davis, Danny
Franks (AZ)
Kelly (IL)
Meng
Slaughter

□ 1429

Messrs. O'HALLERAN and BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Mr. MARSHALL changed his vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the previous question was ordered.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ALLEN). The question is on the resolution.

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

RECORDED VOTE

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

A recorded vote was ordered.

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

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 231, noes 193, not voting 6, as follows:

[Roll No. 241]

AYES—231

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Arrington
Babin
Bacon
Banks (IN)
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Bergman
Biggs
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Budd
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Cheney
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comer
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davidson
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Dunn
Emmer
Estes (KS)
Farenthold
Faso
Ferguson
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Flores
Fortenberry
Foxx
Frelinghuysen
Gaetz
Gallagher
Garrett
Gibbs
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Guthrie
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins (LA)
Hill
Holding
Hollingsworth
Hudson
Huizenga
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger
Knight
Kustoff (TN)
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
Lewis (MN)
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Marshall
Mast
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mitchell
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Murphy (PA)
Newhouse
Noem
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Pittenger
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Posey
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Rice (SC)
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney, Francis
Rooney, Thomas J.
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce (CA)
Russell
Rutherford
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smucker
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Taylor
Tenney
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Zeldin

NOES—193

Adams
Aguilar
Amash
Barragán
Bass
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (MD)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capuano
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Correa
Costa
Courtney
Crist
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Demings
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Espaillat
Esty (CT)
Evans
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Gonzalez (TX)
Gottheimer
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hanabusa
Hastings
Heck
Higgins (NY)
Himes
Hoyer
Huffman
Jackson Lee
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Khanna
Kihuen
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster (NH)
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham, M.
Luján, Ben Ray
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn B.
Maloney, Sean
Massie
Matsui
McCollum
McEachin
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Halleran
O'Rourke
Pallone
Panetta
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Raskin
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Rosen
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz

Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Smith (WA)
Soto
Speier
Suozzi
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—6

Amodei
Chaffetz
Franks (AZ)
Grothman
Meng
Slaughter

□ 1437

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall No. 241.

FEMA ACCOUNTABILITY, MODERNIZATION AND TRANSPARENCY ACT OF 2017

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee). The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1679) to ensure that the Federal Emergency Management Agency's current efforts to modernize its grant management system includes applicant accessibility and transparency, and for other purposes, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BARLETTA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 419, nays 0, not voting 11, as follows:

[Roll No. 242]

YEAS—419

Abraham
Adams
Aderholt
Aguilar
Allen
Amash
Arrington
Babin
Bacon
Banks (IN)
Barletta
Barr
Barragán
Barton
Bass
Beatty
Bera
Bergman
Beyer
Biggs
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Blumenauer
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Bost
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brown (MD)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Budd
Burgess
Bustos
Butterfield
Byrne
Calvert
Capuano
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carson (IN)
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Cheney
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coffman
Cohen
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comer
Conaway
Connolly
Conyers
Cook
Cooper
Correa
Costa
Costello (PA)
Courtney
Cramer
Crawford
Crist
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Curbelo (FL)
Davidson
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Demings
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DeSaulnier
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Doggett
Donovan
Doyle, Michael F.
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Dunn
Ellison
Emmer
Engel
Eshoo
Espaillat
Estes (KS)
Esty (CT)
Evans
Farenthold
Faso
Ferguson
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Flores
Fortenberry
Foster
Foxx
Frankel (FL)
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Gabbard
Gaetz
Gallagher
Gallego
Garamendi
Garrett
Gibbs
Gohmert
Gonzalez (TX)
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gottheimer
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Grothman
Guthrie
Hanabusa
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings
Heck
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins (LA)
Higgins (NY)
Hill
Himes
Holding
Hollingsworth
Hoyer
Hudson
Huffman
Huizenga
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd
Issa
Jackson Lee
Jayapal
Jeffries
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Kaptur
Katko
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Khanna
Kihuen
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger
Knight
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster (NH)
Kustoff (TN)
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latta
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lewis (MN)
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren
Long
Love
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham, M.
Luján, Ben Ray
Lynch
MacArthur
Maloney, Carolyn B.
Maloney, Sean
Marchant
Marino
Marshall
Massie
Mast
Matsui
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McEachin
McGovern
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Meeks
Messer
Mitchell
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Moore
Moulton
Mullin
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Newhouse
Noem
Nolan
Norcross
Nunes
O'Halleran
O'Rourke
Olson
Palazzo
Pallone
Palmer
Panetta
Pascrell
Paulsen
Payne
Pearce
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Perry
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pittenger
Pocan
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Polis
Posey
Price (NC)
Quigley
Raskin
Ratcliffe
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Rice (NY)
Rice (SC)
Richmond
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney, Francis
Rooney, Thomas J.
Ros-Lehtinen
Rosen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Roybal-Allard
Royce (CA)
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Russell
Rutherford
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez
Sanford
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Sires
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Smucker
Soto
Speier
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Suozzi
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Taylor
Tenney
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Trott
Tsongas
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Weber (TX)
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Welch
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams
Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yarmuth
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Zeldin

NOT VOTING—11

Amodei
Chaffetz
Comstock
Davis, Rodney
Franks (AZ)
Griffith
Gutiérrez
Loudermilk
Meng
Rush
Slaughter

□ 1449

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall No. 242.

KOREAN INTERDICTION AND MODERNIZATION OF SANCTIONS ACT

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1644) to enhance sanctions with respect to transactions relating to North Korea, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1644

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 ''Korean Interdiction and Modernization of Sanctions Act''.

SEC. 2. TABLE OF CONTENTS.

The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title.
Sec. 2. Table of contents.
Sec. 3. Definitions.
TITLE I—SANCTIONS TO ENFORCE AND IMPLEMENT UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL SANCTIONS AGAINST NORTH KOREA
Sec. 101. Modification and expansion of requirements for the designation of persons.
Sec. 102. Prohibition on indirect correspondent accounts.
Sec. 103. Limitations on foreign assistance to noncompliant governments.
Sec. 104. Amendments to enhance inspection authorities.
Sec. 105. Enforcing compliance with United Nations shipping sanctions against North Korea.
Sec. 106. Report on cooperation between North Korea and Iran.
Sec. 107. Report on implementation of United Nations Security Council resolutions by other governments.
Sec. 108. Briefing on measures to deny specialized financial messaging services to designated North Korean financial institutions.

TITLE II—SANCTIONS WITH RESPECT TO HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES BY THE GOVERNMENT OF NORTH KOREA
Sec. 201. Sanctions for forced labor and slavery overseas of North Koreans.
Sec. 202. Modifications to sanctions suspension and waiver authorities.
Sec. 203. Reward for informants.
Sec. 204. Determination on designation of North Korea as a state sponsor of terrorism.
TITLE III—GENERAL AUTHORITIES
Sec. 301. Authority to consolidate reports.
Sec. 302. Rule of construction.
Sec. 303. Regulatory authority.
Sec. 304. Limitation on funds.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

(a) AMENDMENTS TO DEFINITIONS IN THE NORTH KOREA SANCTIONS AND POLICY ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2016.—

(1) APPLICABLE EXECUTIVE ORDER.—Section 3(1)(A) of the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016 (22 U.S.C. 9202(1)(A)) is amended—

(A) by striking ''or Executive Order 13694'' and inserting ''Executive Order 13694''; and

(B) by inserting ''or Executive Order 13722 (50 U.S.C. 1701 note; relating to blocking the property of the Government of North Korea and the Workers' Party of Korea, and Prohibiting Certain Transactions With Respect to North Korea),'' before ''to the extent''.

(2) APPLICABLE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION.—Section 3(2)(A) of the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016 (22 U.S.C. 9202(2)(A)) is amended by striking ''or 2094 (2013)'' and inserting ''2094 (2013), 2270 (2016), or 2321 (2016)''.

(3) FOREIGN PERSON.—Section 3 of the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016 (22 U.S.C. 9202) is amended—

(A) by redesignating paragraphs (5) through (14) as paragraphs (6) through (15), respectively; and

(B) by inserting after paragraph (4) the following new paragraph:

''(5) FOREIGN PERSON.—The term 'foreign person' means—

''(A) an individual who is not a United States citizen or an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence to the United States; or

''(B) an entity that is not a United States person.''.

(4) LUXURY GOODS.—Paragraph (9) of section 3 of the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016 (22 U.S.C. 9202), as redesignated by paragraph (3) of this subsection, is amended—

(A) in subparagraph (A), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(B) in subparagraph (B), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(C) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

''(C) also includes any items so designated under an applicable United Nations Security Council resolution.''.

(5) NORTH KOREAN PERSON.—Section 3 of the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016 (22 U.S.C. 9202), as amended by paragraph (3) of this subsection, is further amended—

(A) by redesignating paragraphs (13) through (15) as paragraphs (14) through (16), respectively; and

(B) by inserting after paragraph (12) the following new paragraph:

''(13) NORTH KOREAN PERSON.—The term 'North Korean person' means—

''(A) a North Korean citizen or national; or

''(B) an entity owned or controlled by the Government of North Korea or by a North Korean citizen or national.''.

(b) DEFINITIONS FOR PURPOSES OF THIS ACT.—In this Act:

(1) APPLICABLE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION; LUXURY GOODS.—The terms ''applicable United Nations Security Council resolution'' and ''luxury goods'' have the meanings given those terms, respectively, in section 3 of the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016 (22 U.S.C. 9202), as amended by subsection (a).

(2) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES; GOVERNMENT OF NORTH KOREA; UNITED STATES PERSON.—The terms ''appropriate congressional committees'', ''Government of North Korea'', and ''United States person'' have the meanings given those terms, respectively, in section 3 of the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016 (22 U.S.C. 9202).

(3) FOREIGN PERSON; NORTH KOREAN PERSON.—The terms ''foreign person'' and ''North Korean person'' have the meanings given those terms, respectively, in paragraph (5) and paragraph (13) of section 3 of the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016 (22 U.S.C. 9202(5) and 9202(13)), as added by subsection (a).

(4) PROHIBITED WEAPONS PROGRAM.—The term ''prohibited weapons program'' means—

(A) any program related to the development of nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons, and their means of delivery, including ballistic missiles; and

(B) any program to develop related materials with respect to a program described in subparagraph (A).

TITLE I—SANCTIONS TO ENFORCE AND IMPLEMENT UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL SANCTIONS AGAINST NORTH KOREA

SEC. 101. MODIFICATION AND EXPANSION OF REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DESIGNATION OF PERSONS.

(a) EXPANSION OF MANDATORY DESIGNATIONS.—Section 104(a) of the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016 (22 U.S.C. 9214(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (9), by striking ''; or'' and inserting ''or any defense article or defense service (as such terms are defined in section 47 of the Arms Export Control Act (22 U.S.C. 2794));'';

(2) by redesignating paragraph (10) as paragraph (15);

(3) by inserting after paragraph (9) the following new paragraphs:

''(10) knowingly, directly or indirectly, purchases or otherwise acquires from North Korea any significant amounts of gold, titanium ore, vanadium ore, copper, silver, nickel, zinc, or rare earth minerals;

''(11) knowingly, directly or indirectly, sells or transfers to North Korea any significant amounts of rocket, aviation, or jet fuel (except for use by a civilian passenger aircraft outside North Korea, exclusively for consumption during its flight to North Korea or its return flight);

''(12) knowingly, directly or indirectly, provides significant amounts of fuel or supplies, provides bunkering services, or facilitates a significant transaction or transactions to operate or maintain, a vessel or aircraft that is designated under an applicable Executive order or an applicable United Nations Security Council resolution, or that is owned or controlled by a person designated under an applicable Executive order or applicable United Nations Security Council resolution;

''(13) knowingly, directly or indirectly, insures, registers, facilitates the registration of, or maintains insurance or a registration for, a vessel owned or controlled by the Government of North Korea, except as specifically approved by the United Nations Security Council;

''(14) knowingly, directly or indirectly, maintains a correspondent account (as defined in section 201A(d)(1)) with any North Korean financial institution, except as specifically approved by the United Nations Security Council; or''; and

(4) in paragraph (15), as so redesignated, by striking ''(9)'' and inserting ''(14)''.

(b) EXPANSION OF ADDITIONAL DISCRETIONARY DESIGNATIONS.—Section 104(b)(1) of the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016 (22 U.S.C. 9214(b)(1)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), by striking ''pursuant to an applicable United Nations Security Council resolution;'' and inserting the following: ''pursuant to—

''(i) an applicable United Nations Security Council resolution;

''(ii) any regulation promulgated under section 404; or

''(iii) any applicable Executive order;'';

(2) in subparagraph (B)(iii), by striking ''or'' at the end;

(3) in subparagraph (C), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(4) by adding at the end the following new subparagraphs:

''(D) knowingly, directly or indirectly, purchased or otherwise acquired from the Government of North Korea significant quantities of coal, iron, or iron ore, in excess of the limitations provided in applicable United Nations Security Council resolutions;

''(E) knowingly, directly or indirectly, purchased or otherwise acquired significant types or amounts of textiles from the Government of North Korea;

''(F) knowingly facilitated a significant transfer of funds or property of the Government of North Korea that materially contributes to any violation of an applicable United National Security Council resolution;

''(G) knowingly, directly or indirectly, facilitated a significant transfer to or from the Government of North Korea of bulk cash, precious metals, gemstones, or other stores of value not described under subsection (a)(10);

''(H) knowingly, directly or indirectly, sold, transferred, or otherwise provided significant amounts of crude oil, condensates, refined petroleum, other types of petroleum or petroleum byproducts, liquified natural gas, or other natural gas resources to the Government of North Korea (except for heavy fuel oil, gasoline, or diesel fuel for humanitarian use or as excepted under subsection (a)(11));

''(I) knowingly, directly or indirectly, engaged in, facilitated, or was responsible for the online commercial activities of the Government of North Korea, including online gambling;

''(J) knowingly, directly or indirectly, purchased or otherwise acquired fishing rights from the Government of North Korea;

''(K) knowingly, directly or indirectly, provided significant telephonic, telegraphic, telecommunications or other data services, in whole or in part, into or out of North Korea, in excess of services needed for humanitarian or diplomatic purposes (other than services that are excepted under section 203(b)(1) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1702(b)(1)));

''(L) knowingly, directly or indirectly, purchased or otherwise acquired significant types or amounts of food or agricultural products from the Government of North Korea;

''(M) knowingly, directly or indirectly, engaged in, facilitated, or was responsible for the exportation of workers from North Korea in a manner intended to generate significant revenue, directly or indirectly, for use by the Government of North Korea or by the Workers' Party of Korea;

''(N) knowingly conducted a significant transaction or transactions in North Korea's

transportation, mining, energy, or financial services industries; or

''(O) except as specifically approved by the United Nations Security Council, and other than through a correspondent account as described in subsection (a)(14), knowingly facilitated the operation of any branch, subsidiary, or office of a North Korean financial institution.''.

(c) MANDATORY AND DISCRETIONARY ASSET BLOCKING.—Section 104(c) of the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016 (22 U.S.C. 9214(c)) is amended—

(1) by striking ''of a designated person'' and inserting ''of a person designated under subsection (a)'';

(2) by striking ''The President'' and inserting the following:

''(1) MANDATORY ASSET BLOCKING.—The President''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(2) DISCRETIONARY ASSET BLOCKING.—The President may also exercise such powers, in the same manner and to the same extent described in paragraph (1), with respect to a person designated under subsection (b).''.

(d) DESIGNATION OF ADDITIONAL PERSONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report including a determination as to whether reasonable grounds exist, and an explanation of the reasons for any determination that such grounds do not exist, to designate, pursuant to section 104 of the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016 (22 U.S.C. 9214), as amended by this section, each of the following:

(A) The Korea Shipowners' Protection and Indemnity Association, a North Korean insurance company, with respect to facilitating imports, exports, and reexports of arms and related materiel to and from North Korea, or for other activities prohibited by such section 104.

(B) Chinpo Shipping Company (Private) Limited, a Singapore corporation, with respect to facilitating imports, exports, and reexports of arms and related materiel to and from North Korea.

(C) The Central Bank of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, with respect to the sale of gold to, the receipt of gold from, or the import or export of gold by the Government of North Korea.

(D) Kumgang Economic Development Corporation (KKG), with respect to being an entity controlled by Bureau 39 of the Workers' Party of the Government of North Korea.

(E) Sam Pa, also known as Xu Jinghua, Xu Songhua, Sa Muxu, Samo, Sampa, or Sam King, and any entities owned or controlled by such individual, with respect to transactions with KKG.

(F) The Chamber of Commerce of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, with respect to the exportation of workers in violation of section 104(a)(5) or of section 104(b)(1)(M) of such Act, as amended by subsection (b) of this section.

(2) FORM.—The report submitted under paragraph (1) may contain a classified annex.

SEC. 102. PROHIBITION ON INDIRECT CORRESPONDENT ACCOUNTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Title II of the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016 (22 U.S.C. 9221 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 201 the following new section:

''SEC. 201A. PROHIBITION ON INDIRECT CORRESPONDENT ACCOUNTS.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subsection (b), if a United States financial institution has or obtains knowledge that a correspondent account established, maintained, administered, or managed by that institution for a foreign financial institution is being used by the foreign financial institution to provide significant financial services indirectly to any person, foreign government, or financial institution designated under section 104, the United States financial institution shall ensure that such correspondent account is no longer used to provide such services.

''(b) EXCEPTION.—A United States financial institution is authorized to process transfers of funds to or from North Korea, or for the direct or indirect benefit of any person, foreign government, or financial institution that is designated under section 104, only if the transfer—

''(1) arises from, and is ordinarily incident and necessary to give effect to, an underlying transaction that has been authorized by a specific or general license issued by the Secretary of the Treasury; and

''(2) does not involve debiting or crediting a North Korean account.

''(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) CORRESPONDENT ACCOUNT.—The term 'correspondent account' has the meaning given that term in section 5318A of title 31, United States Code.

''(2) UNITED STATES FINANCIAL INSTITUTION.—The term 'United States financial institution' means has the meaning given that term in section 510.310 of title 31, Code of Federal Regulations, as in effect on the date of the enactment of this section.

''(3) FOREIGN FINANCIAL INSTITUTION.—The term 'foreign financial institution' has the meaning given that term in section 1010.605 of title 31, Code of Federal Regulations, as in effect on the date of the enactment of this section.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in section 1(b) of the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 201 the following new item:

''Sec. 201A. Prohibition on indirect correspondent accounts.''.

SEC. 103. LIMITATIONS ON FOREIGN ASSISTANCE TO NONCOMPLIANT GOVERNMENTS.

Section 203 of the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016 (22 U.S.C. 9223) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)—

(A) in the heading, by striking ''TRANSACTIONS IN LETHAL MILITARY EQUIPMENT'' and inserting ''TRANSACTIONS IN DEFENSE ARTICLES OR DEFENSE SERVICES'';

(B) in paragraph (1), by striking ''that provides lethal military equipment to the Government of North Korea'' and inserting ''that provides to or receives from the Government of North Korea a defense article or defense service, as such terms are defined in section 47 of the Arms Export Control Act (22 U.S.C. 2794), if the President determines that a significant type or amount of such article or service has been so provided or received''; and

(C) in paragraph (2), by striking ''1 year'' and inserting ''2 years'';

(2) in subsection (d), by striking ''or emergency'' and inserting ''maternal and child health, disease prevention and response, or''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(e) REPORT ON ARMS TRAFFICKING INVOLVING NORTH KOREA.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this subsection, and annually thereafter for 5 years, the Secretary of State shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that specifically describes the compliance of foreign countries and other foreign jurisdictions with the requirement to curtail the trade described in subsection (b)(1).

''(2) FORM.—The report required under paragraph (1) shall be submitted in unclassified form but may contain a classified annex.''.

SEC. 104. AMENDMENTS TO ENHANCE INSPECTION AUTHORITIES.

Title II of the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016 (22 U.S.C. 9221 et seq.), as amended by section 102 of this Act, is further amended by striking section 205 and inserting the following:

''SEC. 205. ENHANCED INSPECTION AUTHORITIES.

''(a) REPORT REQUIRED.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this section, and annually thereafter for 5 years, the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report—

''(A) identifying the operators of foreign sea ports and airports that knowingly—

''(i) significantly fail to implement or enforce regulations to inspect ships, aircraft, cargo, or conveyances in transit to or from North Korea, as required by applicable United Nations Security Council resolutions;

''(ii) facilitate the transfer, transshipment, or conveyance of significant types or quantities of cargo, vessels, or aircraft owned or controlled by persons designated under applicable United Nations Security Council resolutions; or

''(iii) facilitate any of the activities described in section 104(a);

''(B) describing the extent to which the requirements of applicable United Nations Security Council resolutions to de-register any vessel owned, controlled, or operated by or on behalf of the Government of North Korea have been implemented by other foreign countries;

''(C) describing the compliance of the Islamic Republic of Iran with the sanctions mandated in applicable United Nations Security Council resolutions;

''(D) identifying vessels, aircraft, and conveyances owned or controlled by the Reconnaissance General Bureau of the Workers' Party of Korea; and

''(E) describing the diplomatic and enforcement efforts by the President to secure the full implementation of the applicable United Nations Security Council resolutions, as described in subparagraphs (A) through (C).

''(2) FORM.—The report required under paragraph (1) shall be submitted in unclassified form but may contain a classified annex.

''(b) SPECIFIC FINDINGS.—Each report required under subsection (a) shall include specific findings with respect to the following ports and airports:

''(1) The ports of Dandong, Dalian, and any other port in the People's Republic of China that the President deems appropriate.

''(2) The ports of Abadan, Bandar-e-Abbas, Chabahar, Bandar-e-Khomeini, Bushehr Port, Asaluyeh Port, Kish, Kharg Island, Bandar-e-Lenge, and Khorramshahr, and Tehran Imam Khomeini International Airport, in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

''(3) The ports of Nakhodka, Vanino, and Vladivostok, in the Russian Federation.

''(4) The ports of Latakia, Banias, and Tartous, and Damascus International Airport, in the Syrian Arab Republic.

''(c) ENHANCED SECURITY TARGETING REQUIREMENTS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), the Secretary of Homeland Security may, using a layered approach, require enhanced screening procedures to determine whether physical inspections are warranted of any cargo bound for or landed in the United States that—

''(A) has been transported through a sea port or airport the operator of which has

been identified by the President in accordance with subsection (a)(1) as having repeatedly failed to comply with applicable United Nations Security Council resolutions;

''(B) is aboard a vessel or aircraft, or within a conveyance that has, within the last 365 days, entered the territory or waters of North Korea, or landed in any of the sea ports or airports of North Korea; or

''(C) is registered by a country or jurisdiction whose compliance has been identified by the President as deficient pursuant to subsection (a)(2).

''(2) EXCEPTION FOR FOOD, MEDICINE, AND HUMANITARIAN SHIPMENTS.—Paragraph (1) shall not apply to any vessel, aircraft, or conveyance that has entered the territory or waters of North Korea, or landed in any of the sea ports or airports of North Korea, exclusively for the purposes described in section 208(b)(3)(B), or to import food, medicine, or supplies into North Korea to meet the humanitarian needs of the North Korean people.

''(d) SEIZURE AND FORFEITURE.—A vessel, aircraft, or conveyance used to facilitate any of the activities described in section 104(a) under the jurisdiction of the United States may be seized and forfeited, or subject to forfeiture, under—

''(1) chapter 46 of title 18, United States Code; or

''(2) part V of title IV of the Tariff Act of 1930 (19 U.S.C. 1581 et seq.).''.

SEC. 105. ENFORCING COMPLIANCE WITH UNITED NATIONS SHIPPING SANCTIONS AGAINST NORTH KOREA.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Ports and Waterways Safety Act (33 U.S.C. 1221 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

''SEC. 16. PROHIBITION ON ENTRY AND OPERATION.

''(a) PROHIBITION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as otherwise provided in this section, no vessel described in subsection (b) may enter or operate in the navigable waters of the United States or transfer cargo in any port or place under the jurisdiction of the United States.

''(2) LIMITATIONS ON APPLICATION.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The prohibition under paragraph (1) shall not apply with respect to—

''(i) a vessel described in subsection (b)(1), if the Secretary of State determines that—

''(I) the vessel is owned or operated by or on behalf of a country the government of which the Secretary of State determines is closely cooperating with the United States with respect to implementing the applicable United Nations Security Council resolutions (as such term is defined in section 3 of the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016); or

''(II) it is in the national security interest not to apply the prohibition to such vessel; or

''(ii) a vessel described in subsection (b)(2), if the Secretary of State determines that the vessel is no longer registered as described in that subsection.

''(B) NOTICE.—Not later than 15 days after making a determination under subparagraph (A), the Secretary of State shall submit to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Foreign Relations and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate written notice of the determination and the basis upon which the determination was made.

''(C) PUBLICATION.—The Secretary of State shall publish a notice in the Federal Register of each determination made under subparagraph (A).

''(b) VESSELS DESCRIBED.—A vessel referred to in subsection (a) is a foreign vessel for which a notice of arrival is required to be filed under section 4(a)(5), and that—

''(1) is on the most recent list of vessels published in Federal Register under subsection (c)(2); or

''(2) more than 180 days after the publication of such list, is knowingly registered, pursuant to the 1958 Convention on the High Seas entered into force on September 30, 1962, by a government the agents or instrumentalities of which are maintaining a registration of a vessel that is included on such list.

''(c) INFORMATION AND PUBLICATION.—The Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating, with the concurrence of the Secretary of State, shall—

''(1) maintain timely information on the registrations of all foreign vessels over 300 gross tons that are known to be—

''(A) owned or operated by or on behalf of the Government of North Korea or a North Korean person;

''(B) owned or operated by or on behalf of any country in which a sea port is located, the operator of which the President has identified in the most recent report submitted under section 205(a)(1)(A) of the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016; or

''(C) owned or operated by or on behalf of any country identified by the President as a country that has not complied with the applicable United Nations Security Council resolutions (as such term is defined in section 3 of such Act); and

''(2) not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this section, and periodically thereafter, publish in the Federal Register a list of the vessels described in paragraph (1).

''(d) NOTIFICATION OF GOVERNMENTS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State shall notify each government, the agents or instrumentalities of which are maintaining a registration of a foreign vessel that is included on a list published under subsection (c)(2), not later than 30 days after such publication, that all vessels registered under such government's authority are subject to subsection (a).

''(2) ADDITIONAL NOTIFICATION.—In the case of a government that continues to maintain a registration for a vessel that is included on such list after receiving an initial notification under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall issue an additional notification to such government not later than 120 days after the publication of a list under subsection (c)(2).

''(e) NOTIFICATION OF VESSELS.—Upon receiving a notice of arrival under section 4(a)(5) from a vessel described in subsection (b), the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating shall notify the master of such vessel that the vessel may not enter or operate in the navigable waters of the United States or transfer cargo in any port or place under the jurisdiction of the United States, unless—

''(1) the Secretary of State has made a determination under subsection (a)(2); or

''(2) the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating allows provisional entry of the vessel, or transfer of cargo from the vessel, under subsection (f).

''(f) PROVISIONAL ENTRY OR CARGO TRANSFER.—Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating may allow provisional entry of, or transfer of cargo from, a vessel, if such entry or transfer is necessary for the safety of the vessel or persons aboard.

''(g) RIGHT OF INNOCENT PASSAGE AND RIGHT OF TRANSIT PASSAGE.—This section shall not be construed as authority to restrict the right of innocent passage or the right of transit passage as recognized under international law.

''(h) FOREIGN VESSEL DEFINED.—In this section, the term 'foreign vessel' has the meaning given that term in section 110 of title 46, United States Code.''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) SPECIAL POWERS.—Section 4(b)(2) of the Ports and Waterways Safety Act (33 U.S.C. 1223(b)(2)) is amended by inserting ''or 16'' after ''section 9''.

(2) DENIAL OF ENTRY.—Section 13(e) of the Ports and Waterways Safety Act (33 U.S.C. 1232(e)) is amended by striking ''section 9'' and inserting ''section 9 or 16''.

SEC. 106. REPORT ON COOPERATION BETWEEN NORTH KOREA AND IRAN.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter for 5 years, the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that includes—

(1) an assessment of the extent of cooperation (including through the transfer of goods, services, technology, or intellectual property) between North Korea and Iran relating to their respective nuclear, ballistic missile development, chemical or biological weapons development, or conventional weapons programs;

(2) the names of any Iranian or North Korean persons that have knowingly engaged in or directed—

(A) the provision of material support to such programs; or

(B) the exchange of information between North Korea and Iran with respect to such programs;

(3) the names of any other foreign persons that have facilitated the activities described in paragraph (1); and

(4) a determination whether any of the activities described in paragraphs (1) and (2) violate United Nations Security Council Resolution 2231 (2015).

(b) FORM.—The report required under subsection (a) shall be submitted in unclassified form but may contain a classified annex.

SEC. 107. REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS BY OTHER GOVERNMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter for 5 years, the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that evaluates the degree to which the governments of other countries have knowingly failed to—

(1) close the representative offices of persons designated under applicable United Nations Security Council resolutions;

(2) expel any North Korean nationals, including diplomats, working on behalf of such persons;

(3) prohibit the opening of new branches, subsidiaries, or representative offices of North Korean financial institutions within the jurisdictions of such governments; or

(4) expel any representatives of North Korean financial institutions.

(b) FORM.—The report required under subsection (a) shall be submitted in unclassified form but may contain a classified annex.

SEC. 108. BRIEFING ON MEASURES TO DENY SPECIALIZED FINANCIAL MESSAGING SERVICES TO DESIGNATED NORTH KOREAN FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every 180 days thereafter for 5 years, the President shall provide to the appropriate congressional committees a briefing that includes the following information:

(1) A list of each person or foreign government the President has identified that directly provides specialized financial messaging services to, or enables or facilitates direct or indirect access to such messaging services for—

(A) any North Korean financial institution (as such term is defined in section 3 of the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016 (22 U.S.C. 9202)) designated under an applicable United Nations Security Council resolution; or

(B) any other North Korean person, on behalf of such a North Korean financial institution.

(2) A detailed assessment of the status of efforts by the Secretary of the Treasury to work with the relevant authorities in the home jurisdictions of such specialized financial messaging providers to end such provision or access.

(b) FORM.—The briefing required under subsection (a) may be classified.

TITLE II—SANCTIONS WITH RESPECT TO HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES BY THE GOVERNMENT OF NORTH KOREA

SEC. 201. SANCTIONS FOR FORCED LABOR AND SLAVERY OVERSEAS OF NORTH KOREANS.

(a) SANCTIONS FOR TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 302(b) of the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016 (22 U.S.C. 9241(b)) is amended—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(B) in paragraph (2), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; and''; and

(C) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(3) a list of foreign persons that knowingly employ North Korean laborers, as described in section 104(b)(1)(M).''.

(2) ADDITIONAL DETERMINATIONS; REPORTS.—With respect to any country identified in section 302(b)(2) of the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016 (22 U.S.C. 9241(b)(2)), as amended by paragraph (1), the report required under section 302(a) of such Act shall—

(A) include a determination whether each person identified in section 302(b)(3) of such Act (as amended by paragraph (1)) who is a national or a citizen of such identified country meets the criteria for sanctions under—

(i) section 111 of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7108) (relating to the prevention of trafficking in persons); or

(ii) section 104(a) or 104(b)(1) of the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016 (22 U.S.C. 9214(a)), as amended by section 101 of this Act;

(B) be included in the report required under section 110(b) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7107(b)) (relating to the annual report on trafficking in persons); and

(C) be considered in any determination that the government of such country has made serious and sustained efforts to eliminate severe forms of trafficking in persons, as such term is defined for purposes of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000.

(b) SANCTIONS ON FOREIGN PERSONS THAT EMPLOY NORTH KOREAN LABOR.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Title III of the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016 (22 U.S.C. 9241 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 302 the following new sections:

''SEC. 302A. REBUTTABLE PRESUMPTION APPLICABLE TO GOODS MADE WITH NORTH KOREAN LABOR.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subsection (b), any significant goods, wares, articles, and merchandise mined, produced, or manufactured wholly or in part by the labor of North Korean nationals or citizens shall be deemed to be prohibited under section 307 of the Tariff Act of 1930 (19 U.S.C. 1307) and shall not be entitled to entry at any of the ports of the United States.

''(b) EXCEPTION.—The prohibition described in subsection (a) shall not apply if the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection finds, by clear and convincing evidence, that the goods, wares, articles, or merchandise described in such paragraph were not produced with convict labor, forced labor, or indentured labor under penal sanctions.

''SEC. 302B. SANCTIONS ON FOREIGN PERSONS EMPLOYING NORTH KOREAN LABOR.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subsection (c), the President shall designate any person identified under section 302(b)(3) for the imposition of sanctions under subsection (b).

''(b) IMPOSITION OF SANCTIONS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The President shall impose the sanctions described in paragraph (2) with respect to any person designated under subsection (a).

''(2) SANCTIONS DESCRIBED.—The sanctions described in this paragraph are sanctions pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.) to block and prohibit all transactions in property and interests in property of a person designated under subsection (a), if such property and interests in property are in the United States, come within the United States, or are or come within the possession or control of a United States person.

''(c) EXCEPTION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—A person may not be designated under subsection (a) if the President certifies to the appropriate congressional committees that the President has received reliable assurances from such person that—

''(A) the employment of North Korean laborers does not result in the direct or indirect transfer of convertible currency, luxury goods, or other stores of value to the Government of North Korea;

''(B) all wages and benefits are provided directly to the laborers, and are held, as applicable, in accounts within the jurisdiction in which they reside in locally denominated currency; and

''(C) the laborers are subject to working conditions consistent with international standards.

''(2) RECERTIFICATION.—Not later than 180 days after the date on which the President transmits to the appropriate congressional committees an initial certification under paragraph (1), and every 180 days thereafter, the President shall—

''(A) transmit a recertification stating that the conditions described in such paragraph continue to be met; or

''(B) if such recertification cannot be transmitted, impose the sanctions described in subsection (b) beginning on the date on which the President determines that such recertification cannot be transmitted.''.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in section 1(b) of the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 302 the following new items:

''Sec. 302A. Rebuttable presumption applicable to goods made with North Korean labor.

''Sec. 302B. Sanctions on foreign persons employing North Korean labor.''.

SEC. 202. MODIFICATIONS TO SANCTIONS SUSPENSION AND WAIVER AUTHORITIES.

(a) EXEMPTIONS.—Section 208(a) of the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016 (22 U.S.C. 9228(a)) is amended in the matter preceding paragraph (1)—

(1) by inserting ''201A,'' after ''104,''; and

(2) by inserting ''302A, 302B,'' after ''209,''.

(b) HUMANITARIAN WAIVER.—Section 208(b) of the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016 (22 U.S.C. 9228(b)(1)) is amended—

(1) by inserting ''201A,'' after ''104,'' in each place it appears; and

(2) by inserting ''302A, 302B,'' after ''209(b),'' in each place it appears.

(c) WAIVER.—Section 208(c) of the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016 (22 U.S.C. 9228(c)) is amended in the matter preceding paragraph (1)—

(1) by inserting ''201A,'' after ''104,''; and

(2) by inserting ''302A, 302B,'' after ''209(b),''.

SEC. 203. REWARD FOR INFORMANTS.

Section 36(b) of the State Department Basic Authorities Act of 1956 (22 U.S.C. 2708(b)), is amended—

(1) in paragraph (9), by striking ''or'' at the end;

(2) in paragraph (10), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new paragraphs:

''(11) the identification or location of any person who, while acting at the direction of or under the control of a foreign government, aids or abets a violation of section 1030 of title 18, United States Code; or

''(12) the disruption of financial mechanisms of any person who has engaged in the conduct described in sections 104(a) or 104(b)(1) of the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016 (22 U.S.C. 2914(a) or (b)(1)).''.

SEC. 204. DETERMINATION ON DESIGNATION OF NORTH KOREA AS A STATE SPONSOR OF TERRORISM.

(a) DETERMINATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a determination whether North Korea meets the criteria for designation as a state sponsor of terrorism.

(2) FORM.—The determination required by paragraph (1) shall be submitted in unclassified form but may include a classified annex, if appropriate.

(b) STATE SPONSOR OF TERRORISM DEFINED.—For purposes of this section, the term ''state sponsor of terrorism'' means a country the government of which the Secretary of State has determined, for purposes of section 6(j) of the Export Administration Act of 1979 (50 U.S.C. 4605(j)) (as in effect pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act), section 620A of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2371), section 40 of the Arms Export Control Act (22 U.S.C. 2780), or any other provision of law, is a government that has repeatedly provided support for acts of international terrorism.

TITLE III—GENERAL AUTHORITIES

SEC. 301. AUTHORITY TO CONSOLIDATE REPORTS.

Any reports required to be submitted to the appropriate congressional committees under this Act or any amendment made by this Act that are subject to deadlines for submission consisting of similar units of time may be consolidated into a single report that is submitted to appropriate congressional committees pursuant to the earlier of such deadlines. The consolidated reports must contain all information required under this Act or any amendment made by this Act, in addition to all other elements mandated by previous law.

SEC. 302. RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.

Nothing in this Act shall be construed to limit—

(1) the authority or obligation of the President to apply the sanctions described in section 104 of the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016 (22 U.S.C. 9214), as amended by section 101 of this Act, with regard to persons who meet the criteria for designation under such section, or in any other provision of law; or

(2) the authorities of the President pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.).

SEC. 303. REGULATORY AUTHORITY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The President shall, not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, promulgate regulations as necessary for the implementation of this Act and the amendments made by this Act.

(b) NOTIFICATION TO CONGRESS.—Not fewer than 10 days before the promulgation of a regulation under subsection (a), the President shall notify and provide to the appropriate congressional committees the proposed regulation, specifying the provisions of this Act or the amendments made by this Act that the regulation is implementing.

SEC. 304. LIMITATION ON FUNDS.

No additional funds are authorized to carry out the requirements of this Act or of the amendments made by this Act. Such requirements shall be carried out using amounts otherwise authorized.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on this measure in the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1644, the Korean Interdiction and Modernization of Sanctions Act.

I want to begin by thanking the coauthor of this bill, Ranking Member ELIOT ENGEL, for his work on this legislation and for his steadfast leadership that he has shown on addressing this threat to national security. He has been in North Korea twice—I have been there once—and he has been focused on this for a long time.

Mr. Speaker, North Korea does, in fact, pose an immediate threat to the national security of the United States and to our allies. Experts believe that, in less than 4 years, North Korea will have the ability probably to target the United States with a reliable intercontinental ballistic missile, one topped by a nuclear warhead.

The quick speed with which North Korea's program is advancing is a game changer for our national security. It is no wonder that former President Obama warned President Trump that North Korea would be the top threat to the United States—and this is after the program of strategic patience which President Obama deployed. That policy of strategic patience, unfortunately, has not worked out. We must move forward with something based on a plan that has worked in the past.

North Korea, now that they have conducted two nuclear weapons tests this last year and launched a total of 26 ballistic missiles, including one from a submarine, has reached the point where it is a threat to the United States. In the last 2 years alone, we have seen 49 of these tests of one kind or another as they have built out this program.

Alarmingly, with every test, North Korea gains valuable technical knowledge that has enabled it to make significant improvements to its developing arsenal. So as they march towards the day that it will have the capability of striking all 50 States with an ICBM, we have been reminded by our Chairman of the Joint Chiefs that the ''I'' in that acronym stands for ''intercontinental,'' and he says: as from that continent to this continent.

More immediately, these missiles gravely threaten our allies in South Korea and Japan, and it is a threat to the tens of thousands of U.S. servicemen serving in those countries.

North Korea has been a major proliferator, cooperating on its nuclear and missile programs with the likes of Iran, of Syria, and of Pakistan. I will remind the Members that they built a carbon copy of their nuclear program in Syria on the banks of the Euphrates River. Had it not been—had it not been—for the Israeli Defense Forces taking that facility out some years ago, we would be wrestling right now with the question of whether that facility was in the hands of al-Nusra or in the hands of ISIS or in the hands of Hezbollah. They are undermining U.S. security along with the entire global counterproliferation system, so we can only guess the extent of the damage that is being done through illicit, undetected networks.

Mr. Speaker, Congress has a chance to put North Korea policy on firmer ground, and this bill, this Korean Interdiction and Modernization of Sanctions Act, is a response to this immediate threat. It builds upon the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act, which was a bill authored by Mr. ENGEL and myself that was signed into law last Congress. With this law, the United States designated North Korea as a primary money laundering concern, cutting off their access to cash, and found Kim Jong-un and his top lieutenants responsible for grave human rights abuses. Indeed, the magazine The Economist accurately described North Korea as a gulag now masquerading as a country.

But at the same time, North Korea has worked over the past year to evade international sanctions with the help of a vast network of front companies, which we have now identified, and those front companies work with governments spanning the globe. Those who do business with North Korea provide it with money to fund the regime's nuclear program and fund its grotesque human rights abuses, and they must be stopped.

This bill does that by expanding sanctions to deter North Korea's nuclear programs and to enforce United Nations Security Council resolutions. Let's be clear: these are international commitments that all nations are obliged to honor, including China.

It targets those who employ North Korean slave labor overseas. Companies from Senegal to Qatar to Angola import these North Korean workers who promptly send their salary back to the regime in North Korea, earning the regime billions of dollars in hard currency each year.

This is money that Kim Jong-un uses to advance his nuclear and missile program and also pay his generals, buying their loyalty to his brutal regime. That is what the high-level defectors that I have met with say. So let's squeeze his purse.

It cracks down on North Korean shipping and the use of international ports, restricting the regime's ability to ship weapons and other banned goods.

When we discover that foreign banks have helped Kim Jong-un skirt these sanctions, as some in China have repeatedly done, then we must give those banks and businesses a stark choice: to do business with that regime in North Korea or the United States. As we have heard from the new administration, this is a key focus of theirs.

So, Mr. Speaker, this legislation gives the administration powerful new tools to protect the U.S. and our allies from the threat of North Korean nuclear missiles by going after those who enable the regime's aggression. This shows the world that Congress stands ready to help the administration work with our allies and others to counter North Korea's belligerent behavior and maintain peace and stability in Northeast Asia.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on H.R. 1644, and I reserve the balance of my time.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM,

Washington, DC, April 24, 2017.

Hon. EDWARD R. ROYCE,

Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR, CHAIRMAN: I write concerning H.R. 1644, the Korean Interdiction and Modernization of Sanctions Act. As you know, the Committee on Foreign Affairs received an original referral and the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform a secondary referral when the bill was introduced on March 21, 2017. I recognize and appreciate your desire to bring this legislation before the House of Representatives in an expeditious manner, and accordingly, the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform will forego action on the bill.

The Committee takes this action with our mutual understanding that by foregoing consideration of H.R. 1644 at this time, we do not waive any jurisdiction over the subject matter contained in this or similar legislation. Further, I request your support for the

appointment of conferees from the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform during any House-Senate conference convened on this or related legislation.

Finally, I would ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included in the bill report filed by the Committee on Foreign Affairs, as well as in the Congressional Record during floor consideration, to memorialize our understanding.

Sincerely,

JASON CHAFFETZ,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC, April 24, 2017.

Hon. JASON CHAFFETZ,
Chairman, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you for consulting with the Foreign Affairs Committee and agreeing to be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 1644, the Korean Interdiction and Modernization of Sanctions Act, so that the bill may proceed expeditiously to the House floor.

I agree that your forgoing further action on this measure does not in any way diminish or alter the jurisdiction of your committee, or prejudice its jurisdictional prerogatives on this resolution or similar legislation in the future. I would support your effort to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees from your committee to any House-Senate conference on this legislation.

I will seek to place our letters on H.R. 1644 into the Congressional Record during floor consideration of the resolution. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation and look forward to continuing to work together as this measure moves through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

EDWARD R. ROYCE,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS,
Washington, DC, April 25, 2017.

Hon. EDWARD R. ROYCE,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN ROYCE: I am writing with respect to H.R. 1644, the ''Korean Interdiction and Modernization of Sanctions Act,'' on with the Committee on Ways and Means was granted an additional referral.

In order to allow H.R. 1644 to move expeditiously to the House floor, I agree to waive formal consideration of this bill. The Committee on Ways and Means takes this action with the mutual understanding that we do not waive any jurisdiction over the subject matter contained in this or similar legislation, and the Committee will be appropriately consulted and involved as the bill or similar legislation moves forward so that we may address any remaining issues that fall within our jurisdiction. The Committee also reserves the right to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving this or similar legislation, and requests your support for such request.

Finally, I would appreciate your response to this letter confirming this understanding, and would ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included in the Congressional Record during floor consideration of H.R. 1644.

Sincerely,

KEVIN BRADY,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC, April 24, 2017.

Hon. KEVIN BRADY,
Chairman, Committee on Ways and Means, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN BRADY: Thank you for consulting with the Foreign Affairs Committee and agreeing to be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 1644, the Korean Interdiction and Modernization of Sanctions Act, so that the bill may proceed expeditiously to the House floor.

I agree that your forgoing further action on this measure does not in any way diminish or alter the jurisdiction of your committee, or prejudice its jurisdictional prerogatives on this resolution or similar legislation in the future. I would support your effort to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees from your committee to any House-Senate conference on this legislation.

I will seek to place our letters on H.R. 1644 into the Congressional Record during floor consideration of the resolution. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation and look forward to continuing to work together as this measure moves through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

EDWARD R. ROYCE,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES,
Washington, DC, April 26, 2017.

Hon. ED ROYCE,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN ROYCE: I am writing concerning H.R. 1644, the Korean Interdiction and Modernization of Sanctions Act.

As a result of your having consulted with the Committee on Financial Services concerning provisions in the bill that fall within our Rule X jurisdiction, I agree to forgo action on the bill so that it may proceed expeditiously to the House Floor. The Committee on Financial Services takes this action with our mutual understanding that, by foregoing consideration of H.R. 1644 at this time, we do not waive any jurisdiction over the subject matter contained in this or similar legislation, and that our Committee will be appropriately consulted and involved as this or similar legislation moves forward so that we may address any remaining issues that fall within our Rule X jurisdiction. Our Committee also reserves the right to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving this or similar legislation, and requests your support for any such request.

Finally, I would appreciate your response to this letter confirming this understanding with respect to H.R. 1644 and would ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included in the Congressional Record during floor consideration of the bill.

Sincerely,

JEB HENSARLING,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC, April 26, 2017.

Hon. JEB HENSARLING,
Chairman, Committee on Financial Services, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN HENSARLING: Thank you for consulting with the Foreign Affairs Committee and agreeing to be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 1644, the Korean Interdiction and Modernization of Sanctions Act, so that the bill may proceed expeditiously to the House floor.

I agree that your forgoing further action on this measure does not in any way diminish or alter the jurisdiction of your committee, or prejudice its jurisdictional prerogatives on this bill or similar legislation in the future. I would support your effort to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees from your committee to any House-Senate conference on this legislation.

I will seek to place our letters on H.R. 1644 into the Congressional Record during floor consideration of the bill. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation and look forward to continuing to work together as this measure moves through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

EDWARD R. ROYCE,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY,
Washington, DC, April 27, 2017.

Hon. EDWARD R. ROYCE,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN ROYCE: I write with respect to H.R. 1644, the ''Korean Interdiction and Modernization of Sanctions Act.'' As a result of your having consulted with us on provisions within H.R. 1644 that fall within the Rule X jurisdiction of the Committee on the Judiciary, I forego any further consideration of this bill so that it may proceed expeditiously to the House floor for consideration.

The Judiciary Committee takes this action with our mutual understanding that by foregoing consideration of H.R. 1644 at this time, we do not waive any jurisdiction over subject matter contained in this or similar legislation and that our committee will be appropriately consulted and involved as this bill or similar legislation moves forward so that we may address any remaining issues in our jurisdiction. Our committee also reserves the right to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving this or similar legislation and asks that you support any such request.

I would appreciate a response to this letter confirming this understanding with respect to H.R. 1644 and would ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included in the Congressional Record during floor consideration of H.R. 1644.

Sincerely,

BOB GOODLATTE,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC, April 26, 2017.

Hon. BOB GOODLATTE,
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN GOODLATTE: Thank you for consulting with the Foreign Affairs Committee and agreeing to be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 1644, the Korean Interdiction and Modernization of Sanctions Act, so that the bill may proceed expeditiously to the House floor.

I agree that your forgoing further action on this measure does not in any way diminish or alter the jurisdiction of your committee, or prejudice its jurisdictional prerogatives on this bill or similar legislation in the future. I would support your effort to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees from your committee to any House-Senate conference on this legislation.

I will seek to place our letters on H.R. 1644 into the Congressional Record during floor consideration of the measure. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation

and look forward to continuing to work together as this measure moves through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

EDWARD R. ROYCE,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE,
Washington, DC, April 26, 2017.

Hon. ED ROYCE,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN ROYCE: I write concerning H.R. 1644, the ''Korean Interdiction and Modernization of Sanctions Act.'' This legislation includes matters that fall within the Rule X jurisdiction of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

In order to expedite Floor consideration of H.R. 1644, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure will forgo action on this bill. However, this is conditional on our mutual understanding that forgoing consideration of the bill does not prejudice the Committee with respect to the appointment of conferees or to any future jurisdictional claim over the subject matters contained in the bill or similar legislation that fall Within the Committee's Rule X jurisdiction. I request you urge the Speaker to name members of the Committee to any conference committee named to consider such provisions.

Please place a copy of this letter and your response acknowledging our jurisdictional interest into the committee report on H.R. 1644 and in the Congressional Record during House Floor consideration of the bill. Thank you for working with us on this bill, and I look forward to working with the Committee on Foreign Affairs as the bill moves through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

BILL SHUSTER,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC, April 26, 2017.

Hon. BILL SHUSTER,
Chairman, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you for consulting with the Foreign Affairs Committee and agreeing to be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 1644, the Korean Interdiction and Modernization of Sanctions Act, so that the bill may proceed expeditiously to the House floor.

I agree that your forgoing further action on this measure does not in any way diminish or alter the jurisdiction of your committee, or prejudice its jurisdictional prerogatives on this bill or similar legislation in the future. I would support your effort to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees from your committee to any House-Senate conference on this legislation.

I will seek to place our letters on H.R. 1644 into the Congressional Record during floor consideration of the bill. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation and look forward to continuing to work together as this measure moves through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

EDWARD R. ROYCE,
Chairman.

□ 1500

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this legislation, and let me start by thanking our chairman on the Foreign Affairs Committee, ED ROYCE from California. His personal commitment to this important issue is reflected by his long track record and leadership in crafting the legislation before us today. We have had innumerable talks about North Korea and the threat through the years. ED ROYCE has always been there at the forefront in this very important issue.

I am proud to be the lead Democratic cosponsor of the bill. We stand on the floor today speaking in a unified, bipartisan voice about the threat that North Korea and the Kim regime pose to the United States, to our friend and allies, and to peace and stability across the globe.

Already, Mr. Speaker, North Korea poses a potentially catastrophic danger to our closest allies in Northeast Asia: Japan and South Korea. With each passing day, the reclusive regime in Pyongyang continues to make progress on nuclear and ballistic missile technology that could reach American soil.

This isn't a laughing matter. This isn't a matter about something that might happen. This is a matter about something that will happen, unless we take steps to prevent it from happening.

American administrations of both parties have tried and failed to curb the dangerous behavior of the Kim regime. Before Kim, you had his father and his grandfather before him. There is plenty of blame to go around for how we got here, but rehashing past mistakes won't get us anywhere. Instead, the United States and other global powers need to focus on this challenge before it is too late.

However, I fear that the administration's inconsistency in recent weeks has thrown fuel to the fire. We have seen the White House blow hot and cold on the potential for talks with Pyongyang. We have seen careless rhetoric alienate South Korea, a critical ally whose partnership is essential in trying to contain North Korea.

One week we see saber rattling toward North Korea, including the false claim that an aircraft carrier battle group was headed toward the Korean Peninsula, and the next week, the President saying he would be ''honored'' to meet with ''smart cookie'' Kim Jong-un, the latest in a long list of totalitarian strongmen who seem to have won the President's admiration.

We are sending mixed signals, Mr. Speaker, and the world is taking notice. Inconsistency on national security matters is not a foreign policy strategy that will succeed. When America appears confused or unmoored, it emboldens our adversaries and gives our friends and allies pause. When we are talking about nuclear weapons, there is simply no margin for error.

Fortunately, in this Congress, our priorities are clear: work with China and our close partners in the region and dial up pressure on the Kim regime to return to the negotiating table.

Last year, under Chairman ROYCE's leadership, we passed a sanctions bill that President Obama signed into law.

Kim Jong-un is exceedingly crafty: his regime is becoming increasingly effective at invading international sanctions.

When we make sanctions tougher, they come up with new ways to get around them: phony bank accounts, fake companies overseas, shipments under foreign flags.

We need to go back to the well to close the loopholes that the regime exploits. That is what this measure does. It dials up sanctions on those who do business with the Kim regime, hopefully, making them think twice before providing cover to one of the most brutal human rights abusers in the world and the nuclear ambitions of the leader of that country.

If you buy certain materials like metals or minerals from North Korea, if you sell fuel that the North Korean military can use, if you have a role in maintaining overseas bank accounts or insuring the ships Pyongyang uses to evade the law, then you are going to get caught up in these new sanctions.

If you ignore the U.N.'s limits on important North Korean coal or iron, or try to buy cheap textiles or fishing rights from the government, or help the Kim regime conduct business online, you will be subject to additional scrutiny with this legislation.

With this bill, we will target those who use North Korean forced labor, a gross human rights abuse and a cash cow for the regime. We will consider limiting certain types of assistance to countries buying or selling American equipment to Pyongyang.

In light of the recent public assassination of Kim's half brother, and other nefarious activities, we require the State Department to take a hard look at whether North Korea should be put back on the State Sponsors of Terrorism list.

The Kim regime must be made to understand that we will not back down in our effort to cut off support for its dangerous activities. Every time they cut another corner, we will put up another roadblock. We will come after them again and again until they realize there is no option but to sit down and negotiate.

As we have seen, it won't be an easy process. Making real progress on complex global issues rarely is. Reckless threats and bombastic talk usually make matters worse, especially when you are dealing with an unpredictable and impulsive leader.

The stakes are very high. No one wants to see war on the Korean Peninsula, least of all the 25 million people in Seoul and the nearly 30,000 United States troops who are in Pyongyang's sights every single day.

We need to remain focused, with clarity of purpose, in order to get the results we all want. This bipartisan bill builds on our record in the House of grappling with this challenge. I am

glad to join with Chairman ROYCE in this effort. I fully support this bill.

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

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CHABOT), a senior member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1644, the Korean Interdiction and Modernization of Sanctions Act.

Kim Jong-un murdered his uncle. He murdered his brother. He and his father and grandfather were responsible for the deaths of hundreds of thousands, probably millions, of their own people. Now this ruthless tyrant is trying to develop long-range nuclear weapons that very soon could reach the United States.

Let me be clear: North Korea is a threat to the security of the United States of America. It is a threat to our allies. It is a threat to the world. As long as North Korea has nuclear weapons, the world is not safe.

For far too long, we have done very little to deter the Kim regime's persistent march in the development of its nuclear weapons program. That changes today.

The Kim regime's nuclear program lives and dies by its access to hard currency. North Korea acquires that hard currency from various sources. We know that China is the worst offender. But China is not the only bad actor. Terrorist networks around the world purchase weapons, technology, and training from North Korea. North Korea, in exchange, gets that money, the hard currency that it needs.

Autocrats like the Congo's Joseph Kabila have long reasoned that no one would actually enforce the arms embargo currently against North Korea. They continue to support the Kim regime and its nuclear program with no consequence.

This bill would put a stop to that. It requires that the President cut off bad actors from our financial system. No more transactions in dollars. No more using banks that serve U.S. customers. The Kim regime will know that we are finally serious.

I want to thank Chairman ROYCE for his leadership on this, Ranking Member ENGEL, and also Subcommittee Chairman Mr. YOHO and Ranking Member SHERMAN for their leadership.

This is critical legislation. North Korea has been getting away with murder, literally, for far too long in their own country. We need to make sure that hundreds of thousands—perhaps millions—of Americans' lives are not wiped out by North Korea sometime in the very near future if we do not push back and actually stop their nuclear weapons program, particularly the ballistic missile system that they are trying to develop.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN), the ranking member of the Asia and the Pacific Subcommittee of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1644, the Korean Interdiction and Modernization of Sanctions Act.

This bill was introduced by the chair and ranking member of the full committee, Mr. ROYCE and Mr. ENGEL; by the chair and ranking member of the Asia and the Pacific Subcommittee, Mr. YOHO; and myself. It is a clear example of the way bipartisanship should be here in the House of Representatives.

North Korea continues to act as a state sponsor of terrorism, test ballistic missiles, conduct cyber warfare, build nuclear weapons, and threaten the United States and our allies.

We need a strategy to confront North Korea. An essential part of that strategy is to confront North Korea with economic and political pressure. A key to that would be to get China fully on board and to be willing to threaten China with tariffs if China continued to serve as the lifeline for the North Korean criminal regime. In addition to working with China, we need to start modernizing our own sanctions regime to impose a greater cost on Kim Jong-un.

This bill expands the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act passed by this Congress in 2016 to provide expanded and mandatory and discretionary sanctions on the North Korean Government, particularly involving gold and other precious minerals, jet fuel, coal, iron ore, and textiles.

The bill requires U.S. financial institutions to ensure that no correspondent accounts are being used by foreign financial institutions to provide financial services to North Korea. It does a host of other necessary things, including requiring the State Department to submit to Congress a report detailing their decision on whether to put North Korea back on the State Sponsors of Terrorism list, and that we get that report within 90 days.

It seems clear to me that North Korea should be listed as a state sponsor of terror. We took them off the list not because they stopped engaging in international terror, but as a quid pro quo for suspending their own nuclear program, which they didn't suspend.

So why are they still off the list?

There is no doubt that North Korea has engaged in multiple acts of international terrorism, including the murder of the half brother of Kim Jong-un; the cyber attack against Sony Pictures; and although the initial action was taken decades ago, they seized Japanese civilians in order to learn Japanese manners in order to instruct their spies. They continue to hold those Japanese civilians today in a continuing act of terrorism.

Finally, the bill, requires a report from the President of cooperation between North Korea and Iran. We would suspect that North Korea, after it builds a certain cache of nuclear weapons, would be willing to sell to Iran not for millions but for billions of dollars fully assembled nuclear weapons or the fissile material to create those. This is an important thing Congress needs to address.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON), a senior member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, who also chairs the Armed Services Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate Mr. ROYCE's determined leadership on this important issue of national security protecting American families.

I am in strong support of H.R. 1644, the Korean Interdiction and Modernization of Sanctions Act. In 2003, I traveled to Pyongyang, North Korea, with the ranking member, Congressman ELIOT ENGEL, in a bipartisan delegation, along with Congressman Curt Weldon, Chairman Jeff Miller, Silvestre Reyes, and Solomon Ortiz, where we saw firsthand the tyranny and oppression of the Communist regime.

Last month, the House of Representatives overwhelmingly passed H. Res. 92, a bipartisan resolution I introduced condemning the regime in North Korea for their recent ballistic missiles, and called for the consideration of all available sanctions. It passed 398–3.

Since then, North Korea has continued testing missiles and released yet another propaganda video—this one simulating the destruction of American troops, aircraft, warships, and even the U.S. Capitol Building.

After 8 years of ''strategic patience,'' I appreciate the strong leadership of President Trump and his administration, along with the Ambassador to the U.N., Nikki Haley, and also Secretary of State Rex Tillerson.

It is clear the regime in North Korea will only respond to strength, and these sanctions that are proposed in this package would effectively target the regime and any other individuals who would do business with North Korea, especially in the shipping and financial industries.

I appreciate the extraordinary leadership of Chairman ED ROYCE and Ranking Member ELIOT ENGEL on the legislation, and I urge my colleagues to vote in support.

□ 1515

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, before I call on the next speaker, I want to talk to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON). When we went on that trip to North Korea, I am sure that he will remember that he took a clandestine picture of a big billboard that was in Pyongyang showing a North Korean soldier with a bayonet sticking through an American soldier's head. So the propaganda and the anti-American

rhetoric is ingrained, it is taught, and it was very disconcerting. I remember the gentleman sitting in the front of the bus very clandestinely taking that picture so no one would know. It was really a good thing to do. I want to thank the gentleman.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. ENGEL. I yield to the gentleman from South Carolina.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, it was my honor to be with Ranking Member ELIOT ENGEL.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KEATING), the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade of the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1644, the Korean Interdiction and Modernization of Sanctions Act. I thank the chairman of the committee, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE); and the ranking member, the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL), for their leadership in this important legislation.

This legislation furthers North Korea's severe financial isolation by further targeting banks and money lenders to gain cooperation throughout the region. This bipartisan bill builds on the pressure and sanctions imposed under both the Bush and Obama administrations to strengthen our response to North Korea's continued belligerence by, number one, expanding sanctions on North Korea's government transactions involving precious metals, minerals, jet fuel, and coal; providing restrictions on U.S. foreign assistance to any country that buys or sells military equipment from North Korea; and provides increasing scrutiny of North Korean shipping vessels to target against trafficking, counterfeiting, and aspects of North Korea's illicit economy, among other things, in order to tighten sanctions in accordance with the United Nations Security Council. This vote comes at a critical juncture. Despite rounds of sanctions aimed at squeezing the faltering economy of North Korea, recent reports from the peninsula suggest that the country continues to gain sufficient traction to move forward.

North Korea poses a real and immediate threat to the stability in the region, to our allies, and to ourselves. By broadening eligibility activities to be sanctioned and extending the duration of sanctions to prevent arms trade, this bill will further leverage the North Korean economy to enhance our ability to reduce its nuclear threat. What is more, this bill will strengthen our ability to hinder trade between North Korea's strongest partners, including businesses and banks within Russia and China that are exposed to the international financial market. In the face of growing uncertainty and seeming lack of clarity surrounding the current administration's plan toward North Korea, this act demonstrates the strong, bipartisan, and resolute stance of this Congress in the face of increased provocative and aggressive actions by North Korea.

As an original sponsor of the unprecedented legislation signed into law last year that sanctioned North Korea for its egregious human rights violations, I am proud to now support this critical legislation and urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE), the chairman of the Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade of the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman and ranking member for sponsoring this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, a few years ago, North Korea ordered its missile units on standby to strike the United States. Little Kim, as I call him, and his generals convened a press conference and displayed a chart of what they called U.S. mainland strike plan.

The attack plan targeted several major United States population centers, including Austin, Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am personally offended by that. At the time of this plan, it was ridiculed by international media. After all, the administration was pursuing a passive strategic patience plan.

But now experts say that, in less than 4 years, North Korea will have intercontinental ballistic missiles capable of raining down nuclear weapons on the entire United States. North Korea is making steady progress on its nuclear program. It conducted two nuclear tests in 2016 alone.

So the time has come to tighten the noose on little Kim. We need to choke off the sources of his ill-gotten gain, and these sanctions will help do that. This bill expands sanctions to target some of the regime's most lucrative sources of revenue. It also requires the State Department to reassess whether North Korea should be placed back on the State Sponsors of Terrorism list. I think that is long overdue.

Little Kim has earned the distinction of being a worldwide terrorist. So little Kim means it when he says he wants to destroy the United States. He even wants to put ICBMs in submarines and send them off the coast of California. He cannot be allowed to do this mischief. He needs to know the United States means it when we say that we will protect the American people.

And that is just the way it is.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY), my friend, cochair of the Korea Caucus, and a respected member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend from New York, our very distinguished ranking member.

I rise today in support of H.R. 1644, the Korean Interdiction and Modernization of Sanctions Act. I am pleased to cosponsor this bill, an act that updates and expands the North Korea sanctions policy that was enacted just last year. It is undeniable that North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile programs have accelerated in recent years. In 2016 alone, the regime conducted two nuclear tests and more than 20 missile tests.

In response to this threat, the U.S. helped negotiate the passage of the U.N. Security Council Resolutions 2270 and 2231 to strengthen U.N. sanctions against the regime. H.R. 1644 builds on those Security Council resolutions by expanding mandatory and discretionary sanctions and authorizing new sanctions provisions related to evasion and the use of North Korean exported labor, correspondent banking, and trade in oil, textiles, food, and agricultural products.

For example, if someone knowingly transfers significant amounts of jet fuel to North Korea, then the President could freeze that person's assets that come within the jurisdiction of the United States. Vessels that use North Korean ports will be banned from entering U.S. waters or using U.S. ports. The bill also establishes restrictions on the use of foreign assistance to any country that violates these provisions.

I want to thank the chairman and the ranking member for their leadership and for including my amendment, which will ensure that U.S. sanctions against North Korea do not impede the provision of vital U.S. assistance to developing countries for maternal and child health, disease prevention, and response.

U.S. sanctions are necessary, but they are not a complete tool to address the threat of North Korea's impending nuclear development program. The U.S. must undertake a rigorous diplomatic effort to urge the global community, and China in particular, to use their goodwill, their leverage to enforce international sanctions and to get North Korea back to the negotiating table.

The Korean Peninsula remains one of the most dangerous flash points in the world. President Trump, sadly, I think has escalated regional tensions by sending mixed signals about the location of U.S. military assets, about his views, as the ranking member said, about Kim Jong-un, and about how best the United States ought to respond that we are going to disabuse ourselves of the previous policy which seems to mean the only policy left is kinetic, a military option. I don't think that makes anything better on the Korean Peninsula.

I thank the leaders for this effort. I think it is the right way to go. I support it fully.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOHO), chairman of the Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific of the Committee on Foreign Affairs and a coauthor of this bill.

Mr. YOHO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the Korea Interdiction and Modernization of Sanctions Act, H.R. 1644, the KIMS Act.

I thank Chairman ROYCE for his leadership in guiding this bill through the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the original cosponsors of this bill, Ranking Member ENGEL and Congressman SHERMAN, who serves alongside me as the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific. I also thank the chairman and ranking member for accepting my amendment to this bill that targets the ability of leaders like those of the Democratic Republic of the Congo that have been buying North Korean arms for years with impunity, supplying a means of income for the North Korean regime to fund their nuclear program and the regime of terror and provocations.

Mr. Speaker, North Korea's nuclear program has never been a bigger threat, and we need to respond with all the tools at our disposal. After all, the world community is against nuclear proliferation from any country, so the world community should support the United States preventing North Korea's nuclear program. If anything, Pyongyang has dramatically accelerated its belligerent behavior, conducting two nuclear tests and two dozen missile launches last year.

Speaking before the U.N. Security Council, Secretary Tillerson was right when he said that the threat of a North Korea nuclear attack on Seoul or Tokyo is very real. That is why it is so important that Congress, as we are doing here today, continue to apply pressure on Pyongyang, providing the administration with the tools it needs to deprive the Kim regime of the hard currency it depends on to feed its illicit weapons program.

Importantly, this measure will advance the national security interests of not just the United States and the Korean Peninsula but of the whole Asia-Pacific region and will contribute to regional security by targeting North Korea's abhorrent overseas slave labor, which is estimated at bringing in as much as $230 million each year. There are precious few nonmilitary tools left for managing the security situation on the Korean Peninsula. Financial sanctions are the most important and effective of these tools.

By advancing this legislation, the House will continue its critical work to ensure our country has the necessary authorities and mandates in place to ensure our financial measures are effective. A peaceful outcome on the peninsula depends on inflicting enough pressure on Kim to force him to make the hard but smart choices. This bill will affect him where it hurts—in his bank accounts.

Again, I commend Chairman ROYCE and Ranking Member ENGEL for their contributions and leadership on this important legislation. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CASTRO), co-chair of the Japan Caucus, a very respected member of our Committee on Foreign Affairs, and a member of the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence.

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank Ranking Member ENGEL for yielding me this time. I rise in support of H.R. 1644, the Korean Interdiction and Modernization of Sanctions Act, legislation that would more effectively cut off the Kim regime's access to hard currency and equipment for its ballistic missile and nuclear programs.

This legislation updates and expands the range of sanctions available for the United States to use against persons or entities that violate existing U.S. sanction laws and United Nations Security Council resolutions regarding North Korea. The bill also requires the President to report to Congress on foreign countries' compliance with those Security Council resolutions.

The United States is determined to preserve the stability in the Asia-Pacific region. Our Nation will uphold its treaty commitments to Japan and South Korea and will defend their security in the face of the North Korean threat.

I urge my colleagues to join me and vote in favor of this legislation, which makes clear that the United States will target individuals, companies, and banks that continue to do business with North Korea.

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

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Texas (Mr. DOGGETT).

□ 1530

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, I commend the leaders of the Foreign Affairs Committee for their leadership on this important matter. We need stronger international action like this to send a message to the North Korean regime.

Our sanctions approach should be at least as strong against North Korea as it has been against Iran; and to be effective, sanctions must include all countries. Chinese trade during the last year with North Korea has actually increased. It is clear that it is shirking its responsibility. If it were to limit energy and access to hard currency reserves to North Korea, the regime would likely collapse.

Intensified sanctions of the type contemplated by this measure are particularly important because, despite all of the recent saber rattling from Donald Trump, we have no acceptable military solution. Any military attack on North Korea would result in the death of hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of the 25 million Koreans in the greater Seoul area and the over 100,000 Americans that are in that region.

Only this week, General McMaster, President Trump's national security adviser, conceded that a preventive military strike would result in a human catastrophe. We cannot eliminate the risk of North Korea, but we can better manage it, and this measure is a step in the right direction.

The arsenal of our democracy is more than just our military might. Let's apply every bit of international pressure possible and hope that the great self-described dealmaker Donald J. Trump can begin direct negotiations to secure an agreement with North Korea that achieves at least as much as President Obama did with Iran.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, may I ask how much time is remaining on both sides?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New York has 3½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from California has 4½ minutes remaining.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. FRANKEL), a very respected and hardworking member of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from New York.

I just returned from a trip to South Korea and Japan, a bipartisan trip, where we focused on the dangers of North Korea. First, I want to just say what became very clear to us is how important our relationship is with South Korea and Japan, both economically and for our national security.

We sat in roundtable discussions with scholars, ambassadors, and military leaders from the United States, Japan, South Korea, and China; and I will tell you one thing was unanimous in the thinking: a preemptive military strike right now on our part would be catastrophic—catastrophic not only to our friends in South Korea, the millions who live there, our friends in Japan, but the hundreds of thousands of American citizens and our military personnel.

I thank our chairman and our ranking member for their good work, and I urge my colleagues to support this good bill.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time, and I want to close the way I opened. I want to again thank Chairman ROYCE for authoring this measure and for his hard work.

One of the things I have been most proud about as the ranking member of the Foreign Affairs Committee is the collaborative work that the chairman and I have done together in passing so many bills with both our names. It is what the American people want us to do, and I think the Foreign Affairs Committee is a great example of how the American people want Congress to work together. This bill is exactly a product of that, of working together.

If we want to pressure the Kim regime and if we want to prevent a potentially devastating conflict in Northeast Asia, we cannot be impulsive. The risks are too high. We need a strong, focused, and consistent policy. We need

strong measures that cut off support for the Kim regime and careful diplomacy to bring the relevant players together. This bill represents an important part of such a policy.

So, again, as I said, I am glad we are advancing this measure with strong bipartisan support, and I hope the other body will take up this legislation soon.

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

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague, Mr. ENGEL, for his comments.

I will return to this theme about the urgent threat that the United States and our allies face here. We have listened to experts who have looked at this problem. In less than 4 years, Pyongyang may have the ability to make a reliable intercontinental ballistic missile topped by a nuclear warhead capable of targeting the continental United States. When we watch these tests and we see, from a North Korean submarine, how they are launching missiles and we watch the atomic weapons tests that they are doing, you can see how North Korea has advanced in their capabilities as they try to shrink these warheads and figure out how to put them onto an ICBM.

The problem is that, in the next few years, at the current rate of production of their nuclear material, they are going to be able to build out 100 atomic weapons for these intercontinental ballistic missiles. So the threat from North Korea is real, and real threats demand real responses.

We have tried various approaches in the past. We tried strategic patience during the last administration. I will tell you that I think Secretary Tillerson has helped devise a strategy of maximum pressure that makes a tremendous amount of sense to me, and I will share with you why I think it is very credible.

We have seen in the past, in 2005, back during Banco Delta Asia, back when North Korea was caught counterfeiting $100 U.S. bank notes, a strategy deployed that froze the capability of that regime to move forward with its nuclear weapons program. We know from talking to defectors about the impact that that had internally on North Korea because, frankly, these weapons programs are very expensive to run. It requires billions and billions of dollars every year.

North Korea doesn't really manufacture much, other than some of the clandestine missile parts and so forth that they transfer overseas and some meth and counterfeit cigarettes. All of that can be halted so that hard currency doesn't come into the hands of the regime, and, therefore, the regime will no longer have this capability.

Because it happened in 2005 and because we know of the consequences at the time, but also because of what we have seen with other nations, we should move with bipartisan legislation here.

I am going to speak for a moment about what this House of Representatives and our counterparts in the Senate did in the 1990s when it came to the issue of a regime in South Africa that had obtained a nuclear weapon and also was doubling down on their practices of apartheid in terms of the way that that regime treated its own people.

If you will recall, despite the assurances and warnings about sanctions that this was the wrong road, this House stood up, and over 80 percent of the Members here and over 80 percent of the Members in the Senate—or 75—huge bipartisan majorities of Republicans and Democrats came together with a policy that said enough—enough of the conduct of that apartheid state, enough of them developing a nuclear weapon.

It was time for the United States to lead on this, work with the international community and enforce sanctions in a way that did what? That, within a short period of time, brought the apartheid regime to offer up to the international community that atomic weapon and to say: We are done with it. And for the South African apartheid regime to say, in terms of elections: Next year we are going to hold free and fair elections in South Africa—in terms of the release of Nelson Mandela and in terms of his election to President of South Africa.

Now, when people argue with us that sanctions may not be a way forward, I would remind them that, when we unite the international community and when we speak with one voice, yes, we could see a change of conduct in this regime in North Korea. So I say this gives a powerful tool to cut off the funding by going after those who do business with the regime in violation of U.N. Security Council resolutions.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. ENGEL for his assistance in this, and I thank all of my colleagues who helped on this measure.

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

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, the era of strategic patience is over. In its place there is a need for more concerted action to counter North Korea's nuclear proliferation, its horrific human rights abuses, and its sponsorship of terrorism globally. This bill strengthens the tools the Administration can use to counter the threat posed by a nuclear armed North Korea. It targets the shipping and financial sectors and also targets those, in China and Russia and elsewhere, who profit from using North Korean slave labor. I strongly support this legislation and commend my colleagues on the House Foreign Affairs Committee—Chairman ED ROYCE and Ranking Member ELIOT ENGEL for their leadership.

The Administration must continue to uncover and sanction both Pyongyang's enablers and those it enables. We should further target with sanctions those individuals responsible for gross human rights violations inside the so-called "hermit kingdom" and stop money and materials from reaching terrorists and nuclear proliferators globally.

Not taking the North Korea threat seriously enough have been a bipartisan problem of the last three Administrations. I commend the Trump Administration for taking more strategic actions. The U.S. cannot sit on the sidelines while Kim Jong Un proliferates nuclear and missile technology that will threaten the United States. We cannot stand idly by while Kim Jong Un sponsors terrorism and traffics his own people for profit. We cannot be silent while an estimated 120,000 people are being held in political-prison labor camps, suffering and dying in barbaric conditions. Torture, rape, and the public executions of religious believers are part of the daily life in these camps.

North Korea's political-prisoner camps are inhumane, they are horrific, they are a crime against humanity and they must be dismantled.

We know that the threat posed by North Korea was high on the agenda of President Trump and President Xi meeting in Florida several weeks ago. As we all know, the Chinese government's actions have not always been helpful. China usually describes the China-North Korea relationship as being one of "like lips to teeth." It was good to see this formula changed after the Trump-Xi meeting. Foreign Minister Wang Yi know says China's relationship with "the Peninsula" both North and South Korea is like lips to teeth. That is big change in rhetoric and hopefully China will no longer prop up Kim Jong Un's deliberate attempts to destabilize the Korean peninsula.

In addition to a more robust sanctions regime, the Administration should pay more attention to undermining the faith of the North Korean people in Kim Jong Un's leadership. The cult of personality that surrounds the Kim family remains a strong deterrent to protest and uprisings within North Korea. The Kim family is accorded god-like status—the cult of personality is sometimes called Juche—and it offers Kim Jong Un a 'divine mandate' to pursue nuclear weapons, national security, and human rights abuses with impunity.

More needs to be done to tarnish Kim Jong Un's image and that of the Kim family. The U.S. should be actively seeking to undermine the cult of personality and drive a wedge between North Korea elites and the Kim family. Sanctions are one way to drive such a wedge, but also needed are more radio broadcasts and USB drives with South Korean pop culture and news and information targeting North Korean military and elites. The more information the North Korean people have, the less isolated they are, the more likely they will see the Kim family as false gods.

Some of this work is being done by North Korean defectors living in South Korea. But their efforts are tiny and were not supported by the previous Administration.

The current sanctions regime is having some effect. High-level diplomats, military leaders, and the families of high-ranking officials are defecting—they are recognizing that they will be held accountable if they continue to support Kim Jong Un's barbaric regime.

Nevertheless, recent evidence shows that North Korea has become very good at evading sanctions. Last month a U.N. report made clear that North Korea is using 'increasingly sophisticated' tactics to evade existing sanctions. Money, arms, and people are moved across borders by networks of middlemen and banks to avoid detection. The U.N. report concluded that sanctions enforcement 'remains insufficient.' This legislation will expand U.S.

sanctions to target those help Kim Jong Un avoid sanctions and fund his nuclear program and human rights abuses.

I urge support for the legislation offered today and commend my colleagues for bringing this important legislation before the House.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1644, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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

WORKING FAMILIES FLEXIBILITY ACT OF 2017

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 299, I call up the bill (H.R. 1180) to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to provide compensatory time for employees in the private sector, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 299, in lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Education and the Workforce, printed in the bill, an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 115–15 is adopted, and the bill, as amended, is considered read.

The text of the bill, as amended, is as follows:

H.R. 1180

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 ''Working Families Flexibility Act of 2017''.

SEC. 2. COMPENSATORY TIME.

Section 7 of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 207) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(s) COMPENSATORY TIME OFF FOR PRIVATE EMPLOYEES.—

''(1) GENERAL RULE.—An employee may receive, in accordance with this subsection and in lieu of monetary overtime compensation, compensatory time off at a rate not less than one and one-half hours for each hour of employment for which overtime compensation is required by this section.

''(2) CONDITIONS.—An employer may provide compensatory time to employees under paragraph (1) only if such time is provided in accordance with—

''(A) applicable provisions of a collective bargaining agreement between the employer and the labor organization that has been certified or recognized as the representative of the employees under applicable law; or

''(B) in the case of an employee who is not represented by a labor organization that has been certified or recognized as the representative of such employee under applicable law, an agreement arrived at between the employer and employee before the performance of the work and affirmed by a written or otherwise verifiable record maintained in accordance with section 11(c)—

''(i) in which the employer has offered and the employee has chosen to receive compensatory time in lieu of monetary overtime compensation; and

''(ii) entered into knowingly and voluntarily by such employee and not as a condition of employment.

No employee may receive or agree to receive compensatory time off under this subsection unless the employee has worked at least 1,000 hours for the employee's employer during a period of continuous employment with the employer in the 12-month period before the date of agreement or receipt of compensatory time off.

''(3) HOUR LIMIT.—

''(A) MAXIMUM HOURS.—An employee may accrue not more than 160 hours of compensatory time.

''(B) COMPENSATION DATE.—Not later than January 31 of each calendar year, the employee's employer shall provide monetary compensation for any unused compensatory time off accrued during the preceding calendar year that was not used prior to December 31 of the preceding year at the rate prescribed by paragraph (6). An employer may designate and communicate to the employer's employees a 12-month period other than the calendar year, in which case such compensation shall be provided not later than 31 days after the end of such 12-month period.

''(C) EXCESS OF 80 HOURS.—The employer may provide monetary compensation for an employee's unused compensatory time in excess of 80 hours at any time after giving the employee at least 30 days notice. Such compensation shall be provided at the rate prescribed by paragraph (6).

''(D) POLICY.—Except where a collective bargaining agreement provides otherwise, an employer that has adopted a policy offering compensatory time to employees may discontinue such policy upon giving employees 30 days notice.

''(E) WRITTEN REQUEST.—An employee may withdraw an agreement described in paragraph (2)(B) at any time. An employee may also request in writing that monetary compensation be provided, at any time, for all compensatory time accrued that has not yet been used. Within 30 days of receiving the written request, the employer shall provide the employee the monetary compensation due in accordance with paragraph (6).

''(4) PRIVATE EMPLOYER ACTIONS.—An employer that provides compensatory time under paragraph (1) to an employee shall not directly or indirectly intimidate, threaten, or coerce or attempt to intimidate, threaten, or coerce any employee for the purpose of—

''(A) interfering with such employee's rights under this subsection to request or not request compensatory time off in lieu of payment of monetary overtime compensation for overtime hours; or

''(B) requiring any employee to use such compensatory time.

''(5) TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT.—An employee who has accrued compensatory time off authorized to be provided under paragraph (1) shall, upon the voluntary or involuntary termination of employment, be paid for the unused compensatory time in accordance with paragraph (6).

''(6) RATE OF COMPENSATION.—

''(A) GENERAL RULE.—If compensation is to be paid to an employee for accrued compensatory time off, such compensation shall be paid at a rate of compensation not less than—

''(i) the regular rate earned by such employee when the compensatory time was accrued; or

''(ii) the regular rate earned by such employee at the time such employee received payment of such compensation,

whichever is higher.

''(B) CONSIDERATION OF PAYMENT.—Any payment owed to an employee under this subsection for unused compensatory time shall be considered unpaid overtime compensation.

''(7) USE OF TIME.—An employee—

''(A) who has accrued compensatory time off authorized to be provided under paragraph (1); and

''(B) who has requested the use of such compensatory time,

shall be permitted by the employee's employer to use such time within a reasonable period after making the request if the use of the compensatory time does not unduly disrupt the operations of the employer.

''(8) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this subsection—

''(A) the term 'employee' does not include an employee of a public agency; and

''(B) the terms 'overtime compensation' and 'compensatory time' shall have the meanings given such terms by subsection (o)(7).''.

SEC. 3. REMEDIES.

Section 16 of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 216) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b), by striking ''(b) Any employer'' and inserting ''(b) Except as provided in subsection (f), any employer''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(f) An employer that violates section 7(s)(4) shall be liable to the employee affected in the amount of the rate of compensation (determined in accordance with section 7(s)(6)(A)) for each hour of compensatory time accrued by the employee and in an additional equal amount as liquidated damages reduced by the amount of such rate of compensation for each hour of compensatory time used by such employee.''.

SEC. 4. NOTICE TO EMPLOYEES.

Not later than 30 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Labor shall revise the materials the Secretary provides, under regulations published in section 516.4 of title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, to employers for purposes of a notice explaining the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to employees so that such notice reflects the amendments made to such Act by this Act.

SEC. 5. GAO REPORT.

Beginning 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act and each of the 3 years thereafter, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit a report to Congress providing, with respect to the reporting period immediately prior to each such report—

(1) data concerning the extent to which employers provide compensatory time pursuant to section 7(s) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, as added by this Act, and the extent to which employees opt to receive compensatory time;

(2) the number of complaints alleging a violation of such section filed by any employee with the Secretary of Labor;

(3) the number of enforcement actions commenced by the Secretary or commenced by the Secretary on behalf of any employee for alleged violations of such section;

(4) the disposition or status of such complaints and actions described in paragraphs (2) and (3); and

(5) an account of any unpaid wages, damages, penalties, injunctive relief, or other remedies obtained or sought by the Secretary in connection with such actions described in paragraph (3).

SEC. 6. SUNSET.

This Act and the amendments made by this Act shall cease to be in effect on the

date that is 5 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from North Carolina.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 1180.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from North Carolina?

There was no objection.

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

Today I rise in strong support of H.R. 1180, the Working Families Flexibility Act of 2017.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is about freedom, flexibility, and fairness. The freedom for workers to choose what is best for themselves and their families, more flexibility for men and women to balance work, life, and family, and greater fairness in how Federal policies treat workers and families.

Under the legislation, private sector workers who are eligible for overtime pay would be able to choose between cash wages or paid time off. This simple choice will help improve the lives of many hardworking Americans.

This option has long been available to government workers. More than 30 years ago, Republicans and Democrats came together to amend an outdated Federal law and provide public sector employees more workplace flexibility.

□ 1545

That is why comp time is a popular benefit enjoyed today by police officers, firefighters, and other State and local government employees. But the Federal Government still denies many private sector workers the same opportunity. This double standard simply isn't fair. It is time to level the playing field for those in the private sector.

Despite what we will hear from the other side of the aisle today, all we are doing is empowering workers with a choice. For some workers, more money in the bank may be the best choice for them. Nothing—I repeat, nothing—in this bill will take away that right.

But other workers, if given the choice, would seize the opportunity to turn their overtime hours into paid time off. There are single parents who need more flexibility to spend time with their children; students who are struggling to juggle college and a full-time job; and a growing number of individuals need more time to care for an aging relative.

Time is precious, yet Democrats in Congress think the Federal Government should decide how people use it. They think they know what is best for workers and their families. In the name of protecting workers, our colleagues and their so-called progressive allies have denied workers this choice for years. They continue to ignore the bill's strong protections, including several that are more robust than what is available in the public sector.

The bill preserves the 40-hour workweek, and comp time would accrue at the same time-and-a-half rate as cash wages. The legislation also requires a written comp time agreement between each individual worker and his or her employer, or between a worker's union and employer.

Additionally, workers can cash out their comp time at any time and for any reason. Employers who force their employees into a comp time arrangement would face costly penalties, and the Department of Labor would have full authority to crack down on bad actors.

Mr. Speaker, by providing more freedom and flexibility, we can improve the quality of life of many Americans. We have an opportunity to make a positive difference in people's lives simply by getting the Federal Government out of the way and allowing individuals to choose what is best for themselves and their families.

I want to thank Representative ROBY for championing this effort, and I urge all Members to vote in favor of freedom, flexibility, and fairness for the American people by supporting H.R. 1180.

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

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 3 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, under current law, if an employee wants to work overtime, put the money in the bank where it can earn interest, and use it to cover the cost of taking some time off later with the permission of the employer, he can do that today without this bill.

But under H.R. 1180, instead of getting paid for overtime work in the next scheduled paycheck, the employee might not get paid until as much as a year later, when his employer decides to let him take that comp time.

This legislation simply weakens the protections available in the Fair Labor Standards Act—the original family-friendly workplace law—at the very moment that we really ought to be strengthening the law.

Under H.R. 1180, it would be legal to withhold workers' overtime pay for a long time. This would be otherwise a violation of the Fair Labor Standards Act.

The bill would allow you to undermine the 40-hour workweek by creating a mechanism that allows employees to earn time off to be with their families only if they spend extra time at work beyond a 40-hour workweek.

It undermines a worker's ability to earn overtime pay, which many workers rely on to send their children to college, save for retirement, or make a down payment on a house.

Because the legislation makes it cheaper for employers to assign overtime to employees who agree to accept comp time instead of actual cash wages, this legislation makes it extremely likely that the only employees who will be asked to work overtime are those who agree to get comp time instead of actual time and a half paid cash.

Furthermore, the legislation creates significant uncertainty for workers. An employer could decide that an employee cannot take comp time on the dates requested because the employer said it would be an undue disruption to business operations.

My Democratic colleagues and I are working on a Working Families Agenda with real solutions that would boost wages for working people and help them balance work and family life. An employee should be able to earn time off without sacrificing overtime pay. This is exactly what the Healthy Families Act would do. It would allow workers to earn up to 7 paid sick days.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, 92 groups that actually represent working people sent a letter urging the Committee on Education and the Workforce to oppose the legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a letter which is led by the National Partnership for Women & Families. It points out that we should be taking up real solutions, such as legislation, to raise the minimum wage, Schedules That Work Act, family and medical leave, and other responsible solutions. These solutions would truly help working families, yet the majority has refused to support any of these initiatives.

MAY 1, 2017.

DEAR MEMBER OF CONGRESS: We, the undersigned organizations, urge you to oppose the so-called Working Families Flexibility Act (H.R. 1180/S. 801), a smoke-and-mirrors bill that would offer working people a pay cut without any guaranteed flexibility or time off. As members of Congress on both sides of the aisle acknowledge, people today are struggling to manage the demands of job and family, and to make ends meet and plan for the future. We urgently need lawmakers to update our nation's workplace policies to meet 21st century realities, but the Working Families Flexibility Act would be a grievous step in the wrong direction. It is, at best, an empty promise that would cause considerably more harm than good.

The Working Families Flexibility Act would offer a false choice between time and pay. Supporters claim the bill would give hourly workers more flexibility and time with their loved ones by allowing them to choose paid time off, rather than time-and-a-half wages, as compensation for working more than 40 hours in one week (''comp time''). But people would only get more time with their families after spending extra hours away from them at work, and the bill does not guarantee that workers could use the time they earn when they need it. Moreover, the bill would do nothing to address the need all working people—not just those who work overtime—have for guaranteed access to paid sick days and paid family and medical leave. Too few employers provide these protections now, especially to their hourly workers.

The Fair Labor Standards Act currently allows employers to provide flexibility and

time off without compromising workers' right to be paid fairly for the hours they work. The types of flexibility allowed under the FLSA include alternative start and end times, compressed or variable work hours within a week, split shifts, work at multiple locations, and paid or unpaid time off. Proponents of the Working Families Flexibility Act set up a false dichotomy that would force workers to choose between flexibility and overtime pay when, in reality, the FLSA does nothing currently to prevent employers from offering both.

The ''worker flexibility'' offered by the Working Families Flexibility Act would magnify the power imbalance between employees and employers. The proposal would give the employer, not the employee, the ''flexibility'' to decide when, and even if, comp time could be used. The bill would allow employers to deny requests if an employee's use of comp time would ''unduly disrupt'' operations, or grant leave on a day other than the one requested. This means the Working Families Flexibility Act would provide no guarantee that workers could use their earned time to care for a sick child, attend a parent-teacher conference, or help an aging parent. Employers could veto an employee's request to use their time even in cases of urgent need. The bill would also allow employers to ''cash out'' an employee's comp time in excess of 80 hours, or discontinue the comp time program altogether, with just 30 days' notice. This means an employee's carefully crafted plan to bank time for a child's birth or surgery could be thwarted by an employer's decision to cash out the employee's time.

The Working Families Flexibility Act would put workers' economic security at risk and provide an interest-free loan to employers. An employee who does not participate in an employer's comp time program could be penalized with fewer hours, bad shifts and lost overtime hours. The bill would permit employers to defer compensation for unused comp time for as long as 13 months, creating an interest-free loan for employers and hardship for workers. It also would not provide any protections for employees when firms collapse or go bankrupt, meaning workers could lose the value of their unused comp time altogether.

The Working Families Flexibility Act would provide few protections for workers and no additional resources to the U.S. Department of Labor for education, investigation and enforcement. The U.S. Department of Labor's (DOL's) Wage and Hour Division already struggles to enforce the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) with too few investigators and a small budget—and DOL is facing a draconian reduction in funding that threatens its ability to maintain current operations, let alone engage in robust enforcement. This bill would add significant new provisions to the FLSA, but it would not provide additional funds for education and enforcement efforts the new provisions would require. Workers would have few remedies in cases of employer misconduct pursuant to the bill, and would not be able to rely on an under-resourced Wage and Hour Division for assistance. Wage theft (nonpayment or underpayment of wages for hours worked) would be exacerbated because it would be easier for employers to avoid overtime compensation obligations without consequences.

Instead of wasting time on smoke and mirrors, Congress should focus on policies that would meaningfully improve people's economic security and provide the time they need. We urge Congress to adopt:

The Healthy Families Act (H.R. 1516/S. 636), which would make earned paid sick days available to millions of workers and build on the success of paid sick days laws that have been, or will soon be, implemented in seven states and 32 localities;

The Family And Medical Insurance Leave (FAMILY) Act (H.R. 947/S. 337), which would create a national paid leave insurance program—modeled on successful state programs in California, New. Jersey, Rhode Island and, soon, New York and the District of Columbia—that would allow workers to take paid time to care for a new child; care for a seriously ill family member; address their own serious health condition; or manage certain military caregiving responsibilities;

The Schedules That Work Act, which would give workers more control over their schedules and incentivize predictability and stability in shifts and work hours; and

An increase in the minimum wage, including the elimination of the sub-minimum ''tipped'' wage, which would lift millions of families out of poverty.

People simply should not have to work more than 40 hours in a week and forgo pay to earn time to care for themselves or their loved ones. We urge Congress to reject the Working Families Flexibility Act and instead adopt family friendly workplace policies that provide true flexibility—not an empty promise that would make life appreciably more difficult for people who are already struggling

Sincerely,

1,000 Days, 9to5, National Association of Working Women, 9to5 California, 9to5 Colorado, 9to5 Georgia, 9to5 Wisconsin, A Better Balance, American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL–CIO), American Association of University Women (AAUW), American Federation of Government Employees, American Federation of Teachers, (AFL–CIO), California Work & Family Coalition, Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP), Center for Popular Democracy, Coalition for Social Justice, Coalition of Labor Union Women, Coalition on Human Needs, Communications Workers of America (CWA), Connecticut Working Families Party, Connecticut Women's Education and Legal Fund (CWEALF), Daily Kos, Demos, Economic Policy Institute Policy Center, Economic Progress Institute, Faith in Public Life, Family Forward Oregon, Family Values @ Work, Feminist Majority.

Indiana Institute for Working Families, Innovation Ohio, Institute for Science and Human Values, Inc., Interfaith Worker Justice, International Brotherhood of Teamsters, International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace & Agricultural Implement Workers of America (UAW), Jewish Women International (JWI), Jews United for Justice, Jobs With Justice, Labor Project for Working Families, The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, Legal Aid at Work, Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy (LAANE), Main Street Alliance, Maine Women's Lobby, Make it Work, McKenna Pihlaja, MomsRising.org, Mothering Justice.

National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum (NAPAWF), National Association of Social Workers (NASW), National Center for Lesbian Rights, National Coalition 100 Black Women Central Ohio Chapter, National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW), National Education Association (NEA), National Employment Law Project, National Employment Lawyers Association, National Institute for Reproductive Health, National Network to End Domestic Violence, National Partnership for Women & Families, National Women's Law Center, NC Justice Center, NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice, New Jersey Citizen Action, New Jersey Time to Care Coalition, New York Paid Leave Coalition, Ohio Domestic Violence Network, Ohio Women's Public Policy Network, OUR Walmart.

PathWays PA, People For the American Way, People's Action, PL+US Paid Leave for the U.S., Progress For All, Project IRENE, Restaurant Opportunities Center of Pennsylvania (ROC-PA), Restaurant Opportunities Centers United (ROC), Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law, Service Employees International Union (SEIU), Southwest PA National Organization for Women, The Body Is Not An Apology (TBINAA, Inc.), Texas Organizing Project, The Voter Participation Center, UltraViolet, Unitarian Universalist Women's Federation, Voices for Progress, Women Employed, Women's Foundation of Florida, Women's Law Project, Women's Voices Women Vote Action Fund, Working America, Working Partnerships USA, Young Invincibles, YWCA USA.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' on this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I yield 6 minutes to the gentlewoman from Alabama (Mrs. ROBY), the author of the legislation.

Mrs. ROBY. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentlewoman for yielding. Let me say how grateful I am for the leadership of Chairwoman FOXX in the Education and the Workforce Committee. She and her staff have been instrumental in advancing this bill.

I also want to thank my friend, my colleague from Alabama, BRADLEY BYRNE, who serves as the chair on the Workforce Protections Subcommittee. He has been a champion for commonsense policies in the workplace, and I appreciate his hard work.

Mr. Speaker, today's workforce is more diverse than ever, especially as it concerns working parents. More than 70 percent of mothers today work outside of the home; and that is different from 50 years ago, when that number was less than 30 percent.

But while the workforce has changed quite a bit, our policies and laws that govern the workplace have not. As a working mom myself, I understand all too well how challenging it can be to balance career and family. Ask any working parent, and they will tell you just how precious their time is. They will tell you that they just need one more hour in the day to be able to take care of their family and all of those responsibilities that come with it.

I always say, Congress can't legislate another hour in the day, but we can update our laws to allow more choice and fairness in how employees use their time. That is why I am proud to bring to the floor H.R. 1180, the Working Families Flexibility Act.

Mr. Speaker, this bill does three important things: it removes outdated and unnecessary Federal restrictions on the use of comp time in the private sector; it provides flexibility for working moms and dads who need more time to spend taking care of their family responsibilities; and it demonstrates how commonsense conservative principles can help Americans in their everyday lives.

Here is how it works: an hourly wage employee would be able to voluntarily enter into an agreement with their employer to put a portion of their accrued

overtime towards paid time off instead of extra cash. An employee could simply use the time-and-a-half overtime that they earned to take a paid hour and a half off of work instead of the extra money if that is what they wanted.

Ask yourselves: Should a working dad be forced to use up all of his vacation time in order to get involved in his child's school?

Should a military mom, with her husband deployed, have to dip into her sick leave to make sure her kids have the support they need?

Should someone with aging parents who require extra care have no option allowing them to devote more time and attention to their loved ones when they need it most?

Under the Working Families Flexibility Act, those working moms and dads could have the option of using their accrued overtime toward paid time off, allowing them to take care of these responsibilities without losing the paycheck that they count on.

Mr. Speaker, for anyone who works in the public sector, this comp time system probably sounds familiar. That is because, since 1985, government employees have had access to comp time benefits.

Why should the rules be different? If it is good enough for the government employees, why is it not good enough for the private sector?

H.R. 1180 fixes this disparity by allowing for greater choice and fairness over how workers use their time. I have sponsored this bill for three straight Congresses now, so I am well aware of the criticism from the labor unions and their allies. They try to say this bill is somehow antiunion or antiworker. This is simply untrue. Of course, the truth is, many Big Labor groups will reflexively attack any proposal that would change a single word of the Fair Labor Standards Act. Ironically, labor unions themselves can, and often do, negotiate similar agreements for their members already.

So I want to just go over a few of these criticisms quickly. Critics of this bill, as has already been stated in this debate, will tell you that it will somehow result in employees working longer hours for less pay. That is not true. The decision to receive comp time is completely voluntary. An employee who prefers to receive cash payment for overtime hours is always free to do so.

Workers can withdraw from a comp time agreement whenever they choose. An employee who changes their mind or just can't work out with their employer when to use compensatory time can say, ''You know what? I would rather have the cash payments that I accrued in my overtime,'' and the employer must provide that within 30 days.

All existing protections in the Fair Labor Standards Act are maintained, including the 40-hour workweek, and how overtime compensation is accrued.

Critics of this bill also say that it will allow employers to control when workers take their comp time. That is also not true. It is up to the employee to decide when to use his or her comp time. It is their time.

My time is running out. There are other myths, and I hope during this debate that we will be able to go through what is myth, and what is fact, and I am happy to address that at any time.

I want to thank again the chairwoman for her support, for her willingness to move this bill through committee.

We have got big issues in this country to deal with right now: health care, funding the government, tax reform. And as we continue to work on those issues—and we will—nothing should stop us from doing what we can right now to help make life a little easier for moms and dads. The Working Families Flexibility Act does that by helping Americans better balance the demands of family and work. After all, this is their time.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. BONAMICI), the vice ranking member on the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, too many workers in Oregon and across the country are still facing a great deal of economic uncertainty. They worry about rent payments, healthcare costs, saving for retirement, balancing family responsibilities and work, and making ends meet.

Congress should be considering policy changes that support workers, not a bill that threatens their economic security. This bill takes away overtime pay and, instead, a workers gets a vague IOU for compensatory time sometime in the future, and only if the comp time does not unduly disrupt the operations of the employer—whatever that means.

I would like to share the story of Anjeanette. She said:

> I work as a waitress in a restaurant in Gresham, Oregon, that is part of a large chain. I have three children. I have never had a single paid sick day. A few years ago, when I was working in construction, I sprained my ankle badly and couldn't go to work for a week. I didn't have any paid sick days, so I lost a whole week's pay, which meant I wasn't able to pay all of my bills and I wasn't able to pay for gas.

Anjeanette is a single mother of three sons who also struggles to care for them when they get sick. In fact, when her youngest got the flu, her older son had to stay home from school to care for him.

In May and June, we celebrate Mother's Day and Father's Day. This is a perfect time for Congress to focus on legislation that allows parents like Anjeanette to be more present in their kid's lives and still pay their bills.

Instead, this legislation would result in taking their overtime pay from their pockets. The so-called Working Families Flexibility Act is not a solution.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to reject this legislation.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROE), the chair of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, as well as a member of the Education and the Workforce Committee.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1180, the Working Families Flexibility Act, and encourage all of my colleagues to do the same. This commonsense piece of legislation, sponsored by my friend and colleague from Alabama, MARTHA ROBY, would empower private sector workers with the flexibility to choose comp time as compensation for working overtime hours instead of added wages.

Specifically, the provisions of this legislation would be completely voluntary for workers, allow them to exchange their accrued time for full overtime pay at any time or for any reason, and would maintain the protections of the Fair Labor Standards Act, such as the standard 40-hour workweek.

□ 1600

Mr. Speaker, I have heard our friends on the other side of the aisle express opposition to giving private sector employees this choice. I would point out that the public sector employees have enjoyed the ability to use comp time to maintain a work-life balance for 30 years. We are simply doing the same thing for private sector employees that public sector employees have the right to do today.

H.R. 1180 would benefit workers who want more flexibility to decide where they spend the time, with their families or pursue entrepreneurial or education ambitions outside the workplace, and these individuals should be admired for their efforts.

At its most basic level, this legislation is about choice and the belief that hardworking employees know their needs better than Washington bureaucrats. House Republicans believe it is time to adapt our labor laws to meet the needs of a rapidly changing 21st century workplace instead of imposing a one-size-fits-all, Washington-knows-best model.

It is time to empower employees to make choices on what will allow them to better balance work with their personal lives. This commonsense legislation will ultimately improve not only their benefits but their lives.

I want to again encourage my colleagues to support H.R. 1180.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO), the ranking member of the Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Subcommittee of the Appropriations Committee.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to this bill which would give workers less flexibility and less pay. The economic challenge of our time is that people are in jobs today that just don't pay them enough to live on. They are struggling to make

ends meet. This bill would make that worse.

It forces workers to decide between time-and-a-half overtime pay and paid time off when they work more than 40 hours a week. It enables employers to exert more control over employees' wages and hours that hinders a worker's ability to plan family time, to have flexible and stable schedules, and, yes, to make ends meet.

Rather than helping American workers earn better wages and more time off, this bill creates more power for employers to delay paying overtime wages for as long as 13 months. For people who need to work extra hours to pay those bills, this legislation forces them into an impossible choice between time and money with no guarantee of time off.

This bill is nothing more than a false promise of time off and a pay cut. Working Americans deserve better. We have an obligation to pursue public policy that puts workers before corporations. Instead of forcing bad choices for workers about their time off, we ought to bring the Healthy Families Act to the floor which would enable workers to earn paid sick days, because no one should have to choose between getting healthy and putting food on the table.

Instead of considering this legislation which will hurt workers and their ability to earn fair wages, we should be considering the FAMILY Act, which would create a national paid leave insurance program to allow workers to take time off while they are caring for a new child, a seriously ill family member, or their own serious health conditions.

Instead of undermining workers' schedules, we should be considering the Schedules That Work Act, which gives workers more control over their schedules, offers them real predictability and stability in their shifts and in their work hours.

These are the policies that workers need, policies that reflect the realities of working in America today, the challenges that workers face. This bill goes in the opposite direction.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to oppose it.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GROTHMAN).

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak as well on the Working Families Flexibility Act.

Over a period of time, a lot of the rules and regulations that this body has passed, it becomes apparent they are one-size-fits-all and lack common sense. I am glad to be a cosponsor of this bill which gives people the flexibility, if they work more than 40 hours in a week, they can take the cash if they need the cash. But for some people, either because of life circumstances or because they are just less materialistic, they don't want that cash. They would rather spend time with their family.

I think particularly in today's world where so many people live in two-parent families in which both people work, a lot of people would love to spend a day with their children instead of having their children in daycare. I think it is right that people should have the freedom to do that. We recognize for government employees we frequently have comp time in which if they work more than 40 hours a week, they can come back, spend more time with their family, or maybe just spend more time on recreation.

It is high time we give that freedom to people in the private sector, high time to put family first, and we all have to remember that even though some people always want more money, some people say there are other things in life that are more important.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), the Democratic whip.

(Mr. HOYER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, freedom to make less. What could be wrong with that? Freedom to make less.

Now, I am an employer, and I tell my employees, you have the freedom to either work for time and a half or just take comp time. One employee says: Well, I will work for comp time. The other employee says: Mr. Boss, you know, I need that money. Well, the person I will choose to work will be the person who will do it for comp time.

I don't know whether there is a provision to pay FICA on comp time or not in this bill, but I presume there is not. I presume there is an extraordinary saving to the employer, an incentive to the employer to choose the employee who doesn't need the extra money. Maybe their spouse makes a lot of money. Maybe not.

This is the freedom to make less bill, and I rise in opposition to it as I did when it last came to this floor. Instead of requiring employers to provide their workers with overtime, as currently amended, this bill would allow them to replace overtime with comp time.

Now, I have run a business. Most businessmen would not say it was a business because it was a law office. But I had employees, and I had to pay them. I wanted to pay them. I needed to pay them. When they worked overtime, I needed to pay them overtime. In other words, this bill provides if you work more than 40 hours a week, instead of getting time and a half for overtime, your boss can tell you no. Instead, you get paid time off, but you don't get to choose when you get to take it.

Now, if you only have one employee, that is not a problem because they have a choice. But if you have two employees and one employee makes the choice, as I pointed out, of getting comp time, such a deal for the boss.

And, yes, probably a pretty good deal for the person who can afford to just take comp time and doesn't need that time and a half.

The problem is, of course, as the previous speaker on our side said, we are having trouble getting people to a wage on which they can live and support themselves and their families. They need that time and a half.

And while we say it is voluntary and their choice, as a practical matter, as I have just pointed out, it is not.

Ms. FOXX. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. HOYER. I yield to the gentlewoman from North Carolina.

Ms. FOXX. I would like to ask the gentleman if he could point out in the bill where you cede the power to the employer because that is not in this legislation. I would love it if you would just point that out to us in the legislation.

Mr. HOYER. Where it is is not articulated in the bill, but you don't say if there are two employees in the example I have given, Madam Chair, whether or not the employer can say: Employee A, you are going to take some comp time, so would you work an hour and a half or 2 hours overtime? But Employee B, I know you can't afford to do that, you have got to be home with your child, and if you are going to work, you need the overtime to pay, perhaps, for the extra childcare.

There is nothing in your bill that precludes the employer from doing that; is there?

I yield to the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX).

Ms. FOXX. It is totally voluntary on the part of the employee.

Mr. HOYER. I understand that. My example was totally a voluntary commitment by someone who will work for comp time. This is a bill, as I said at the beginning, you can work more and get less.

Mr. Speaker, we ought to defeat this bill because employees and every employee organization that I know of has been articulating opposition to this bill because they know it will hurt employees.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 30 seconds.

Mr. Speaker, this bill strengthens protections for workers and increases penalties for abuses. It contains strong anticoercion provisions that would prohibit an employer from directly or indirectly trying to intimidate or coerce workers.

Employers found to have coerced employees would be liable to the employees for double damages. And all existing remedies, including action by the U.S. Department of Labor, are available to workers if an employer fails to pay cash wages for overtime hours.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CHABOT), the chairman of the Small Business Committee.

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Working Families Flexibility Act. I want to commend my colleague, the gentlewoman from Alabama (Mrs. ROBY), for introducing this legislation which will help

private sector employees increase workplace flexibility.

This week is National Small Business Week, a time to celebrate America's 29 million small businesses which employ nearly half of the private sector workforce, and, as was mentioned, I happen to be the chairman of the House Small Business Committee.

Small businesses are run by our neighbors and families and friends, and they offer working families the chance to get ahead. Small businesses are also known for treating their employees well and providing workplace flexibility.

This bill will allow small businesses to give their hourly employees another option that public sector employees have enjoyed for many years, the choice of being paid off instead of cash wages for overtime hours worked.

While some employees may prefer wages for the overtime hours they put in, others might want to use that time to attend their child's piano recital or go to a sports event or caring for an elderly parent. This bill gives them that choice. It is the employee's choice, not the employer.

The flexibility is crucial for families where there is a single parent or both parents work full time. Importantly, this bill does not force any employee to take comp time, and it provides protections such as requiring the employer and employee to enter into a written comp time agreement.

The Working Families Flexibility Act will allow small businesses to offer their employees a new benefit. As we celebrate National Small Business Week, let's give small businesses another way to make the lives of working families a little easier.

It seems like a lot of the folks on the other side of aisle oftentimes think that small businesses are going to try to get away with anything that they can possibly get away with, that they want to exploit their workers, they are going to take advantage of them, we just can't trust them. Almost every small business in this country cares not only about their business, but they care about their employees.

Mr. Speaker, let's give them credit for something.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO), the ranking member of the Workforce Protections Subcommittee of the Education and the Workforce Committee.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to H.R. 1180 for a simple reason: the Working Families Flexibility Act does not give working families more flexibility. In fact, it gives them nothing.

The bill contains no meaningful rights for workers that they don't already have. Instead, it is employers who get the flexibility and the power to withhold overtime pay in exchange for a false promise of comp time in the future.

□ 1615

This bill takes the simple idea that workers should be paid when they work overtime and creates a more complicated system in which employers can pressure their workers to accept comp time instead of cash and then refuse to give them that comp time until it is convenient.

Even the American Sustainable Business Council opposes the bill, and I include their letter in the RECORD.

AMERICAN SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS COUNCIL,
April 24, 2017.

Hon. VIRGINIA FOXX,
Chairman, Committee on Education and the Workforce, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

Hon. BRADLEY BYRNE,
Chairman, Subcommittee on Workforce Protections, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

Hon. ROBERT ''BOBBY'' SCOTT,
Ranking Member, Committee on Education and the Workforce, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

Hon. MARK TAKANO,
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Workforce Protections, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRPERSONS FOXX AND BYRNE, AND RANKING MEMBERS SCOTT AND TAKANO: On behalf of our members and supporter organizations, the American Sustainable Business Council (ASBC) is writing to express our opposition to the Working Families Flexibility Act (H.R. 1180/S. 801) of 2017.

The misleadingly named bill, as introduced by Representative Martha Roby, is the wrong way to encourage employers to offer work-life benefits to their employees.

This bill would create a major liability on the balance sheet of small businesses whose employees have ''banked'' away their overtime comp hours. This liability then becomes a scheduling and accounting challenge when employees decide to trade in banked hours, requiring business owners to make unexpected shifts in personnel assignments and paychecks. Obviously, small businesses with fewer resources and employees would be even harder hit by these onerous logistical challenges than larger corporations.

It is important that more supporting measures are taken to ensure the success of small business. In the spirit of pursuing pro-business legislation, the Working Families Flexibility Act proves itself to be anything but flexible for employees and even more burdensome for employers. The sheer volume of tracking requirements has the potential to result in improper penalties being assessed by various government agencies. The bill will stymie, not foster, economic activity in the private sector.

In addition, this bill would create headaches for any employer who must track banked hours across multiple employees and make the required organizational rearrangements. These factors could put business owners in the position of making uncomfortable decisions regarding their employees which could, in turn, lower the morale of their workforce.

Current law does not deny employers and employees the ability to develop mutually beneficial flexible scheduling if they so choose, which makes this an unnecessary new law. If Representatives Roby is truly concerned about creating flexibility for working families, there are other, less onerous options.

The Healthy Families Act, for instance, would provide workers the right to earn up to seven earned paid sick days each year to recover from illness, to care for a family member, to seek routine medical care, or to manage other unpredictable necessities of day-to-day life. Employers who provide this type of leave already would not have to provide additional sick time. This method is a more predictable and easier approach to implement for employers.

ASBC is a growing national coalition of businesses and business organizations committed to advancing policies that support a vibrant and sustainable economy. ASBC represents over 250,000 businesses and more than 300,000 business professionals, including industry trade associations, local and state chambers of commerce, microenterprise, social enterprise, green and sustainable business, local and community-rooted business, women and minority business leaders, and investors.

The Working Families Flexibility Act is a poorly designed bill for both employers and employees. In the interest of working families who need true flexibility, and the businesses who rely on those family members, we urge you to vote against it.

Sincerely,

RICHARD EIDLIN,
Co-Founder & Vice President of Public Policy.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, this is a terrible deal for working families. This bill should be called the betrayal of working families act.

Mr. Speaker, I do not believe my colleagues in the majority are intentionally eroding the rights of working families. I do not believe they lack respect or compassion for the millions of hardworking Americans who feel stuck and powerless in this economy.

But I do believe that, when faced with a choice between protecting workers and rewarding corporations, they routinely fall on the side of corporate interests. The evidence is in this bill. The evidence is in their vote to roll back workplace safety reporting standards. The evidence is in their vote to block the fiduciary rule, and the evidence is in the majority's continued resistance to restoring overtime protections for millions of middle class workers.

President Trump promised to give power back to the people. This legislation betrays that promise, and it betrays the people who desperately need a voice in Washington.

I call on my colleagues to oppose H.R. 1180.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentlewoman from Kansas (Ms. JENKINS), a member of the Ways and Means Committee.

Ms. JENKINS of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1180, the Working Families Flexibility Act.

Hardworking Americans who are paid hourly wages and work overtime should have the choice to receive the money or annual leave to spend how they choose. Under our outdated law, they don't have this choice today. This commonsense legislation will fix that and directly benefit workers and their families.

As a single working mom myself, I know firsthand the difficulties parents encounter when trying to balance work and family responsibilities. For hourly

workers having the voluntary option to take either money or more time with their families opens up a world of possibilities for folks to spend more time with their kids, run errands, or make appointments.

This is an option provided to workers in the public sector. Why wouldn't we want to give this option to all American workers?

I support this family friendly legislation. I encourage my colleagues to support it as well.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. FRANKEL).

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to urge a ''no'' vote on this misleading name, Working Families Flexibility Act.

Quite simply, this is a bait-and-switch proposal. It awards employers flexibility, not the families who need it. It fails ordinary working men and women, like the mom who has no overtime stored up and must go into credit card debt after having a baby or the dad who has worked long, crushing overtime hours but can't afford to give up his pay in order to stay home with his ill son.

Mr. Speaker, Democrats have better solutions: 12 weeks of paid family leave, guaranteed paid sick days. These are proposals that will modernize our workplace. It will lead to better workers and stronger families.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN).

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman FOXX and Chairman ROBY for the outstanding job that they have done on this.

Listening to my colleagues, you would think that there is a lack of understanding, if you will, to that old saying that women want more time.

As one of my constituents asked me today: If you pass this bill, is it going to mean that I can bank my time during tax season, take time and a half and use it to take a field trip or a school trip with my child?

I said: Absolutely. Because this is a bill that puts you in charge of how you want to be compensated for overtime work. Do you want the money? Do you want the added time so that you have control of your schedule?

Yes, this is about empowering the employee.

It is so interesting, the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 put in place something for the public sector. They forgot about the private sector. You could look at this and say, well, it is a correction within the law so that not only public sector employees, but also private sector employees have the ability to say: I choose to have more time at this point in my career. I want the flexibility.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. JAYAPAL).

Ms. JAYAPAL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to this bill, H.R. 1180, the Working Families Flexibility Act.

There is nothing in this bill that provides any flexibility to working families. In fact, Mr. Speaker, we all seem to have names for this bill, but mine is that it should be called the employer flexibility act because that is what it really does. It gives employers flexibility to not pay for time worked. It is a smoke-and-mirrors promise that ultimately helps employers but hurts workers.

The choice between overtime pay and comp time is a false choice for workers, Mr. Speaker. We know what happens in the reality of the workplace. The vague promise of time off in the future is often never realized, and many hourly workers may feel compelled by employers to forfeit their overtime pay to accept comp time.

Workers do need more flexibility, more money, and more control over their lives, but this bill is a cruel joke on workers. At a time when America's working families are strapped for both time and money, this bill takes time away from families and offers them less money in every paycheck. In the end, there is no guarantee that employers will let their employees take the time off when they need it.

Here is the story of Camilla, from my home State of Washington. This is what she wrote:

> It was my first job out of college. I was given comp time in lieu of overtime pay. I worked so much overtime that, in just over 6 months' time, I had accrued 2 weeks of comp time. When I scheduled my time off, I was told I could not take the time off, as I had not worked there for a full year. I had already purchased airfare. I ended up quitting my job.

Mr. Speaker, I urge our Republican majority to go back to the table and return with legislation that provides real flexibility to American families: raise the minimum wage; ensure that hourly workers have paid sick leave; make sure that families don't suffer from pay discrimination. That is what the American people expect us to be working on. Not false choices in the name of flexibility.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Georgia (Mr. ALLEN).

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of H.R. 1108, the Working Families Flexibility Act.

Many Americans can relate to the difficulties of balancing work duties with family obligations. It is not always easy to attend a parent-teacher conference, care for an aging parent, or stay home with a newborn when outdated Federal laws create constant barriers to workplace flexibility.

H.R. 1180 will amend the outdated Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 and bring much-needed reform to the workplace. It will give employers the freedom to offer employees a choice between cash wages and comp time for overtime hours worked.

I emphasize this is a voluntary option, which means that employees who want to receive cash wages can continue to do so; and if they choose to accept comp time and change their mind, it allows workers to withdraw and receive cash wages whenever they choose.

By passing this bill, American workers will gain more flexibility in the workplace, allowing them to have more time to spend with the people they love.

I urge my colleagues to support this commonsense legislation that supports our American workers.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 30 seconds.

Mr. Speaker, there was mention about the legislative history back in the 1980s. The fact is there was no mention in legislative history that Congress passed the comp time legislation to be family friendly or to provide flexibility. The legislation was passed purely to respond to States' and localities' concerns about fiscal pressures created by the Supreme Court case Garcia v. San Antonio Metropolitan Transportation Authority. So I think it ought to be clear that these are entirely different issues.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. ESPAILLAT).

Mr. ESPAILLAT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to H.R. 1180, the so-called Working Families Flexibility Act.

The name of this bill is pretty deceiving. In reality, this legislation only worsens the significant problem of wage theft. Violators of our wage and hour laws do not need another way to cheat workers out of their pay, but that is exactly what H.R. 1180 gives them.

The problem of wage theft has reached epidemic proportions, and overtime violations are too common. All H.R. 1180 does is give dishonest employers who want to steal workers' paychecks any number of smoke screens—like denying requested and hard-earned time off because it would be an undue burden to business operations—to hide behind.

Further, we know from experience that significant litigation over payment of wages owed under comp time programs in the public sector exist. Yet this legislation includes no additional funding for the Department of Labor to enforce or implement these provisions.

Even worse, this legislation is being considered while President Trump has proposed a severe 21 percent budget cut to DOL. It simply makes no sense to give unscrupulous employers another mechanism for stealing workers' hard-earned paychecks while providing no additional resources for employees who need help recovering their stolen pay.

I would like to share a story from a New Yorker who has felt the direct and negative consequences of wage theft and comp time. During her 40-plus years as a secretary, word processor, and paralegal, she worked hundreds of extra hours and was frequently promised comp time. She never received it.

Not once. Further, any overtime pay was usually conveniently forgotten, and she feared she would lose her job if she asked for her rightful pay or promised time off.

Rather than protect employees like this woman, H.R. 1180 will do the opposite and produce more of these unjust horrendous stories.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHIMKUS). The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. ESPAILLAT. Mr. Speaker, I offered an amendment during the markup of this bill which would have stopped this legislation from enabling bad actors to cheat workers out of their pay. It would have exempted willful and repeated violators of the minimum wage and overtime protections from this act, but my Republican colleagues unanimously voted against this amendment, a clear indication of where they stand on protecting hardworking Americans.

I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' on this bill.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Alabama (Mrs. ROBY), the author of the bill.

Mrs. ROBY. Mr. Speaker, in response to the gentleman's comments that he just made, it is well worth repeating: this bill actually strengthens protections for workers and increases penalties for abuse. It contains in it strong anticoercion provisions.

We have to be factual about what is actually in the bill. This bill prohibits an employer from directly or indirectly, as suggested by the gentleman, trying to intimidate or coerce workers. Employers found to have coerced employees would be liable to those employees for double damages.

Of course, in response to the previous statements, all existing enforcement remedies, including action by the U.S. Department of Labor, are available to workers if an employer failed to pay cash wages for overtime hours or unreasonably refuses to allow workers to use their accrued comp time.

□ 1630

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the gentlewoman to show where in the bill the penalties are actually more than they are today?

Ms. FOXX. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. I yield to the gentlewoman from North Carolina.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to take the gentleman's time to explain where in the bill. It is section 4, and we will give you the text of it. Give us a second.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. And how is that different from what the Federal law is now?

Ms. FOXX. How much time, Mr. Speaker, do I have?

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, in the meanwhile, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY).

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

Actually, the idea of the 40-hour day began over—yesterday makes 130 years at Haymarket Square in the city of Chicago, my hometown. And the idea is very simple: that after 40 hours of work, which is a reasonable time in most industrialized countries in the world, that people then get overtime pay. It is something that helps strengthen families and is good for workers to have money in their pockets.

But the idea here, under the guise of flexibility—which is a really nice word—is it allows employers to deny extra hours to workers who want overtime. Instead, they can pick those who are willing to work long hours without pay for promises in the future that they would be able to have comp time, that they would be able to make it up at a time of their boss' choosing. Oh, they say over a negotiation, but go ahead and try and negotiate with your employer about that.

While the majority argues that providing comp time to private sector workers creates parity between the public and private sector, workers in the public sector have many more protections than workers in the private sector right now.

Union density in the public sector is five to six times the union density of the private sector. Workers represented by unions have far more bargaining power than unrepresented workers, greatly increasing the potential for employer abuse of comp time and decreasing the employees' ability to defend themselves from such abuses.

Workers in the public sector have more job security, higher wages than their private sector counterparts. This means public sector workers are less likely to be putting their jobs at risk. So this is just a bad idea, hurts workers, hurts families, hurts the longstanding idea of the 40-hour workweek.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman had asked a question, and we are prepared to answer on his time.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentlewoman from Alabama (Mrs. ROBY).

Mrs. ROBY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to point the gentleman to page 4 of the bill, in section 4, beginning on line 21: ''An employer that provides compensatory time under Paragraph 1 to employees shall not directly or indirectly intimidate, threaten, or coerce or attempt to intimidate, threaten, or coerce any employee for the purpose of . . . '' And then it goes through ''requiring any employee to use such compensatory time.''

If you turn to page 7 of the bill, under section 3, remedies, subsection F, it directly addresses the damages.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 15 seconds just to include in the RECORD section 216 of the Fair Labor Standards Act, which says essentially the same penalties are available in the present law as in the bill.

§ 216. Penalties

(a) Fines and imprisonment

Any person who willfully violates any of the provisions of section 215 of this title shall upon conviction thereof be subject to a fine of not more than $10,000, or to imprisonment for not more than six months, or both. No person shall be imprisoned under this subsection except for an offense committed after the conviction of such person for a prior offense under this subsection.

(b) Damages; right of action; attorney's fees and costs; termination of right of action

Any employer who violates the provisions of section 206 or section 207 of this title shall be liable to the employee or employees affected in the amount of their unpaid minimum wages, or their unpaid overtime compensation, as the case may be, and in an additional equal amount as liquidated damages. Any employer who violates the provisions of section 215(a)(3) of this title shall be liable for such legal or equitable relief as may be appropriate to effectuate the purposes of section 215(a)(3) of this title, including without limitation employment, reinstatement, promotion, and the payment of wages lost and an additional equal amount as liquidated damages. An action to recover the liability prescribed in either of the preceding sentences may be maintained against any employer (including a public agency) in any Federal or State court of competent jurisdiction by any one or more employees for and in behalf of himself or themselves and other employees similarly situated. No employee shall be a party plaintiff to any such action unless he gives his consent in writing to become such a party and such consent is filed in the court in which such action is brought. The court in such action shall, in addition to any judgment awarded to the plaintiff or plaintiffs, allow a reasonable attorney's fee to be paid by the defendant, and costs of the action. The right provided by this subsection to bring an action by or on behalf of any employee, and the right of any employee to become a party plaintiff to any such action, shall terminate upon the filing of a complaint by the Secretary of Labor in an action under section 217 of this title in which (1) restraint is sought of any further delay in the payment of unpaid minimum wages, or the amount of unpaid overtime compensation, as the case may be, owing to such employee under section 206 or section 207 of this title by an employer liable therefor under the provisions of this subsection or (2) legal or equitable relief is sought as a result of alleged violations of section 215(a)(3) of this title.

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentlewoman from Alabama (Mrs. ROBY).

Mrs. ROBY. Mr. Speaker, I would just like to say in addition: You are saying that it is the same remedies under the current law. But you have to remember, the cash-out provisions are also a strengthening of employees' rights under this bill; that at any time that the employee wishes to cash out, within 30 days, the employer must honor that and provide the accrued overtime and cash wages.

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

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

I would like to point out a couple of things in response to some of what our

colleagues have said. This bill is giving workers the freedom to choose. I want to reiterate that.

Our colleagues on the other side of the aisle are always big on giving women, in particular, the right to choose when it comes to abortions. This gives women and men both a right to choose when it comes to their time; and, to me, there is no more commodity more precious to us than our time.

I also want to say that our colleagues have said there are no meaningful rights that they don't already have. Well, Mr. Speaker, if the workers in the private sector already had these rights, we wouldn't be putting this law up for a vote.

Our colleague from Illinois, a few minutes ago, outlined all these wonderful benefits that the public sector employees have, and she is right. The private sector people would love to have the same rights that the public sector people have that are paid for by hardworking taxpayers.

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

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 30 seconds.

I include in the RECORD letters from AFSCME and the National Education Association in opposition to the legislation.

AFSCME,
April 4, 2017.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON WORKFORCE PROTECTIONS OF THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the 1.6 million members of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), I urge you to oppose H.R. 1180, the Working Families Flexibility Act of 2017. H.R. 1180 claims to help American workers better balance the needs of family and the workplace by allowing employers to offer private-sector employees the choice of paid time off in lieu of cash wages for overtime hours worked. But contrary to its stated purposes, the proposed law will result in more overtime hours for employees for less money and without any guarantee of compensatory time when needed.

For over 80 years and counting, the Federal Labor Standards Act (FLSA) establishes the basic requirements for wage and hour protections including overtime compensation. Under FLSA, overtime compensation must be provided for covered employees working more than the maximum period of 40 hours per week. However, H.R. 1180 provides no guaranteed right for an employee to use banked compensatory time when needed, even in the case of a personal or family emergency. Instead, this legislation gives discretion to the employer to permit use of compensatory time only ''within a reasonable period after making the request if the use of the compensatory time does not unduly disrupt the operations of the employer.''

This legislation calls for an irresponsible change to the FLSA that will negatively impact worker's actual take home pay, and the valued time spent with their family when both are needed for workers' financial stability and to address family obligations. Also, if an employee's request to use comp time is denied because the employer unilaterally decides it is ''unduly disruptive'', the law provides no recourse. And then, even when provided the compensatory time, the use of that time is controlled solely by the employer. In short, employees can be denied overtime pay, and effectively be prevented from meeting their family needs.

Our experience in the public sector has revealed that employers' control over the use of compensatory time inflicts very real hardships on the public employees entitled to compensatory time for their overtime work. Employees request specific dates for valid reasons. Employees need the earned time off for milestones such as children's birthdays, family and friends' weddings, funerals, scheduled vacations and other date-specific activities.

Giving the employer veto power has been burdensome and abused by employers in the public sector and it has been cause for litigation. In theory, employees may take compensatory time within a reasonable period after making the request. In practice, it creates problems for employees denied the time when they need it and the language of the law becomes a false promise.

Balancing the demands of family and the workplace are already a challenge for far too many workers. At a time in our country when our priority should be investing in stable jobs with good wages and benefits, our attention should not be on legislation that would further hurt workers who are already subjected to very little formality with respect to an agreement to take compensatory time off in lieu of overtime pay.

Nothing in the current compensatory time-off application of the FLSA prevents employers from giving leave to employees who work long hours. Neither does the new proposal offer the critical protections workers need in the 21st century. Workers need solutions that actually help them manage work and family responsibilities; not a law that will provide less flexibility to a workforce under the guise of providing more.

H.R. 1180 attacks workers' paychecks, time off and flexibility; and AFSCME strongly opposes this bill.

Sincerely,

SCOTT FREY,
Director of Federal Government Affairs.

NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION,
May 1, 2017.

U.S. CONGRESS,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the three million members of the National Education Association and the 50 million students they serve, in advance of this week's vote we urge you to vote NO on the Working Families Flexibility Act (H.R. 1180). Votes on this issue may be included in NEA's Report Card for the 115th Congress.

This deceptively named bill would hurt, not help, working families. Instead of extra pay for overtime, low-wage workers could receive ''comp'' time—paid time off. But the employer, not the employee, would decide when time off is granted. There is no guarantee workers could take time off when they need it most—for example, to care for a sick child, attend a parent-teacher conference, help an aging parent, or other attend to other pressing responsibilities. Employers could defer compensation for unused comp time for up to 13 months, a real hardship for low-wage workers who struggle to make ends meet. Employers could also unilaterally decide to ''cash out'' comp time in excess of 80 hours or discontinue their entire comp time program with just 30 days' notice, leaving employees in the lurch.

In short, in exchange for longer hours at lower pay, workers get the possibility—but no guarantee—of extra time to care for their families or time off when they really need it.

All working people—not just those who spend more than 40 hours a week on the job—need guaranteed access to paid sick days and paid family and medical leave. Too few employers provide these protections now, especially for employees paid by the hour. Again, we urge you to vote NO on the Working Families Flexibility Act and focus instead on truly family-friendly policies that reflect the realities of the 21st century workplace.

Sincerely,

MARC EGAN,
Director of Government Relations.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I want to point out that AFSCME, the NEA, ATU, and other public service unions have written letters in opposition.

One from AFSCME: ''Our experience in the public sector has revealed that employers' control over the use of compensatory time inflicts very real hardships on public employees entitled to compensatory time for their overtime work. Employees request specific dates for valid reasons. Employees need the earned time off for milestones such as children's birthdays, family and friends' weddings. . . .''

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

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself an additional 30 seconds.

''Giving the employer veto power has been burdensome and abused by employers in the public sector and it has been cause for litigation. In theory, employees may take compensatory time within a reasonable period after making the request. In practice, it creates problems for employees denied the time when they need it and the language of the law becomes a false promise.''

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I have listened to the debate on the floor, and I want to join my fellow colleagues—women and men of the Democratic Caucus—on opposing the Working Families Flexibility Act of 2017.

I just have one anecdotal story that reflects the constituents that I represent. Take that woman who I saw—when going to my elementary schools, visiting them, I saw a mother who got up at 4 in the morning to take three buses to drop her young child off at an elementary school, and then get two buses back to work, an hourly wage maker. She does it because, one, she is supporting her child and, two, she has got to work.

This bill is a complete undermining of all of the hardworking men and women who need their money to pay a light bill, to pay rent, maybe even a mortgage, to pay the normal expenses that many take for granted. And this bill wants to substitute compensatory time for overtime pay.

So I cannot imagine that anyone with a heart would have this legislation as a substitute for this hard-working mother to be paid overtime. I just can't imagine that compensatory time off cannot pay the light bill, cannot pay rent, cannot pay healthcare costs, which we see are immediately being taken away from 24 million Americans.

So I oppose this legislation because I want to stand on the side of the hard-working mother who needs her resources for a school uniform, a school trip, a rent payment, a light bill.

Mr. Speaker, this bill should be opposed. It does not serve the American people.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time to close.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, how much time do I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Virginia has 6½ minutes remaining.

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

I include in the RECORD a letter from the Amalgamated Transit Union against the bill.

AMALGAMATED TRANSIT UNION,
Silver Spring, MD, May 1, 2017.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU), the largest labor organization representing public transit workers in the United States, I am urging you to oppose the Working Families Flexibility Act of 2017 (H.R. 1180). The title of the legislation is extremely misleading, as the bill actually provides flexibility only to employers—not workers—and hurts working families who are already struggling to make ends meet.

In response to an epidemic of workers plagued by mandatory excessive hours, Congress in 1938 made the wise decision to pass the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), establishing the 40-hour workweek that we all take for granted today. This landmark legislation, requiring that employers pay a time-and-a-half cash premium for overtime work, serves as the only deterrent from employers demanding excessive hours by making overtime work more expensive for them. H.R. 1180 would remove this barrier.

Forced overtime is already a serious problem in the transit industry, and many of ATU's bargaining units are increasingly in the private sector and thus subject to FLSA rules. If privatized transit operations were provided with the ''flexibility'' to offer workers comp time instead of being paid time-and-a-half for overtime, we would see prolific abuse of overtime. Intercity bus operators are already exempt from FLSA overtime provisions, and as a result, there has recently been one horrific crash after another on U.S. Highways caused by driver fatigue. In fact, according to the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), driver fatigue is responsible for a staggering 36% of fatalities due to intercity bus crashes. If H.R. 1180 is passed, it would lead to widespread fatigue throughout the transit industry as well. Quite simply, more buses will be involved in crashes due to fatigued drivers, and innocent people will die.

Moreover, the so-called flexibility under this bill is one-sided, putting management in total control. Private transit companies, which generally cast safety concerns to the wind and have no regard for anything other than the bottom line, would be able to decide if a requested absence on a particular day would ''unduly disrupt'' business operations and specify an alternative date which is not at all convenient for an employee.

The need to discourage working people to the brink of exhaustion is as necessary today as it was nearly 80 years ago. America needs to maintain the disincentive for employers to force workers to spend more time away from their families. If additional hiring is needed, then workforces should be expanded. In the transportation industry, this is a matter of life and death.

H.R. 1180 is bad for workers, dangerous for transit passengers, and another example of a solution in search of a problem. Please oppose and work to defeat this ill-advised legislation.

Thank you for your consideration of our views.

Sincerely,

LAWRENCE J. HANLEY,
International President.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, under this bill, there are no advantages to the employee. Without this bill, an employee can work overtime, make the money, and then have enough money to afford to be able to take subsequent time off without pay. That is about what this bill does.

But with the bill, it allows the employers to work people overtime and avoid paying the overtime wages. The employer just lets the people take their comp time when work is slow, so the employer never has to pay the overtime.

This bill allows the employer to decide when the comp time can be taken. The employee can request, but the employer has the final word because the bill says that the comp time can be denied if the time off unduly disrupts operations.

And guess who gets to decide that measure?

Those employees who want to work extra time to make extra pay will lose that opportunity to fellow employees who agree to ingratiate themselves to the employer by saving their employer money by accepting comp time instead of overtime pay. There is no coercion. Preference is just given to those who will accept the comp time and not the real wages.

Mr. Speaker, this bill offers nothing to the employees. It offers the employer the opportunity to avoid paying overtime. That is why all of the representatives of workers oppose the legislation, and I think we should, too.

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

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

We have heard from our colleagues that we are just not doing enough for working people, and we have also heard from our colleagues that all employers are evil people.

I tell you, Mr. Speaker, it is astonishing to me that we have as many people working in this country as we do under all these evil employers. They must have run into just the worst people in the world. I don't ever run into people like that. Everybody I know that has employees is cherishing them because they need them, and they treat them right.

They have often said there are other things that we can do. But, Mr. Speaker, we have this bill in front of us, and it gives workers something that our colleagues cannot give them: the freedom to choose and to have more time.

Edward Everett Hale said: ''I am only one; but still I am one. I cannot do everything; but still I can do something; and because I cannot do everything, I will not refuse to do the something that I can do.''

That is what this bill does. Congresswoman ROBY has introduced a bill—and many people have signed on—that will do one thing for people in the private sector. It will give them the same rights that people in the public sector have, to turn overtime into comp time.

It is a pro-worker, pro-family proposal that will make a positive difference in the lives of many Americans. The Federal Government shouldn't stand in the way of more flexibility in the workplace.

Today we have a chance to empower single parents, moms and dads with a newborn, students trying to earn a college diploma, and so many other individuals who simply need more time to meet their needs.

□ 1645

We have heard a lot of excuses from Democrats today. It is the same story we have heard for years in an effort to deny workers the freedom to do what is best for them based on their own values. However, the concerns we heard have been addressed. This bill provides very strong worker protections to ensure the decision to choose comp time is voluntary. It gives workers a choice and puts them in control of their time.

Let's vote in favor of freedom and flexibility for American workers today. Let's give private sector employees the same choice that government workers have. Let's establish fairness in our Nation's workforce policies.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all Members to help more Americans balance the demands of work and family by supporting the Working Families Flexibility Act.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. SANCHEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition H.R. 1180, a bill that would rob workers of pay they've earned.

This proposal guts overtime protections and forces working men and women to make the false choice between time with their loved ones and a fair wage. Instead of offering "flexibility" to working families, employers should be following the letter of the law and pay workers fairly for the hours they work. Employers shouldn't be able to put their workers' well-being at risk under the guise of giving workers a choice.

If Republicans truly wanted to help working families, they would guarantee paid sick days and paid family leave instead of offering the "flexibility" for employers to choose how workers live their lives. This bill is a bait and switch that amounts to nothing more than another attack on worker's rights. I strongly oppose this bill and urge my colleagues to vote no.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, nearly ten years ago Senator

Ted Kennedy and I introduced a bill called the Working Families Flexibility Act.

The bill before us today has the same name and its supporters may try to claim it fixes the same problems we were trying to fix, but, Mr. Speaker this is not Senator Kennedy's bill and in fact it bears little resemblance to the bill he and I worked on and that Sen. BOB CASEY and I have reintroduced this week.

Let me be clear, the bill before us today creates zero new rights for workers. Zero.

In fact, under this bill working families would have even less flexibility than they do now to care for a child or sick family member.

This GOP bill allows employers to withhold desperately needed overtime pay for months at a time.

It lets bosses hold back overtime earnings, and only pay them out when employees request the money they have earned.

And even if employees do ask, which is ridiculous since it is money that they earned and should not have to ask their bosses if they can get paid for work they already did—bosses are given a month to write that overtime check.

And if it wasn't clear enough that this bill is not about helping working families, this bill puts all decisions about when employees can use flex time in the hands of their bosses.

Want to take an extra week off in the summer when kids are out of school? Too bad, that doesn't fit with your boss' plans.

Even if you work hard for six months to build up that extra comp time, your employer can still deny that request.

We should be ashamed that the U.S. stands out in the world as a country that requires the least family-friendly benefits for workers. How can we call ourselves a country dedicated to family values when we don't support working families?

The real value of the minimum wage has severely eroded, and the new administration has blocked a badly needed update to our overtime protections.

We have no mandated paid parental leave. No paid sick days. No fair, predictable scheduling. No flexible work arrangements.

And American families are paying dearly for our inaction.

So let's not call this bill the Working Families Flexibility Act.

That's an insult to millions of working families across the country and it's an insult to the late-Senator Ted Kennedy who did so much for the working families of this Nation.

I urge my colleagues to oppose.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to House Resolution 299, the previous question is ordered on the bill, as amended.

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

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

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

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

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Yes, I am opposed.

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

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Scott of Virginia moves to recommit the bill H.R. 1180 to the Committee on Education and the Workforce with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith, with the following amendment:

At the end of the bill, add the following new section:

SEC. 7. MINIMUM SICK DAYS.

This Act and the amendments made by this Act shall not apply to any employee who does not receive from his or her employer fewer than seven paid sick days, which days may be used to seek medical care for a pre-existing health condition.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Virginia is recognized for 5 minutes in support of his motion.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, this is the final amendment to the bill, which will not kill the bill nor send it back to committee. If adopted, the bill will immediately proceed to final passage, as amended.

Mr. Speaker, the underlying bill would undermine workers' access to overtime pay and provide them with no real benefit in return, and that is why all of the groups representing workers oppose it. So, instead of undermining employment protections that boost wages for working Americans such as overtime pay, we should work towards ensuring that American workers can remain healthy while on the job.

Critical to that goal is guaranteeing true workplace flexibility by ensuring that workers do not have to choose between their health and their paycheck. So, if the majority is truly concerned about American workers, then the majority should work with us to provide workers the paid time off they need to care for themselves and their families. They could easily do that by supporting the Healthy Families Act, which would give workers the right to earn up to 7 paid sick days.

This motion to recommit would protect workers by ensuring that only employees who are subjected to this comp time arrangement would be those who have at least 7 paid sick days. Providing paid sick days is not only good for working families, it is also good for business, public health, and our overall economy. Providing paid sick days decreases employee turnover and prevents illness from being spread throughout the workplace.

If we are truly concerned about workers, we should not ask them to spend more time away from their families and forfeit their overtime pay in order to take the time off when they are sick or when they need to care for a sick child.

Mr. Speaker, while we are considering this bill, we are also considering healthcare legislation that Republicans are trying to pass which would rob American families of protection under the Affordable Care Act that requires coverage for preexisting conditions.

We know that President Trump has promised to repeal the ACA on day one, and Republicans have spent 7 years complaining about the law and voting time after time to repeal all or parts of the law, but they have never developed a comprehensive proposal to actually deliver on their promises of better care at lower costs.

If we are going to make changes to the Affordable Care Act, we should improve health care for working families, not make it worse. Incredibly, every proposal the Republicans have come up with actually makes things worse.

Under the recent Republican plan, 24 million fewer people would be covered, and everybody else will pay more and get less. While their plan inflicts pain on those most in need, the wealthiest 2 percent of Americans get massive tax cuts.

Under that plan, the typical working family would suffer an increase in healthcare coverage costs of about $2,000 a year, for the average family with a head of household age 55 to 64, the bill would increase costs by over $7,000.

Recent changes in the Republican health plan would unravel many of the protections that American families currently enjoy in their healthcare coverage, including ending current protections for people with preexisting conditions. The Republican health plan would return us to the days when health insurance coverage was unaffordable for many individuals with preexisting conditions. That bill directly violates the commitment made by President Trump and House Republicans to protect individuals with preexisting conditions.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to drop their attempts to take away quality health insurance coverage for those with preexisting conditions. Instead, we should adopt this motion which takes a small step in ensuring that workers can access paid sick leave that allows them to remain healthy, including accessing medical treatment needed to treat or address preexisting conditions.

Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of the motion, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I claim the time in opposition to the motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from North Carolina is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I oppose the motion to recommit.

For years, so-called Progressives have clung to outdated Federal workforce policies from the 1930s. Why? They think government knows what is best for hardworking men and women in this country. This is a theme they abide by day after day.

This motion is just another attempt to deny workers the freedom to decide what is best for them and their families. Once again, Democrats are defending a double standard—yes, a double standard. They voted to give government workers a choice on comp time. Why shouldn't those in the private sector, those whose taxpayer dollars pay

the salaries of government employees, receive the same choice?

It is time to eliminate this double standard. It is time to modernize our Nation's labor rules to meet the needs of the 21st century workforce. It is time for greater freedom, flexibility, and fairness for American workers.

I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' on the motion to recommit and ''yes'' on the Working Families Flexibility Act.

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

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

There was no objection.

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

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

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 and clause 9 of rule XX, this 15-minute vote on the motion to recommit will be followed by 5-minute votes on passage of the bill, if ordered; and agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal, if ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 192, nays 234, not voting 4, as follows:

[Roll No. 243]

YEAS—192

Adams
Aguilar
Barragán
Bass
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blum
Blumenauer
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (MD)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capuano
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Correa
Costa
Courtney
Crist
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Demings
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Espaillat
Esty (CT)
Evans
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Gonzalez (TX)
Gottheimer
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hanabusa
Hastings
Heck
Higgins (NY)
Himes
Hoyer
Huffman
Jackson Lee
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Khanna
Kihuen
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster (NH)
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham, M.
Luján, Ben Ray
Lynch
Maloney, Carolyn B.
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McEachin
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Halleran
O'Rourke
Pallone
Panetta
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Raskin
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Rosen
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Smith (WA)
Soto
Speier
Suozzi
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NAYS—234

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Arrington
Babin
Bacon
Banks (IN)
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Bergman
Biggs
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Bost
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Budd
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Cheney
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comer
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davidson
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Dunn
Emmer
Estes (KS)
Farenthold
Faso
Ferguson
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Flores
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gaetz
Gallagher
Garrett
Gibbs
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guthrie
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins (LA)
Hill
Holding
Hollingsworth
Hudson
Huizenga
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger
Knight
Kustoff (TN)
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
Lewis (MN)
LoBiondo
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
MacArthur
Marchant
Marino
Marshall
Massie
Mast
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mitchell
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Murphy (PA)
Newhouse
Noem
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Pittenger
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Posey
Ratcliffe
Reichert
Renacci
Rice (SC)
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney, Francis
Rooney, Thomas J.
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce (CA)
Russell
Rutherford
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smucker
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Taylor
Tenney
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Zeldin

NOT VOTING—4

Chaffetz
Meng
Reed
Slaughter

□ 1717

Messrs. WEBSTER of Florida, EMMER, MEEHAN, AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, WESTERMAN, OLSON, RUSSELL, SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana, Mr. PALAZZO, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Messrs. DENHAM, FORTENBERRY, and KATKO changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Messrs. DOGGETT, NEAL, and RUPPERSBERGER changed their vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia). The question is on the passage of the bill.

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

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

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

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 229, noes 197, not voting 4, as follows:

[Roll No. 244]

AYES—229

Abraham
Aderholt
Allen
Amash
Amodei
Arrington
Babin
Bacon
Banks (IN)
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Bergman
Biggs
Bilirakis
Bishop (MI)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blum
Bost
Brady (TX)
Brat
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Budd
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Chabot
Cheney
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Comer
Comstock
Conaway
Cook
Costello (PA)
Cramer
Crawford
Culberson
Curbelo (FL)
Davidson
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Donovan
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Dunn
Emmer
Estes (KS)
Farenthold
Faso
Ferguson
Fleischmann
Flores
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gaetz
Gallagher
Garrett
Gibbs
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Griffith
Grothman
Guthrie
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Higgins (LA)
Hill
Holding
Hollingsworth
Hudson
Huizenga
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurd
Issa
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger
Knight
Kustoff (TN)
Labrador
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Latta
Lewis (MN)
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Marchant
Marino
Marshall
Massie
Mast
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McSally
Meadows
Messer
Mitchell
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Mullin
Murphy (PA)
Newhouse
Noem

Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Pittenger
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Posey
Ratcliffe
Reichert
Renacci
Rice (SC)
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney, Francis
Rooney, Thomas J.
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Rouzer
Royce (CA)
Russell
Rutherford
Sanford
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (TX)
Smucker
Stefanik
Stewart
Stivers
Taylor
Tenney
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Trott
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Walters, Mimi
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IA)
Zeldin

NOES—197

Adams
Aguilar
Barragán
Bass
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brown (MD)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capuano
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Correa
Costa
Courtney
Crist
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Demings
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Espaillat
Esty (CT)
Evans
Fitzpatrick
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Gonzalez (TX)
Gottheimer
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hanabusa
Hastings
Heck
Higgins (NY)
Himes
Hoyer
Huffman
Jackson Lee
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Joyce (OH)
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Khanna
Kihuen
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster (NH)
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lieu, Ted
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham, M.
Luján, Ben Ray
Lynch
MacArthur
Maloney, Carolyn B.
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McEachin
McGovern
McNerney
Meehan
Meeks
Moore
Moulton
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
Norcross
O'Halleran
O'Rourke
Pallone
Panetta
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Peterson
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Raskin
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Rosen
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Smith (NJ)
Smith (WA)
Soto
Speier
Suozzi
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tonko
Torres
Tsongas
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—4

Chaffetz
Meng
Reed
Slaughter

□ 1725

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York changed her vote from ''aye'' to ''no.''

Mr. TURNER changed his vote from ''no'' to ''aye.''

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the question on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal, which the Chair will put de novo.

The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

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

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

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

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 237, noes 176, answered ''present'' 3, not voting 14, as follows:

[Roll No. 245]

AYES—237

Abraham
Adams
Aderholt
Allen
Amodei
Arrington
Bacon
Banks (IN)
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Beatty
Biggs
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Brady (TX)
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brown (MD)
Buchanan
Bustos
Butterfield
Byrne
Calvert
Carson (IN)
Carter (TX)
Cartwright
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Cheney
Chu, Judy
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clay
Cleaver
Cole
Collins (NY)
Comstock
Cook
Cooper
Correa
Courtney
Cramer
Crawford
Cuellar
Culberson
Davidson
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeGette
DeLauro
DelBene
Demings
Dent
DesJarlais
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Donovan
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Dunn
Ellison
Emmer
Engel
Eshoo
Espaillat
Estes (KS)
Esty (CT)
Evans
Fleischmann
Fortenberry
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Garrett
Goodlatte
Gowdy
Granger
Green, Al
Griffith
Grothman
Guthrie
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings
Heck
Hensarling
Higgins (LA)
Higgins (NY)
Hill
Himes
Hollingsworth
Huffman
Hultgren
Hunter
Issa
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Kaptur
Katko
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Kildee
King (IA)
King (NY)
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster (NH)
Kustoff (TN)
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Larson (CT)
Latta
Lewis (MN)
Lipinski
Long
Loudermilk
Love
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham, M.
Luján, Ben Ray
Marchant
Marino
Marshall
Massie
McCarthy
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McEachin
McHenry
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
Meadows
Meeks
Messer
Mitchell
Moolenaar
Mooney (WV)
Moore
Moulton
Mullin
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Newhouse
Nunes
O'Rourke
Olson
Palazzo
Palmer
Pascrell
Pingree
Pocan
Polis
Posey
Price (NC)
Quigley
Raskin
Renacci
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (KY)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney, Francis
Rooney, Thomas J.
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Royce (CA)
Ruppersberger
Russell
Rutherford
Scalise
Schneider
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Smucker
Speier
Stefanik
Stewart
Suozzi
Takano
Taylor
Thornberry
Tiberi
Titus
Trott
Tsongas
Wagner
Walters, Mimi
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters, Maxine
Webster (FL)
Welch
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Yarmuth
Young (IA)
Zeldin

NOES—176

Aguilar
Amash
Babin
Barragán
Bass
Bera
Bergman
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (MI)
Blum
Bost
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brady (PA)
Brownley (CA)
Buck
Bucshon
Budd
Burgess
Capuano
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carter (GA)
Castor (FL)
Clarke (NY)
Clyburn
Coffman
Cohen
Collins (GA)
Comer
Conaway
Connolly
Conyers
Costa
Costello (PA)
Crist
Crowley
Cummings
Curbelo (FL)
Davis, Rodney
DeFazio
Delaney
Denham
DeSantis
DeSaulnier
Diaz-Balart
Doyle, Michael F.
Duffy
Farenthold
Faso
Fitzpatrick
Flores
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Fudge
Gaetz
Gallagher
Gibbs
Gonzalez (TX)
Gosar
Gottheimer
Graves (GA)
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Green, Gene
Gutiérrez
Hanabusa
Herrera Beutler
Hice, Jody B.
Holding
Hoyer
Hudson
Huizenga
Hurd
Jackson Lee
Jayapal
Jeffries
Jenkins (KS)
Jenkins (WV)
Johnson (OH)
Jones
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Keating
Khanna
Kihuen
Kilmer
Kind
Kinzinger
Knight
LaHood
Lance
Langevin
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lieu, Ted
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lynch
MacArthur
Maloney, Sean
Mast
Matsui
McGovern
McKinley
McSally
Meehan
Murphy (PA)
Neal
Noem
Nolan
Norcross
O'Halleran
Pallone
Paulsen
Payne
Pearce
Pelosi
Perry
Peters
Peterson
Pittenger
Poe (TX)
Poliquin
Ratcliffe
Reichert
Rice (NY)
Richmond
Rogers (AL)
Ros-Lehtinen
Rosen
Rouzer
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez
Sanford
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Sewell (AL)
Sires
Smith (MO)
Soto
Stivers
Swalwell (CA)
Tenney
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Torres
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walberg
Walden
Walker
Walorski
Watson Coleman
Weber (TX)
Wilson (FL)
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)

ANSWERED ''PRESENT''—3

Grijalva
Rice (SC)
Tonko

NOT VOTING—14

Brat	Kelly (IL)	Panetta
Chaffetz	Larsen (WA)	Perlmutter
Ferguson	Maloney, Carolyn B.	Reed
Frelinghuysen	Meng	Slaughter
Gohmert		Tipton

□ 1734

So the Journal was approved.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained and missed rollcall vote Nos. 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, and 245. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on votes 242 and 243. I would have voted "nay" on votes 240, 241, 244 and 245.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF SENATE AMENDMENTS TO H.R. 244, HONORING INVESTMENTS IN RECRUITING AND EMPLOYING AMERICAN MILITARY VETERANS ACT OF 2017

Mr. COLE, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 115–108) on the resolution (H. Res. 305) providing for consideration of the Senate amendments to the bill (H.R. 244) to encourage effective, voluntary investments to recruit, employ, and retain men and women who have served in the United States military with annual Federal awards to employers recognizing such efforts, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

POLL SHOWS MEDIA IS NOT MAINSTREAM

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

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the national media's continued crusade against President Trump further demonstrates that they are not mainstream.

A Morning Consult poll found that a majority of Americans believe the media is ''out of touch with everyday Americans.'' Most significantly, 37 percent said they trusted President Trump to tell the truth, while only 29 percent said the media is truthful.

The media's open hostility to the President continues to erode his credibility. A poll by the University of Virginia Center for Politics found that 88 percent of Trump voters agree with him that the media ''is the enemy of the American people.''

Let's hope the media will put aside their bias and give the President fair and objective coverage. It may be the only way for the media to rebuild their credibility.

AMERICA'S WORKERS NEED JOBS AND A RENEGOTIATED NAFTA

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

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, President Trump claims to have brought profound change in his first 100 days in office, but thus far, on jobs, our trade deficit continues to rise.

Rather than fulfill his promise to directly renegotiate NAFTA, the President signed another ''dodge 'em'' executive order asking for a 6-month delay by reviewing all U.S. trade agreements. That could take forever. His NAFTA backtrack presents a serious problem for Americans who continue to lose their jobs to NAFTA's broken promises.

None will be more impacted than Americans working in the automotive sector. Last year, our country's automotive trade gap with Mexico was deep in the red again. As a result, our country imported 800,000 more cars from Mexico than we exported.

This is what it looked like back in 1993. This is what it looks like today. Is it any wonder that Americans are concerned about jobs?

In agricultural trade among NAFTA partners, 2 million small-scale Mexican farmers were thrown off their farms and out of work. This fueled the immigration crisis and subwage workers across our continent as poverty continued—no different than 1993.

America's workers don't need any more studies or delays. We need jobs and a renegotiated NAFTA now.

CELEBRATING ISRAEL'S 69TH ANNIVERSARY OF INDEPENDENCE

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

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate our ally Israel on its 69th anniversary of independence.

For nearly seven decades, Israel has become a beacon of promise and success amid continued challenges. Since the declaration of the State of Israel back in 1948, they have consistently shown the power of democracy and strength in a volatile part of the world. The people of Israel have also proven themselves to be loyal allies to the United States during tumultuous times, serving as a constant reaffirmation of our unbreakable bond.

Their resolve cannot be understated, either. Israel consistently keeps its citizens safe, despite security threats on a daily basis. The fact that Israel continues to flourish amid constant efforts to terrorize and daunt them is a signal of the nation's strength.

So today we join those in Israel, as well as others around the world, in celebration.

Mr. Speaker, let us continue to protect and preserve the unending and unwavering friendship and relationship between America and Israel.

WE NEED TO IMPROVE OUR HEALTHCARE SYSTEM, NOT TEAR IT DOWN

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

Mr. CÁRDENAS. Mr. Speaker, the Lord works in mysterious ways.

Any person today can go online and look at the speech that Jimmy Kimmel made live on television. He talks about his newborn little boy. He talks about how, within a few minutes, they had to whisk him over to another hospital to give him an emergency operation on his heart. He was very emotional.

But he didn't just talk about him and his wife and his little daughter and his newborn son. He talked about how no person, no family, or no child should ever have to be denied that opportunity for that lifesaving operation, especially right here in the United States of America.

Mr. Speaker, the Lord works in mysterious ways because this is the perfect time for every American to go online and look at the Jimmy Kimmel speech. It is not politics, ladies and gentlemen, it is love. It is respect not only for his little boy, but for this great country and how we can be greater. That is why we need to improve our healthcare system, not tear it down.

NATIONAL CHARTER SCHOOLS WEEK

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

Mr. BIGGS. Mr. Speaker, this week is National Charter Schools Week, and I rise to recognize Arizona's leadership amongst the charter school community.

Over this past school year, a record number of students attended 547 charter schools in Arizona; and last week, a new survey found that five of the country's top seven high schools were Arizona charter schools, including one from my own district, Arizona's Fifth Congressional District. I am extremely proud of our charter schools.

Arizona charter schools are thriving because of two decades of tireless work from advocates to give thousands of students more educational choices and opportunities to succeed. These leaders have fostered a culture that balances autonomy and accountability to prepare their students for higher education and the workforce.

As the rankings prove, Arizona's policies are drastically improving student achievement and should be emulated by the rest of the Nation.

SMALL BUSINESS WEEK

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

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today during Small Business Week in recognition of the entrepreneurs and small-business owners that form the foundation of our American economy.

More than half of all working Americans either own or are employed by small businesses.

In Congress, our job is to promote an environment where small businesses grow and succeed and communities and working families can prosper. To do that, we need to educate our kids to close the skills gap too many businesses face in trying to find the talent they need to grow their companies.

We need to reimagine and renew our crumbling infrastructure for the 21st century economy. We can help small businesses invent things here, make things here, and ship them around the world.

We need to reform our immigration system to reduce the complexity employers face when trying to legally hire talented, industrious people.

I urge my colleagues to consider this week, Small Business Week, what we can do together to support American small businesses—the greatest job creation engines of our economy.

□ 1745

CELEBRATING SMALL BUSINESS WEEK

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

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt that small businesses drive the American economy. Across the United States, small businesses create about two out of every three new jobs.

Since 1963, every President has designated this week National Small Business Week to celebrate these economic engines and encourage policies that allow them to thrive. When our local small businesses succeed, they create opportunity, invigorate communities, and preserve the district character of our local economy. That is why I have committed to visit 100 small businesses across my district this year and every year, to better appreciate the needs of local small businesses and help them create good-paying jobs in our community.

During my visits, I have heard common themes: a Tax Code that is too complex, burdensome one-size-fits-all regulations from Washington, and lawmakers too focused on partisan bickering rather than on working together to grow our economy.

As we turn our attention to small businesses this week, let's put these concerns at the forefront and get to work on solutions.

OPPOSE REPUBLICAN HEALTHCARE BILL

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

Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire. Mr. Speaker, tonight I rise to speak in opposition to the Republican healthcare bill that is once again under consideration in this House.

Mr. Speaker, it feels like Groundhog Day all over again. The bill is back, and rather than coming to the table to discuss ways we can all work together to improve health care for every American, Republicans are again trying to jam through a misguided bill that would threaten the health care of thousands of Granite Staters and literally millions of Americans.

Just a few weeks ago, I joined with my colleagues to highlight a particularly egregious provision of this bill that would jeopardize access to health care for 7 million veterans. Weeks later, these provisions remain in the bill, and this is unacceptable. We had the time, and the Republicans failed to fix this.

It is wrong for America, and it is wrong for millions of veterans. I urge Members to oppose the bill.

AMERICAN HEALTH CARE ACT IS BETTER FOR AMERICANS

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

Mr. HARRIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about the good things that are going to happen on Thursday if we bring the House Republican plan to the floor.

For the first time in 6 years, we are actually going to lower premiums for Americans. We are actually going to take the problems with the ObamaCare bill, the failures of the ObamaCare bill, and correct them.

You just heard, for instance, about Jimmy Kimmel. I guess the comedian published a YouTube video. I suggest you watch the YouTube video and then just google about newborn coverage.

Mr. Speaker, we have the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act—it has been on the books for decades—that covers newborns. This is not an issue. We are a compassionate nation, Mr. Speaker. You and I were both physicians. We understand that we have to take care of Americans.

The American Health Care Act that is forthcoming from the Republicans does exactly that. It not only covers people with preexisting conditions, it adds two layers of protection for them.

So, Mr. Speaker, I urge all Americans look at it and just see how much better their health care will be and how much more affordable it will be after we pass the American Health Care Act.

PASS A HEALTHCARE BILL THAT WORKS FOR THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

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

Ms. GABBARD. Mr. Speaker, I recently wrapped up a townhall tour across my district in Hawaii, visiting every single island. A common theme that I heard from folks was one of concern and questions about this Republican healthcare bill that we may be voting on later this week.

They are worried about their aging parents not being able to pay for their premiums and prescriptions and that newly added provisions that threaten those with preexisting conditions with skyrocketing costs will have such a devastating impact.

Every time we hear about the new versions and new changes to this bill, it gets worse than the one before. Among a host of new problems, the latest version strips away protections on healthcare benefits like maternity care, substance abuse, mental health services, while also expanding an already-crippling age tax against our seniors, against our kupuna.

No matter how you package it, this bill is a handout to insurance and pharmaceutical corporations while breaking the bank for those most in need of care. I urge my colleagues to stand in strong opposition to this bill and, instead, pass a healthcare bill that works for the American people.

RAISING AWARENESS OF MARINES UNITED OFFENSIVE FACEBOOK PAGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MARSHALL). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. FRANKEL) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the topic of my Special Order.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, the women of the Democratic Women's Working Group are here today with other Members that we have invited to raise awareness about the offensive Marines United Facebook page and others like it.

On these pages, male marines posted nude or intimate photos of female servicemembers and veterans without their consent. This affected hundreds of women, with an audience of an estimated 30,000 marines with access to the Facebook page.

The Democratic women recently held a hearing on this alarming situation which, incidentally, began less than a month after the first Marine infantry unit was assigned women, and that was January 5.

At our hearing, we heard testimony from advocates for servicemembers, a former marine, and a journalist who

covered this issue extensively, and most importantly, we heard from Erika Butner and Marisa Woytek, two brave, resilient marines.

Marisa is a current lance corporal. She proudly followed in her father's footsteps, and she joined the Marines because, as she stated, she wanted to be part of something bigger than herself.

Erika enlisted in the Marines for many of the same reasons in 2011, fully aware that she could be deployed to a combat zone. A lifelong patriot, she was ready, and willing to take that chance. But in her own words—little did she know that the ''war she would fight would be among her very own brothers in arms.''

At our hearing, the women described harassment and exploitation at the hands of their Marine brothers, and, quite frankly, it made us feel sick to our stomachs.

Their male counterparts put up Erika's and Marisa's photographs and made lewd and derogatory comments—asking other men to vote on whether they would ''smash or pass'' on these women, meaning would they have sexual relations with them.

The women were threatened with rape and violence, with Facebook posts like: ''We should throw marines into a tub of acid and rip-off their eyelashes.''

Sadly and shockingly, Marisa and Erika were not alone. Thousands and thousands of photos of women were shared on these Facebook pages.

I want to say to Marisa and Erika and all of these women: We share your anger and your hurt, and we are so grateful to you for coming forward with your stories.

I am a mother of a United States Marine veteran who served in both Afghanistan and Iraq—a proud mother—and I understand the selfless sacrifice a marine makes when he or she puts on their uniform. So I am outraged, as are my colleagues whom you will hear from today, that so many brave marines were subjected to this kind of harassment and exploitation while willing to sacrifice for our country. It is not only personally degrading to courageous patriots, it hurts the effectiveness of our military and the ability to recruit women.

So today's Special Order is another opportunity to amplify the voices of Marisa and Erika and to send a message that we stand with them and we will fight for their honor.

I want to thank Congresswoman JACKIE SPEIER and Congresswoman MARTHA MCSALLY, who I hope will be here with us today. They are actually, very sadly, at another hearing where the topic is sexual harassment in our military academies.

After our hearing, they went on and they introduced a bill to make it illegal for military members to share photos without consent. This is a bipartisan effort. I am proud to be a cosponsor, as are many of my colleagues, again, whom you will hear from in a few minutes; and we owe it to Erika and Marisa and all of the other women that have been subjected to this abuse to pass this legislation and to work together to change the culture of disrespect that allowed it to happen.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE), a great leader in this Congress, a member of our Appropriations and Budget Committees and Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies.

Representative LEE, we are pleased that you are with us tonight.

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, let me thank Congresswoman FRANKEL for being such an exemplary chair, and also our vice chair, BRENDA LAWRENCE. You have put together quite a team and really are raising the issues that really don't get raised oftentimes on behalf of our women.

Also, to Congresswoman JACKIE SPEIER, who I believe is in a hearing right now dealing with this very, very important issue, I want to thank her and all of our women in the Democratic Women's Working Group for organizing this very important Special Order to address the nonconsensual sharing of sexual images in the United States military.

I just have to say a couple of things.

First of all, as a member of the Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies Subcommittee and as a woman, I am appalled by the sharing of these private photos. It is really disgraceful. It is disgraceful that our military continues to uphold a culture of sexual harassment and disrespect toward women servicemembers.

Now, let me be clear. The attitudes towards women exposed by websites like the Facebook group Marines United are troubling and dangerous. Not only do such actions threaten our mission, they strip our brave servicemembers who are women of their dignity. No woman should have her private photos exposed on the internet, especially not by her fellow servicemembers.

I was pleased to see the recent Navy and Marine Corps decisions to make the distribution of intimate photos a criminal offense. That is a good thing. We really must do more.

Now, when questioning members of the Army, Air Force, Navy, and Marines at a subcommittee hearing, it became clear to me, based on their responses, that the culture of the military must change.

Members of the Democratic Women's Working Group continue to try to help change this culture and are committed to ensuring that that type of activity is prohibited in all branches of our military. That is why I am pleased to cosponsor Congresswomen SPEIER'S and MCSALLY'S bill, H.R. 2052, the PRIVATE Act, which is a bipartisan bill that would make it illegal within the Uniform Code of Military Justice to distribute intimate images of a person if that person had a reasonable expectation of privacy.

Now, let me be clear. The Department of Defense must expand its efforts to foster a culture of dignity and respect that the military service demands. And, Congresswoman FRANKEL, I just have to mention a conversation I overheard.

I was on a plane flying from point A to point B, and there were two marines sitting next to me, and they were talking very loudly to each other.

□ 1800

That entire time that we were on the flight, their conversation was about degrading women who were serving with them in the military. It was quite shocking. This was just their conversation in the normal course of conversation on an airplane. I was, quite frankly, shocked and disgusted.

Today's report from the Pentagon shows promising progress, though. Sexual assaults are on the decline, and servicemembers are now more likely to report attacks. But the data also reveals that two-thirds of women who do report assaults face backlash in their unit. It comes as no surprise, then, that many victims choose to suffer in silence. That should not be.

We know that tech firms like Facebook have a role to play in helping address this kind of unacceptable behavior. Facebook's recent announcement to help prevent nonconsensual pornography is a huge advancement in combatting this epidemic—and that is what it is, an epidemic—and addressing these heinous acts.

While the new feature takes down images that are reported, this depends on users being vigilant and submitting reports. Too often people do not report such behavior. We must be clear that we do not condone this type of behavior and ensure that those with the courage to speak up do not face retaliation.

I want to make it clear. Exploiting sexual images of fellow servicemembers online is unacceptable, and it should be a crime. Rest assured, as a woman, as a mother, grandmother, daughter of a veteran, and a member of the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Subcommittee, I will work day and night to address the threats to our country and to our women servicemembers. Women in the military are critical to our national security. They should have a safe workplace free from sexual assault and harassment and intimidation.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Congresswoman FRANKEL and Congresswoman BRENDA LAWRENCE and also Congresswoman SPEIER for their leadership and for keeping this issue alive and for making sure the public understands that there are Members of Congress who have said: enough is enough.

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Very well said, Representative LEE. Mr. Speaker, I thank Ms. LEE for her excellent service and advocacy.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield the floor to the gentlewoman from the

State of Michigan (Mrs. LAWRENCE), my co-chair and our vice chair of the Women's Working Group, a very illustrious Member, and she serves on the Transportation and Oversight Committees.

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congresswoman FRANKEL for her leadership on the Women's Caucus. The Women's Caucus is a bipartisan women's committee. I was honored when I was given the opportunity to serve on this committee because I know for a fact in America, for all of the strides and accomplishments that we have had as women, that we still have so many issues and challenges that we must address.

Whenever there is an issue that disrespects or an issue that is a barrier for a woman, it is incumbent upon us to step up and to speak out because silence or turning our head is condoning the behavior.

Now, we stand here today as women, but there will be men joining us and have joined us because the behavior that we have learned about in the Marines, one of our military branches, is unacceptable.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address the issue of nonconsensual activities in the U.S. military. It has been revealed that nonconsensual nude photos of servicemembers were posted to social media, and it was even enhanced by disturbing comments that were unacceptable and really disrespectful.

This offensive behavior strikes at the very heart of the Marines. The Marines, who we trust and admire and know that they go out and serve this country in so many ways, and we have such honor and respect for them—but this behavior, Mr. Speaker, undermines the trust and the confidence that the marines have in each other. The Marines stand up and, as a team and as a body and as a military, take a code that they will protect each other, and it compromises the respect that the American people have for our military.

Our servicemembers must have the confidence that their brothers and their sisters in uniform always have each other's back. There is simply no room in the military or in our society for behavior that humiliates and degrades women servicemembers. Women who are in the Marines have earned the respect of their brothers and sisters, and they deserve the trust. Many victims, just like in the civilian workforce, are afraid to report the assault. We want to encourage them to file their complaints.

I had, at one time, served my country as an EEO investigator in the private sector. As an equal employment opportunity investigator and having cases of sexual harassment, I would sit in a private counseling session with a victim as she relived it to tell me what happened and how so often they struggle with: Should I tell someone? I am embarrassed. Maybe I should have done more. Or why did I accept it?

And then some will say: I will just quit. I just don't want to go through the humiliation of telling my story. Because when you file a complaint, for it to be processed, it becomes public.

I want to say to every woman that if you really understand how inappropriate, how much you do not deserve to be treated that way, and you want to make sure that no other woman ever is treated that way, I want you to know that we as Congress will stand with you to support your right to report it, to make sure we hold those accountable who did it.

I want to say to everybody that I stand here today as a Member of Congress and as a Member of the Women's Caucus to say that you have support.

In 2015, the latest year for which military assault data is available, more than 6,000 sexual assault cases were reported. Only 10 percent of men report their sexual assaults in the military. Only 40 percent of women do the same.

Sexual assault is wrong, whether it is for a man or a woman. According to the Human Rights Watch report released in 2015, the rate of retaliation for reporting a sexual assault in the military is 12 times higher than the rate of report resulting in a conviction for the predator. We understand the problem, and we want to be a part of the solution.

Mr. Speaker, I will close with this. We stand here today knowing that we have a problem. But I am confident in my belief and trust in our military, and I am confident that the women and men in this Congress will stand together and we will fix this problem so we can continue to have our military brothers and sisters serve together without being attacked by their own.

Ms FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Representative LAWRENCE for her excellent advocacy today.

Mr. Speaker, I now want to yield the floor to the gentlewoman from New Hampshire (Ms. KUSTER), my very good friend. She is the ranking member on the Veterans Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, and chair of the bipartisan Task Force to End Sexual Violence.

Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be here tonight for this Special Order on the Marines photo sharing scandal.

I am pleased to be with you but disturbed about the underlying incident. I don't think there is anyone in this country who is watching this evening who doesn't share our sentiment. This is shocking. It is disturbing. And most importantly, it is degrading to the women in the Marines.

I have to just imagine what it would take to become a marine and to be a woman in the Marine Corps. The training, the dedication, the commitment that these people have set their lives toward serving our country.

I am very pleased to join my colleagues today to express my disappointment and, indeed, outrage at the conduct of literally thousands of marines who violated the standards of the Marine Corps and displayed dishonorable conduct and terrible judgment by distributing sexually explicit photos of Active-Duty and veteran women marines online.

The behavior on the Facebook page Marines United is wholly unacceptable and is not only morally repugnant but undermines the safety, the security of female marines and, indeed, our national security.

Women marines were, in some cases, identified by name, rank, and location. These women who are bravely serving our Nation in uniform were put at risk of blackmail, of violence to themselves, or worse. This cannot and will not be tolerated by the United States Congress, by the leadership of the Marines, and by Americans across this country.

The Marines represent the greatest fighting force in the history of the world, and actions like this cannot be allowed to undermine their effectiveness and unit cohesion. As the founder of the bipartisan Task Force to End Sexual Violence, I join my colleagues from both sides of the aisle to understand the persistent challenges that the culture of sexual violence poses on school campuses, in the workplace, online, in the military, and throughout our society.

We are beginning to change the conversation around sexual violence and intimidation, but there is much more work to be done. I strongly support the bipartisan legislative action to back up the cultural change that we know is starting to take place.

The PRIVATE Act, led by Representative MARTHA MCSALLY, would amend the Uniform Code of Military Justice to ensure that the type of explicit sharing that was seen in the Marines United scandal is expressly prohibited.

Mr. Speaker, I want to particularly thank Representative MCSALLY and our Democratic colleague Representative JACKIE SPEIER for their leadership on the Armed Services Committee in protecting the interests of women in our military.

I know that leadership within the Marines and the Armed Forces is taking the issue of sexual harassment and sexual violence very seriously, and I appreciate their commitment to improving safety for all our servicemembers, regardless of gender. This is an issue that transcends politics. I have been encouraged by the bipartisan support that this issue has received.

I look forward to continuing to work with my colleagues to end sexual violence and intimidation in the military and, indeed, throughout our society.

Mr. Speaker, I want to just take a moment to share with you the testimony of Lance Corporal Marisa Woytek, as indicated by our leader today, Representative LOIS FRANKEL. She quoted some of the testimony, and I wanted to share a few other parts with you.

These are two marines who came and spoke to our bipartisan Women's Caucus, and they described what had happened to them; that these personal explicit pictures had been shared on the internet, that their names, their rank, their duty station, had all been shared without their consent.

□ 1815

I want to talk to you about the backlash since they had the courage to speak out, because as we investigate further in the Bipartisan Task Force to End Sexual Violence—whether it is in high schools, whether it is on college campuses, whether it is in the military—when someone has the courage to identify the harassment, sexual assault, intimidation, there is an incredible backlash on social media.

She writes:

''Within the past 24 hours alone, I have had former Marines harass me online, and say and state that they actively look for sexually explicit pictures of me. One of the former Marines who has been harassing me has also been a predator to many women online denigrating women in Marines United, and has even gone as far as saying he would throw an Active Duty female Marine 'into a barrel of acid.' ''

These are our best and brightest. These are the people that we rely upon to keep our country safe, to uphold the dignity of our values overseas.

She continues:

''Another Marine stated to me directly that he was 'passing my info around to Marines, so far the rough estimate is 3,000. Good luck ever being able to show your face again.' ''

This is a woman who has trained, who has dedicated her life, and whose family is proud to call her a marine. And I, as a Member of Congress, am proud to call her a marine. She does not deserve this in the workplace.

One last quote:

''Another former Marine asked 'Who has this bitch's pictures, I want to blast them all over.' ''

I have to ask my colleagues for a bit of personal privilege to even use that word on the floor of the House of Representatives. That is not a word that should ever be used for a marine in the United States Marine Corps.

So I think you can tell this is deeply troubling to us as Members of Congress, deeply troubling—it should be—to the leadership of the Marine Corps, all the way up to and including our Commander in Chief. This is simply unacceptable.

As members of the Bipartisan Task Force to End Sexual Violence, as members of the bipartisan Women's Caucus, as Members of the United States House of Representatives, we will not let it stand.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD testimony of a female marine.

TESTIMONY OF LANCE CORPORAL MARISA WOYTEK

My name is Marisa Woytek. I am a Lance Corporal in the United States Marine Corps. I enlisted, like many of my brothers and sisters because I wanted to be part of something bigger than myself. I joined to follow in my fathers' foot steps who served honorably in the Marine Corps.

Over the past few years of being active duty, I've experienced the amazing things the Marine Corps has to offer. I experienced, brotherhood and sisterhood, I experienced comradery, and I have many fond memories that I will carry with me until the day I die. But with the good, comes the bad. Since my first few weeks in the Marine Corps outside of boot camp, I have seen on numerous occasions the denigration of Marines, especially female Marines by fellow Marines. Some active duty and some former Marines have been posting picture women for the so called game of ''Smash or Pass'', and some have included personal and explicit pictures including these women's names, ranks, and duty station without their consent.

Since speaking out, I've received backlash on social media. Within the past 24 hours alone, I have had former Marines harass me online, and say and state that they actively look for sexually explicit pictures of me. One of the former Marines who has been harassing me has also been a predator to many women online denigrating women in Marines United, and has even gone as far as saying he would throw an active duty female Marine ''into a barrel of acid''. Another Marine stated to me directly that he was ''passing my info around to Marines, so far the rough estimate is 3,000. Good luck ever being able to show your face again''. Another former Marine asked ''Who has this bitch's pictures, I want to blast them all over''.

My brothers and sisters are why I am here today. The majority of Marines are intelligent, well rounded, and respectful people. Those Marines are who the world should be praising. The disgusting actions of a few do not define an entire branch. We must remember that the Marine Corps is an institution that prides itself in honor, courage, and commitment. Most Marines practice these values everyday, and those who do not bring dishonor to themselves and to the United States Marine Corps.

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative KUSTER for that forceful advocacy.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE), one of our greatest fighters for human rights, for women's rights; the ranking member of the Judiciary Committee's Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congresswoman FRANKEL, our chair, our leader, and all of my colleagues that appeared today. What a powerful force of women who are standing by our Marines.

Now, let me be very clear: All of our men and women in the United States Marines have earned and deserve our respect and trust. All of the women in the United States Marines deserve our trust and our respect.

So it saddens me today to have to rise and bring to the attention of so many this unbelievable abuse of the men and women—men because their reputation is tarnished, through no fault of their own, who are not affiliated with Marines United; and women who feel that their service to this Nation has been denigrated.

Let me cite for you the words of 23-year-old Erika Butner:

''As a Marine Corps veteran, I am disheartened and disgusted with this scandal.''

Victim blaming and the excuse that some are giving that boys will be boys needs to stop.

Butner says she first heard of the group in August when a friend of hers was posted to the page without her consent. In January, she notified the Naval Criminal Investigative Service and Google about a shared drive posted to the group that contained naked photos of more than two dozen servicemembers. Comments posted to the group described the victims graphically and, in some cases, advocating that they be raped or sexually assaulted. Names, ranks, and duty stations of the victims were also shared. The Marines United page has been taken down, but there are supposed to be some 30,000 users of that site.

Can you imagine that this is my story for America: that young women marines who put on the uniform and, therefore, are willing to lay down their life and bleed for this Nation and die will be subjected to this?

So I join my colleagues in standing against it, and I ask my friends in the United States Marines—and I have many. I have staff persons who have been members of the Marines and a wounded warrior on my staff right now who loves his Marines. But enough is enough. We will not tolerate the objectification of women, we will not tolerate the nonconsensual pornography, and we will not live with sexual assault.

That is why, for starters, I am proud to be a cosponsor of Congresswoman SPEIERS' resolution for claiming April as Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month. Also, I am very pleased of the privacy bill that is being put forward to never have this occur again. Every 98 seconds another American is sexually assaulted, and there are an average of 321,500 victims per year.

So this ties very clearly into what these United States Marines, who happen to be women, are facing. This is a horrendous reality for women here in the United States, but it is a reality for women in uniform who are defending our freedom abroad. That is what I want to focus on as I complete my remarks.

These female marines go to faraway places and are in the battlefront and the battle lines, standing alongside with their male counterparts. They are expected to go through basic training without any waivers. They are expected to carry that gun without any waivers. They are expected to wear that uniform in dignity without any waivers.

Nude photographs of female marines and veterans across the military were shared on Marines United, and those photographs showed women in various stages of undress, and they were grossly obscene. Some posts on Marines United suggested sexually assaulting women marines and that women did

not belong in the United States military or this particular branch.

Once again, these photos were posted without the knowledge and the consent of the women whose photos were posted. This conduct, as I said, is unacceptable.

The Marines Corps' creed of good order and discipline is being undermined when it cannot police Marines who use social media to promote anti-Semitism, sexism, and racism. These messages of hate are oppressive and demean human dignity.

Let me close by saluting our United States Marines because I do know that they have decades and centuries of laying their lives down. That is not the issue here as I stand before you today.

What the issue is, of course, is that United States Marines deserve the dignity and the respect, even if they are women and, I might say, especially because of what has occurred because they are women. They ask for no deference. They ask for no waivers. They ask for no apologies in terms of them being United States Marines. They simply want that dignity and respect that we all owe them.

I salute them and we stand alongside them.

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I think we have made it clear that when a member of the military is unfairly abused, we are all abused, we are all dishonored.

This is not a Democratic issue. This is not a Republican issue. This is an American issue.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BACON), one of our great Americans, an Air Force veteran who serves on our Armed Services Committee.

Mr. BACON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this bipartisan effort to protect victims of nonconsensual sharing of intimate media in the Armed Forces and to hold those who engage in this dishonorable practice accountable under the military law. This is a bipartisan effort, and I appreciate that. It should be. This is a terrible thing that we have to fix.

I am a five-time commander. I was on the front lines fighting this as a commander. I court-martialed those who abused others. I proudly did so. I was recognized as having the best Sexual Assault Response Program in the Air Force back in 2008 and 2009.

Also, I am proud to stand here in this bipartisan effort as a husband, a father of a daughter, and a grandfather of three little granddaughters. We have got to do better, and we stand in this together to make a difference.

Last month we observed Sexual Assault Awareness Month, and I spoke to the body on the obligation we share as elected leaders to support those who have been victims of sexual violence and exploitation. It is, therefore, fitting that we continue this campaign by turning our good words into legislative action. I want to thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for inviting me to speak on this subject.

As members of the Armed Forces, we are taught the values of honor, integrity, loyalty to our Constitution, to our flag, and to the Republic for which it stands. From our earliest days in uniform, we are also imbued with an unbreakable commitment and trust in each other as warriors and teammates. These are not abstract concepts of quaint notions of a bygone age. Rather, they are the foundation of combat readiness and competence under fire. Mr. Speaker, I submit these ideals are the very essence of our strength of arms as a nation.

That is why when someone in our midst betrays this trust and dishonors our code, the consequences go far beyond an individual act of depravity. It strikes at the heart of our core values and threatens the foundation of our combat readiness. And when the victims of these crimes perceive they are condoned by the very institution they serve, the damage is greater still.

That is why Congress has an obligation to act and to remove any doubt that those who traffic in intimate pictures of their teammates and wrongfully share them not only violate the bonds of human decency, but are breaking the law.

That is why I am proud to stand in a bipartisan effort and also with Representative MCSALLY and colleagues on both sides of the aisle as an original cosponsor of H.R. 2052, the PRIVATE Act, to amend the Uniform Code of Military Justice to prohibit the wrongful broadcast of intimate visual images. This is important to change the UCMJ. It will protect the victims of this crime, hold those who engage in these acts accountable, and make absolutely clear—zero doubt—to every member of the Armed Forces that such conduct is unacceptable and will be prosecuted under the law.

Those of us in the House who have served in uniform and have been entrusted with the responsibility of command know firsthand the importance of disciplined adherence to standards and of creating a climate of mutual trust that treats all members with dignity, fairness, and respect.

For those of us who have fought to enforce our laws and protect the victims of all forms of sexual assault and exploitation in the military, this is not just what is right; it is also very personal.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to stand with my fellow Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle in support of this important legislation, support for our military, support for our culture, support for the defense of our country. I thank those who are leading the effort tonight.

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative BACON, first, for his service to our country and for speaking from the heart. We are very pleased to join him in this effort.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. TORRES), who serves on the Foreign Affairs and the Natural Resources Committees.

I want to say that Representative TORRES is, like myself, the mother of a military veteran. Her son is a member of the Air Force. In bringing the gentlewoman up here, she probably experiences a lot of what I did. I think for parents whose children are in the military, man or a woman, there are so many of those times where you just dread that knock on the door.

□ 1830

You have seen your child put on uniform, and the pride that they feel. Now, could you imagine having gotten a call from your son that someone had posted a nude picture of him on a Facebook page and he was being humiliated? It is just hard to believe.

I know you are going to share some of your insight into all this. I am pleased to have you here.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. TORRES).

Mrs. TORRES. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congresswoman FRANKEL and Congresswoman JACKIE SPEIER of the Democratic Women's Working Group for hosting tonight's Special Order and for their constant advocacy on behalf of the victims of the Marines United scandal.

The gentlewoman is correct. While I was not blessed with a daughter, I was blessed with three sons, one who I am proud to call a veteran of the United States Air Force.

My son Christopher was the first one to leave home, and I can't imagine, as a mother of a child who is leaving him for the first time going into basic training, receiving the types of calls that these parents must have received, completely heartbreaking.

One of the stories that my son shared with me was of a suicide that happened that involved one of his classmates, and how the parents found out about her suicide through a Facebook post because everyone was sharing a condolence note.

So these things happen; and while we cannot and may not be able to always control the actions of these young men and women, there is a basic understanding and expectation from parents like myself that when we send our boys, and our young men and our young women, daughters and sons, to the military, that they will be taken care of; and when they file a complaint, that those complaints will be taken seriously and fully investigated. They deserve nothing less.

Sexual harassment in the military certainly isn't new, but this scandal is a wake-up call that we cannot afford to ignore. The victims of Marines United don't just deserve our sympathy and our support, they deserve a commitment to doing everything that we can to finally bring an end to sexual harassment in the military in all forms.

This isn't a case of boys being boys. This is a disgusting violation of women who have taken an oath to defend our Nation.

I would like to read part of Erika Butner—corporal, U.S. Marine Corps,

2011 to 2016—part of her testimony here today.

She begins by stating her name and thanking you for the opportunity to testify at the August 8, 2011, hearing.

And she states: ''I enlisted in the United States Marine Corps knowing I could have potentially deployed to a combat zone. If presented the opportunity, I would have given my life for this country without hesitation. Never once did I think the war I'd fight would be among my very own brothers in arms.

''During the time I spent in the Marine Corps, various clothed photos of me were taken from my personal social media accounts without my consent and shared on sites that are like Marines United with great frequency. They would post my photo and caption it, 'Smash or Pass,' in other words, 'Would you have sex with this woman or not?' followed by extreme vulgar, degrading, and repulsive comments, including rape talk. My so-called brothers in arms shared clothed photographs of me on Marines United, posted my contact information, and discussed all the unspeakable things they would like to do to me.

''Comments I saw on other posts of the site included how female marines aren't 'real' marines and belong in the kitchen. One post suggested friendly fire to the women who are now being integrated into the infantry units. Another male veteran described how he would rip off an Active-Duty female's eyelashes and then throw her into a tub of acid. Many veterans think because the UCMJ does not apply to them, they're immune from legal action.

''This culture of sharing photographs has been going on long before Marines United, and even before Facebook. With the use of social media and other file-sharing sites, this behavior has developed into something that has led to harassment and the degradation of men and women servicemembers. If this behavior had not come to light, I believe it would have continued as a dark secret of the military.''

Her statement goes on. I will not read the rest of it but continue by saying that these aren't faceless strangers. They are our daughters, our sisters, and our friends. They are American heroes who volunteered to serve our country.

As a mother of a veteran, I know that our military is better than this. Our men and women in uniform represent the very best of this Nation, and I am proud to stand with my colleagues this evening in support of bringing about the changes we need to put a stop to the sharing of nonconsensual pornography in the military and, ultimately, bring an end to sexual and gender-based violence and harassment in our Armed Forces.

The next letter that I write to one of the academies recommending a young lady from my district, I want the reassurance from our military that her safety, her personal safety, will be taken seriously. And I need to have a commitment that she is just as American as any male of our military.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for this opportunity.

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for her son's service and for her service, too. I know what it is like to be the mother of a military person.

Mr. Speaker, we are waiting for—Representative MCSALLY is going to be with us in a few moments, and I thought, as we wait for her to join us—as I said, she is at a hearing now. Unfortunately, the hearing is on the topic of sexual harassment in the military academies.

I wanted to just state for the RECORD the folks who participated at our Democratic Working Women's Group hearing that we had a couple of weeks ago, we talked about Lance Corporal Marisa Woytek. We talked about Erika Butner, who is a Marine Corps veteran, and both, unfortunately, were victims of this Marines United scandal.

We also heard from James LaPorta, who is a journalist for The Daily Beast and a former U.S. Marine Corps sergeant who has covered Marines United extensively. His work has appeared in The Washington Post and the Chicago Tribune, among other national publications. During his 8 years on Active Duty, Mr. LaPorta served within the infantry and intelligence communities, deploying multiple times to the war in Afghanistan.

We also heard from Miranda Peterson. She is the executive director of Protect Our Defenders, which she joined in 2013. Protect Our Defenders' mission is to uplift and support survivors of military sexual assault, and to improve and reform the U.S. military's process for addressing rape, sexual assault, and sexual harassment.

Prior to joining Protect Our Defenders, Mrs. Peterson worked on the historic lawsuits against the Department of Defense filed on behalf of military sexual assault survivors who experienced abuse and retaliation after reporting, and which were the subject of the Oscar-nominated documentary film, ''The Invisible War.''

We also heard from Elizabeth Hillman, and she is the president of Mills College. She was invited by Representative BARBARA LEE. Elizabeth Hillman has conducted extensive research on the history of sexual violence in the military organization's culture. She is a director and past president of the National Institute of Military Justice, a nonprofit that promotes fairness in and public understanding of military justice worldwide.

She previously served on the Response Systems to the Adult Sexual Assault Crimes Panel, an independent panel chartered by Congress to study and make recommendations about sexual assault in the U.S. military.

And of course we heard from Gloria Allred, who is a nationally renowned women's and victims' rights attorney. She was the lawyer representing Marine Corps veteran Butner and Active-Duty Marine Lance Corporal Woytek.

What treasures these activists are. They are patriots in their own way because they are defending and standing up for our patriots; and how sad that they have to spend so much of their time to do that.

Now, since this scandal broke up, there have been numerous articles written. I want to share one as we wait for Representative MCSALLY, who, herself, is a military veteran.

Thomas Brennan actually broke this story. He wrote that: ''The U.S. Department of Defense is investigating hundreds of marines who used social media to solicit and share hundreds, possibly thousands, of naked photographs of female servicemembers and veterans.'' That is just so shameful.

''Since January 30, more than two dozen women, many on Active Duty, including officers and enlisted servicemembers, have been identified by their full name, rank, and military duty station in photographs posted and linked to from a private Facebook page.'' Again, very shameful.

Mr. Speaker, I am now pleased to welcome Representative MCSALLY. I would say to you that I have been talking about you in your absence. First of all, I told the Speaker that you were, unfortunately, at a hearing on sexual harassment in the military academies.

But we are so grateful for your—first of all, for your service to our country and for your advocacy in standing up for what is right for our military men and women. Ms. MCSALLY is our lead sponsor on this PRIVATE Act, which we have had many speakers talk about.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Arizona (Ms. MCSALLY).

Ms. MCSALLY. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague. And yes, I just came over from a hearing on the Armed Services Committee; first panel with some victims, and second panel with the superintendents of the different military academies.

□ 1845

As the only female veteran on my side of the aisle, and having been an academy graduate myself, I thought it was very important for me to be there and continue to help to lead on these issues that are near and dear to my heart. I know there has been much discussion. I want to say thank-you for helping to organize this and manage it and all the people who came down to speak on this very important issue.

As was likely mentioned before, we came upon this issue on Saturday, March 4. The Marines United Facebook page discovered individuals linked with this private group were posting nude, intimate photos of women, as well as personal information, their names, and duty stations, without their consent or their knowledge.

The next day, the NCIS started to launch an investigation and, 1 week

later, discovered, unfortunately, this was not an isolated activity. Sharing intimate photos without a consent is a problem that now we are seeing in the other branches of the military.

Such degrading behavior from troops in uniform is disgusting. As a veteran and a former commander myself, it is infuriating. In some ways it is not surprising, but it is intolerable, and we rise on both sides of the aisle today to say that we are standing together to help on our part, in our appropriate role to stop this.

Our servicemembers enlist to serve this country and protect it from our enemies. They should not have to watch their backs among individuals who are to be their teammates. Sharing explicit photos of fellow servicemembers undermines women and destroys trust and morale. It decreases effectiveness of our Armed Forces, and it embarrasses America. United States troops must be warriors. What it means to be a warrior is to embody courage, commitment, honor, trust, and respect. In all the services we have our core values. They are on and off duty. That is what it means to stand up. We stand in the gap for others. We are not the perpetrators. We are supposed to be the protecters. We are supposed to be the ones who are embodying and leading in those values that we hold dear.

The unearthing of this widespread problem has highlighted the difficulty in prosecuting Active Duty military members, though, who do this, who share private, intimate photos of their teammates without consent. This action is harmful, and it destroys the bonds of trust in the unit that are so critical for our warfighting capabilities.

So to look at the UCMJ, the Uniform Code of Military Justice, again, I am pretty familiar with this having been a commander and a retired colonel. We have a couple of articles, article 133 and article 134. Article 133 is conduct unbecoming of an officer. Article 134 is what we call anything that is prejudicial to good order and discipline. This is one I would say as a commander we often use as the catchall article. When we could not prosecute someone under another article, we go to article 134 because we knew their behavior was degrading good order and discipline.

Civilian law faces challenges in prosecuting this crime. Thirty-five States and the District of Columbia have statutes against sharing private, intimate digital media without consent, but the State laws vary in their proof, the elements, and the punishment.

The Marines recently created a regulation where they can charge these Neanderthals who commit these violations, but creating regulation isn't the same thing as strengthening the law. That is why I introduced the PRIVATE Act. Again, this is a bipartisan bill. My bill provides clear, unambiguous charge that gives commanders a sharper tool in the UCMJ for targeting and prosecuting this behavior. It clearly defines this behavior as a crime, and it also addresses the issues of intent and free speech.

These actions are a symptom of a larger issue: why we must change the culture that promotes this behavior. While these blatant, disrespectful actions have been committed by a specific subset of our military, this is indicative of a larger cultural problem. I just came from speaking about that in our Air Force Academy hearings—I'm sorry, not just Air Force, all the academies.

This is not the first time that behavior like this or culture like this has really been addressed, nor will it be the last. Myself, as the first woman in the U.S. to fly in combat in a fighter aircraft and to command a squadron, I have personally experienced, confronted, and overcome sexist behavior in the military. I have been there, I have seen it, I have lived it, and, quite frankly, I am sick of it.

We need to do what we can together to stop it. We must confront the underlying issues that inculcate resentment toward women in our services. We need to address the topic now and send a clear message this behavior has no place in our military. The issue is developing at the speed of broadband, but our solutions are often stuck at the speed of bureaucracy.

I have met with the commandant of the Marine Corps, General Neller, immediately after this news broke. We had a very productive conversation, and I look forward to continuing work with him and the other service chiefs to address this issue.

We also can't allow this to turn into victim blaming, though. According to one victim who tried to have a video removed:

''I went to the police to get them to take it down, and they told me, because I didn't live in North Carolina, they couldn't do anything. I then went to his command, and they said: Why don't you stop making sex tapes?''

This is not a matter of free speech on the internet. This is a matter of military members who have infringed on the rights, the duty, and the basic respect of others. We can't afford to let another military member become a victim of this crime.

I appreciate everyone stepping up for this Special Order today. I appreciate the bipartisan support of the PRIVATE Act. It is not going to solve it by itself, but it is going to give the commanders another tool. I promise I am going to tirelessly be working and leading on this issue to protect our troops and make sure we have the best, most respected, and most trusted warfighting force.

I want to thank my colleague for giving me the opportunity to speak.

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative MCSALLY. We have come to, I think, a perfect ending here today—those of us who were here today. I know, on a bipartisan basis, we look forward to fighting for the gentlewoman for what is right and to get this bill passed.

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

OUR TIME

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. FORTENBERRY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, before I begin my own remarks, I want to commend my colleagues for continuing to aggressively address the deep wound that so many people have experienced with this form of abuse in our military. Our military prides itself on its clear goal of protecting our Nation and doing their duty even to the point of self-sacrifice. So to think that certain members of the military would abuse others in this manner is not only unconscionable, but demands that this body act. So I want to commend my colleagues for their leadership in this regard.

Mr. Speaker, our Nation recently watched in horror as flight staff at a publicly traded airline, having failed to motivate volunteers with sufficient compensation, then called Chicago Aviation Police to forcibly remove one of the randomly selected passengers so they could seat their own employees instead. After the bloodied but unbowed victim was dragged from the flight, aircraft and airport personnel claimed they acted out of concern that they would lose their own jobs if they had not removed the passenger. The stated motive—that was later proven to be false—was that the flight was ''oversold.''

Now, Mr. Speaker, bizarrely, the airline CEO initially defended these actions. The corporation's airline personnel could have offered more money to find volunteers, but they did not choose to use that option. As a result, this airline-specific issue mushroomed into something far larger as Americans unleashed long-buried resentment against distant corporate structures that too often treat them just as incidentals.

Here is the problem, Mr. Speaker: in technocratic bureaucracy, one size fits all. Management and optimization replace the art of human interaction. When entities grow too large and too distant from the persons they are designed to serve, when technical procedures rule over prudential judgment, when process is improperly elevated to an unyielding standard, persons are not only treated like cattle by airlines, but individuals—in this age of information—sense that they no longer matter.

When you treat people as abstractions, it is easier to push them around, like data points on a spreadsheet. The broken-nosed, busted-teeth, and concussed passenger could only mutter the words: ''Just kill me, just kill me.''

One man's last stand against Leviathan. What he experienced on that airplane struck such a visceral chord with me and so many others. Indignity has its limits—even beyond the limits of the Big Money corporate public affairs teams to manage.

Mr. Speaker, last year, the United Kingdom voted to leave the European Union; and right now, similar debates are taking place across the continent most seismically perhaps in the upcoming French election.

At its core, what is at issue?

It is this: whether more and more power should be consolidated in massive and detached, centralized, and technocratic bureaucratic institutions.

Many people are demanding decentralized alternatives that better harmonize the needs of particular persons in their particular places with the shared goals of security, immigration stabilization, environmental stewardship, and economic well-being. That is what the deeper debate is in Europe and about the European Union.

At its core, Mr. Speaker, I think the issue is this: even more deeply, economic development without a soul robs us of our capacity to fully prosper. Regular people are wondering if they have a seat at the table anymore, and home-team advantage continues to seem to go to a triumvirate class of Big Business, Big Data, and Big Government—a type of transactional aristocracy disconnected from the deeper needs of persons. That is at the core of what is being debated here.

Now, Mr. Speaker, indicting large corporate and governing structures is not merely the point I am trying to make. Certain types of development that come with larger-scale entities has been very positive as goods and services and ideas freely travel at speeds across the world that were unheard of just a few years ago.

Worldwide poverty has declined significantly as underdeveloped nations use their comparative advantage on costs to lift themselves to a higher economic standing.

Moreover, the creative disruption that accompanies technological innovation has yielded new powerful tools for communications, for medicines; and in commerce, it has helped create the sharing economy.

However, a thriving marketplace needs to work for larger swaths of America, including Nebraska, where I live, which remain distant from power centers. For more and more Americans and their families, globalized supply-side elitism has delivered downward mobility, a higher cost of living, wage stagnation, and skyrocketing inequality.

When you couple this with social fragmentation, this is a recipe for disaster, and profit-driven technocracy will not be our answer. It will not solve these challenges. Economics, Mr. Speaker, is more than math, is more than efficiency, and is more than management. It is the art of living.

Now, regarding the airlines, after much embarrassment, they settled with the passenger and instituted important reforms. Maybe this belated gesture signals that we have a better ticket forward. However, unless a new vision emerges of the proper relationship of governing economic and political systems to the persons that they serve, we will likely continue to be told: Just stay in your consumerist seat—unless we deign, yet again, to violently rip you from it.

THE DEEP STATE

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Now, Mr. Speaker, a short distance from here, right through these doors, underneath the dome of our Nation's Capitol, hang eight large paintings that represent the scenes from our Nation's beginnings. In one of these paintings, George Washington is depicted. He is resigning his commission before the Continental Congress. This painting occupies a pride of place in our Nation's Capitol because it shows a profound and historic shift in the understanding of power. General Washington won the Revolutionary War. He enjoyed the support of his Army, yet he was not tempted to use that power for his own glorification. Instead, he returned it to the people.

□ 1900

Power is a tricky thing. It can be absolutely corrupting or it can be used for great good. Exceptional persons throughout history have used power to contribute to civilization. For others, power is a weapon to kill and plunder and crush others.

In our country, America, we embrace the noble way. In our Constitution, in its deepest sense, it really is about one thing: it is about the proper positioning of power, the proper control of power, and the proper transfer of power.

Mr. Speaker, let's now fast-forward to a recent event where a prominent Washington political insider recently wrote that he prefers ''the deep state.''

Now, what is that?

Although not widely known, the term ''deep state'' refers to a group of career employees of the military, intelligence services, and other agencies of the United States Government who have inordinate but often hidden power to influence policy and society.

It is posited that the deep state is particularly successful when it comes to halting or slowing implementation of government edicts deemed threatening to prudent stability or its own existence. This deep state, though, turns sinister when it operates outside of transparency and oversight. This concealed, controlling force, unfettered, can create an entirely new anti-democratic branch of our government.

However, I want to propose something, Mr. Speaker. This discussion about the deep state is bigger than the government itself. A broader understanding of the deep state requires insight into the network of institutions that attempt to manage society in multiple ways.

Some in the media, for instance, academia, and corporations orchestrate self-reinforcing narratives of technocratic or expert superiority. Frankly, again, this is why so many people in our country feel forgotten and are suspicious of what might be called the government-corporate-cultural complex.

The notion that elites supersede the decision of voters and their elected Representatives is contrary to our democratic tradition. It is also deeply offensive to the American understanding of the source of proper governance.

On the other hand, maintaining some consistency for the sake of order has merit. Retaining career civil servants, for instance, with strong institutional knowledge and experience is necessary for the uniquely smooth and peaceful transition of power that we enjoy in this country.

Those who have committed themselves to a career of government service and risen in the ranks, those in the media who have taken a long view of civic responsibility, those in business who have achieved outcomes and wish to share them for the betterment of society, ensuring the stability and proper functioning of our Nation's core operating systems during times of disruptive change, are the persons who make up another type of body in our culture who are taking responsibility for the systems that we enjoy.

The point is any analysis of the deep state is complex. A deep state that is mysterious and enigmatic, unidentified, that effectively triumphs over the will of the people, marginalizes our voices. At the same time, political transitions without the backup of those who maintain a continuity of service can both be volatile and destabilizing. There lies the tension.

President Eisenhower warned us of the military-industrial complex. Perhaps the challenge of today's government-corporate-cultural complex is broader: a self-affirming, closed society that says there is only one way—our way—and you have to follow. Just plug into the technocracy and know your place.

Mr. Speaker, it could easily be said that George Washington was an elite of his day. Nevertheless, Americans celebrate him along with other great leaders because they attained their status through selfless service to our country and its founding ideals to a genuine civic state.

Mr. Speaker, on my desk there is a pile of letters. At one point, it approached about a foot high. It is a little smaller now, as I am digging out. I have to be honest. I am behind because I take the time to review the content of each letter that my constituents send me.

Lately, the mail has tripled, perhaps quadrupled in size due to, frankly, the present philosophical divide that is all

over our country and manifested in this body in the breakneck pace of governmental action and the important questions about what Congress is doing in key policy areas such as health care and immigration.

This is no complaint. I stand in the seat formerly held by the great Midwestern populist William Jennings Bryan, and it is my duty, responsibility—all of our responsibility—to hear and read what our constituents are telling us. It is also my duty to make judgments on their behalf. I have an obligation to read and study and analyze the facts of any situation, to listen to the people who are effective, and ultimately to make a decision.

I think that the irony of this great moment, of great tension in our country, Mr. Speaker, interestingly, has brought a renewed and refreshing attentiveness to this body, to the legislative branch. There is now a very impassioned and healthy engagement with the centers of government about the very nature of power and its purpose. As Americans, we believe that power is justly derived from the dignity and right of each person. When properly exercised, that power rightly informs the State.

Vigorous interaction is beneficial to our Republic when it is cordial and constructive, when all parties in an authentic attempt seek workable consensus. This can be harmful to our Republic when interactions descend into shouting matches, rude interruptions, orchestrated ambushes, or worse, violence toward people or property.

Mr. Speaker, I have a new friend who is an ambassador here in the United States from an African country. It is a fascinating nation that rebuilt after a difficult civil war. He was kind enough to have me over for dinner recently with one of my colleagues. My colleague is a brand-new Member of Congress, and he happens to be in the other political party.

On the ride over, we talked about the very real prospect that, if we could just have a conversation, if we just had the time or disposition to have a conversation, a genuine dialogue, then perhaps things would get a bit better in Washington.

Mr. Speaker, most of us crave dialogue. Our country needs dialogue more than ever. We have multiple new technological ways to conduct dialogue. However, we have lost touch with what genuine dialogue is. If we are racing to score points or impatiently, loudly bludgeoning each other, we are not engaging in authentic dialogue. We are engaging in monologue.

Clearly, there are many differences that cannot easily be solved here throughout America. We have to be sober about that. The tough arena of politics occupies a unique space in our country in the quest for answers, but holding it together depends upon a commitment to this ideal of the civic state, a broad attempt at friendship and goodwill to hold together the good that should be common for everyone.

Mr. Speaker, on a visit to the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland, I noticed that, among its many noteworthy qualities, the beautiful, bucolic campus reflected a dignity, a call, if you will, to something higher. This special place creates a sense of place as a message for the ages, and that used to be reflected in the great tradition of American public architecture.

In one of the Academy's halls, a United States submarine commander named Howard W. Gilmore is honored. During World War II, Gilmore ordered his submarine to the surface of the ocean. The crew came out onto the deck. Unbeknownst to them, enemy planes were in the area and they spotted the vessel and began a strafing run.

The crew of the submarine scrambled back inside to go into dive mode, but as one crew member looked back, he saw Commander Gilmore lying on the deck, wounded. Looking at his commander in the eye, he heard him say, ''Take her down.'' The commander knew he would be left behind to drown, but everyone else was saved.

Stories like this one appear repeatedly throughout our Nation's history, particularly among those who have served in the military. They detail the brave actions of honorable men and women who have served an ideal far greater than any superficial distinctions in the political debate that might separate them, the ideal that the sacrifice for just and enduring principles is a noble thing.

In this age of anxiety and petty strife, it is worth reflecting on why we now find this so hard.

In the wake of World War I, poet-politician W.B. Yeats wrote this:

Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity.

Mr. Speaker, present-day Washington, as a microcosm of the Nation, routinely exhibits a lack of political community. Partisan discord and dysfunction do reflect the larger philosophical divides across America: market fundamentalists versus government fundamentalists, protectionists versus globalists, elites versus the common man—on and on and on.

We lack a unifying spirit. Part of this fracture is driven by monied interests in politics. Part of it is driven by competing world views that are earnestly derived about the core of what it means to be an American and about the core of what it means to have a functioning government for America. Part of it results from the lack of will and courage among lawmakers to move beyond these dispiriting constraints and find some higher ground.

□ 1915

But, Mr. Speaker, I will add this. Perhaps there is a silver lining. Let's think about this. On a deeper level, the vehement animosity in the Capitol and across our country could, ironically, point to something good. Washington's inability to rally around big and meaningful ideas, reflecting longstanding, again, cultural and political divides in America, it might actually signal a desire for resolution. After all, if no one cared, our situation would be far more dire.

If we can stretch to see that all of this negativity is actually a search for solidarity, then perhaps we have a shot. Indeed, there might be a chance to recapture our democratic narrative, our special American identity by embracing something larger than the insistent demands of self, party, or narrowly focused advocacy groups. We are a country whose proper aim and purpose, whose very foundation is built upon that which is good and that which is eternal: fairness, self-determination, the rule of law. Perhaps this combustible moment is actually a yearning to reconnect. Or maybe not. Perhaps it is too far gone. We have to decide.

Mr. Speaker, yet, with all these attempts at lofty sentiments here, to successfully govern requires some type of consensus around core values. And, yes, it requires sacrifice for our ideals, for each other, and for America. So that the center might hold. Right before Commander Gilmore died, he looked at his crew and said, ''Take her down.'' Perhaps the commander's advice to us today to America would be: ''Lift her up. Lift her up.''

Mr. Speaker, I had an incredible opportunity yesterday to meet hundreds of Vietnam veterans who came to our Nation's Capital on one of the honor flights from all over the State of Nebraska. I saw some people I knew, saw constituents, met many of the former troops who I had no idea they served. Isn't that the hallmark of many of our troops, doing so with a quiet selflessness, not needing to have anyone know?

But the Honor Flight actually gave them an opportunity to be welcomed home because particularly after enduring the Vietnam conflict, so many of our soldiers, so many of our troops came home to either no welcome or to, in an odd way, being blamed for the situation that they were trying to resolve. They never got a proper welcoming home.

So we spent a little time together yesterday at the Iwo Jima memorial. After a long day, they had visited the various monuments, including the Vietnam Memorial, the wall.

Of course, it was a tiring day for them, but many were, I would think it is safe to say, exhilarated by the chance to come, to be in solidarity as a community, to reconnect with the purpose of their service and perhaps, most importantly, to be welcomed home because when they got back to the Lincoln airport where I live, thousands of people were there waiting for them, chanting ''USA, USA, USA.''

Mr. Speaker, especially in times of significant duress like we are living in, I think it is particularly important to remind ourselves that America has tremendous capacity for replenishment. Unexpected opportunities give us a chance to reassess and realign in new and compelling ways, both to preserve our most valued traditions and to restore the promise of our Nation. This understanding is especially important as we confront dysfunctional government, economic stagnation, global violence, and the social fallout from the fractures and the pain in our culture.

I submit, Mr. Speaker, that one way to lift America up in this age of anxiety might be glimpsed through four mutually supporting principles: government decentralization, economic inclusion, foreign policy realism, and social conservation.

Now, what do I mean by this?

First, we should consider that a more decentralized government will restore the local source of America's strength. I am not a person who is antigovernment, but what we have done in our society is we have federalized every conceivable level of problem, and this institution ought to be about doing a couple of big things well.

We ought to respect the authority and the institutions that are closer to the people that have jurisdiction over things that they can better provide. Those closest to an opportunity or a problem ought to be the first to be empowered to seize the opportunity or solve the problem.

Economic inclusion, as well, should help America recover from a concentration of wealth and power into fewer and fewer hands. This primarily happens through a restoration of the small business sector, giving rise to entrepreneurial momentum once again. Mr. Speaker, we are in an entrepreneurial winter. This is where most jobs come from. I am not talking about even larger small businesses. I am talking about small, microbusinesses that employ one to five persons. For the first time in America's history, the number of small businesses dying is greater than those being born.

So if you want to restore a vibrancy and create the conditions for economic inclusion, a turn of focus to the small business sector, that great gift where people are using their talents of intellect and the gift of their two hands to make things, an imprint of their own dignity, to give rise to the ability to take care of themselves and those under their authority, their employees, to create benefits for others through exchange, that reinforces a community narrative of the longing and commitment and interdependence.

Third point, foreign policy realism. Based upon authentic relationships and genuine friendships, a foreign policy realism should chart a course between passivity and ad hoc intervention. In other words, we are a globalized society. We are interconnected in extraordinary ways. We are not going to turn the clock back. We couldn't if we tried here. So isolationism is not an option. And yet, just entering into relationships that are transactional without having any authentic basis has led to the collapse of relationships and the conditions for them not to be long lasting.

Finally, social and environmental conservation preserves family life, faith life, civic life, and natural life. The ecosystem, which we all value and live, that is not a partisan issue. That is not even a bipartisan issue. These are transpartisan issues because they create the conditions in which the human heart, the human person can thrive. These are the institutions that give rise to a continuity of our great tradition, give a meaning to life and create sustainability for ourselves and our children.

We know we are confronting intensifying struggles about the direction of our country, the direction of our world. The fault lines can widen, they may widen, but we also can choose to lean into these serious challenges. We can still choose to rediscover commonsense governance, right-sized economic models, a proper foreign policy, and universal and foundational values that create the binding narrative of our country that so many persons have sacrificed for.

It is time to rediscover our purpose as a people and reclaim this sense of solidarity and to reempower our communities. As the military says: One team, one fight.

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

REPUBLICANS CAN ACCOMPLISH GREAT THINGS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MAST). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRABACHER) for 30 minutes.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, before I get into the substance of my remarks, I would like to mention a little story.

When I used to work for Ronald Reagan years ago, he also said: Well, DANA always start off with a little funny story. So I thought I would share one that Ronald Reagan loved with all of you and the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD and those watching us tonight on C–SPAN.

What it deals with is a man who was struggling, struggling to get by. He lived in an area that had very little farmland left. My relatives all came from dirt-poor farms in North Dakota. They didn't have very good land up there. They were homesteaders, and it was rough going. But they did make a go out of it. They made a living out of it. This story is about a fellow in Kentucky, a guy who wanted to be a farmer but couldn't even find any land as good as my parents ended up with when they homesteaded.

One day he found a piece of land that he knew was very fertile. What it was was an old riverbed. He decided he could plant that riverbed, and it was such good soil that he would have a great crop. Well, the trouble with it was that the riverbed was filled with tree stumps and rocks and all sorts of weeds and horrible obstructions to get anything done. He spent a year of his life cleaning out that riverbed. Every day after work, he would go and blow up the rocks, haul them out. He would get a mule team and pull the tree stumps out. He would take a machete and cut down all the weeds. The briars would scratch his body. It was a monstrous job, but he got it done and he planted a garden.

When that garden started to come in, it was so beautiful that he had to tell somebody, he had to brag to somebody. He went to the person in his little town who he respected the most. It was the preacher. He said: Preacher, I want you to come out and see this.

The preacher came out, and the preacher said: This is a miracle. Praise be to God. Look at that corn. I have never seen corn so big as that. And that watermelon, my gosh, and the berries. My goodness, I have never seen such a wonderful garden. Praise be to God.

He went through this, kept going: Thank God for this, thank God for that.

Finally, the young farmer said to him: You know, Preacher, you should have seen this when God was doing it all by himself.

Well, today, there is a lot of stuff going on in Washington, D.C. People are very active. Don't think that there is not a lot of activity. You may not be able to see it, but we in this new Congress, we are scurrying around. There are all sorts of people working on healthcare reform, tax reform. We have got the fiscal year '17 and fiscal year '18 appropriations. We have got border bills. We have got security problems and issues that are the highest order. We are working here. I believe that with the Republican Party under President Trump, we are going to accomplish great things. These are things that we are asking the help of God, but we are not waiting for God to do it.

I would like to discuss tonight a few of the creative proposals that I have made which I believe could impact and have a very positive impact on the United States of America and the American people.

First of all, I would like to talk about border security. And an issue, of course, in border security that is the number one issue that has been plaguing us for so long, so let's understand, there has been a massive flow of illegal immigrants into our country at least for the past 30 or 40 years. I trace it back, unfortunately, to the time I was in the White House. I trace it back to Ronald Reagan's amnesty of 1987.

□ 1930

Ronald Reagan was told that there would be 3 million people who would

then be granted citizenship, would be brought into the core of American activity, and be made U.S. citizens. He also was promised that there would be border control if he signed on to giving amnesty to 3 million people, that no jobs would be permitted to be given to illegals from then on, and that there would be some sort of situation where we could control it so that not only illegals weren't going to be further coming across the border, but they certainly wouldn't be given benefits by our government to encourage them to cross the border.

Well, what happened?

Yes, Ronald Reagan had pity for these poor folks who came here, 3 million of them, who he was going to agree to grant citizenship to, and he did. He signed an amnesty law. And instead of 3 million, it turned out to be 11 million.

And from that moment on, those 11 million, there were none of these restrictions on jobs. We could be E-Verifying all jobs right now and cut that off. We could have done it long ago. We could have done it in the next year after that amnesty that Reagan signed. No.

There hasn't been a huge effort to make sure that we control our borders. Just the opposite. We have had administrations that undercut the border guards that control our borders.

So what have we had since 1987, especially when the word got out that we actually will provide benefits? We will actually provide health care? And we will actually provide jobs? And education for children? Anybody who could just get here, even if they are here illegally?

Well, what we have had is a huge flow into our country that has been threatening, and is threatening, to change the basic fiber of our country in the long run. But even in the short run, it has had a horrendous impact. It has had a horrible impact, for example, on the wages that ordinary Americans have. They have come in, and the middle class and lower middle class working Americans have had their wages bid down by tens of millions of people who have come in and bid down the wages of the American working people.

Now, don't anybody try to tell me, as you have heard—everyone has heard this: There are 11 million illegals in this country. They have been saying that for 20 years. Be honest with yourself, everybody. Let's talk about it. There are probably 30 million illegals in this country.

What has that caused? How has that impacted on us?

What have we seen?

We have seen an education system that has been drained of its resources so those very same working class Americans, who depended on us to make sure their children had a decent education, now have an education that is nowhere near good because the money has been drained away to take care of millions of young kids who have come here illegally.

Well, where is our allegiance?

What about the healthcare dollars that are being consumed?

Average working people know that illegal immigration to our country has hurt, yes, the education and the healthcare benefits to their own families.

Plus, we have destroyed the security of so many middle class neighborhoods where now we have—again, of course, some people don't even want to deport illegal aliens who happen to be criminals. They are talking about let's have a city in which they will not abide by the law, even to deport criminals who are here, violent criminals against our own citizens.

No, these aren't sanctuary cities that we are talking about. These are outlaw cities that don't care about the American people as much as they do about people who come here illegally.

Well, those have been some of the really negative aspects that we face. We know that.

The reason that we understand, and people have recognized this, is Donald Trump was elected President of the United States because of this issue. We know that.

The American people understand that their wages are going down, quality of life is going down, safety in their neighborhoods is going down, education for their children is going down, and health care is being torn apart. And a lot of it goes right back to a massive flow of illegals into our country.

Thus, when Donald Trump shook up the system by saying, We are going to build a wall, and we are going to prevent this massive flow of illegals into our country from continuing, that is why Donald Trump was elected.

So this out-of-control illegal immigration has got to stop. And that is one of the things that now with Donald Trump as President, and with a Republican majority, we are committed to doing.

And the first step, at least the most important step, maybe not the first one, is fulfilling Donald Trump's pledge that we are going to build a wall across our southern border that will be both symbolic and will be practical in stopping this large and massive out-of-control flow across the border.

I have a proposal that I think will go a long way in helping President Trump build that wall. My proposal called the Border Security and Immigration Enforcement Financing Act of 2017—that is the name of the bill. Again, I will say it. Border Security and Immigration Enforcement Financing Act of 2017. I am currently drafting that bill, which will be submitted as either an amendment or it will be submitted as a separate bill.

This goes a long way that will permit President Trump to keep his promise to us.

Now, why wouldn't he keep his promise to us?

Everybody has been saying: He will never find the money necessary to build that wall, so he has fed a false promise to us.

No. There are resources that are available if we use our creativity.

TED CRUZ, over in the Senate, proposed the $14 billion that we have confiscated from a Mexican cartel leader, who we now have in custody, let's use those $14 billion as a down payment. I think TED CRUZ has got a great idea there, and I think that is one idea.

My idea, which I am encompassing my legislation, is based on the idea that we have, and most people know this, 1 million legal immigrants coming into our country every year. Let me make clear what I just said. One million legal immigrants.

Republicans are not against immigrants. We are portrayed that all of the time. We support 1 million legal immigrants coming into our country every year, which happens to be more legal immigrants migrating into our country than all of the other countries of the world combined. Nobody comes even anywhere close to us in our generosity, and Republicans are in favor of that legal immigration. Because we will choose who is coming, they will benefit and help our society as a whole, and they will not especially undermine our poor and working class Americans.

Well, what does that have to do with the wall?

Well, my legislation, which I am now in the middle of writing, says this: Of that million, it recognizes there are 50,000 people who are permitted to come into our country legally every year.

And how are they selected? The rest are very carefully selected.

These are people who are selected by a lottery. That is right, a lottery. We are having a choice, just by happenstance, who we pick, of 50,000 people coming into our country. We may need them. They may be able to contribute. They may not. But we are leaving that up to a lottery.

My proposal is eliminate that 50,000. But we are not going to lower the number of legal immigrants coming into our society. We support legal immigration. In fact, those people who claim Republicans are anti-immigrant, they are the bigots. They are the ones who are proposing that we lump legal and illegal together.

So don't let anybody kid you. That is a political ploy.

So when you hear someone say, Republicans are anti-immigrant, just remember, we are prolegal immigrant. And with them trying to combine illegals with legals makes them the negative force against people who have come here from other countries legally.

So what is my proposal?

My proposal is you take the 50,000 slots that now are selected by some kind of lottery, and you say: We are going to start a pool of money. It is going to be an account that is a protected account. It can only be used for upgrading the border security of the

United States, of both the border, Border Patrol, immigrations coming in, and making sure our homeland is more secure, especially on our borders.

So we take that money in the pot.

Now, where is the money coming from of that 50,000 a year?

I am proposing that we charge anyone in the world, who is not a criminal or some kind of a terrorist. That basically we permit them to put $1 million into that fund. And they will immediately be guaranteed legal status, a green card in the country, but they will be guaranteed within 2 years that they will become a U.S. citizen.

Are there 50,000 people in the world who would do that?

There sure are. We know at least that. But there may be a lot more than that.

But that would be enough for President Trump to build his wall and to make sure that we stem the flow, this massive flow of illegals into our country, and to secure our borders from these drug cartels, et cetera, and to strengthen our Border Patrol, and to make sure that when people are coming into the country we can vet them, we have some sort of technology devices that can help us secure that radical Islamic terrorists aren't coming into our country. Yeah, we can do that if we have the resources.

President Trump wants to do it. Our country has been thwarted in the past by politicians who don't want to do it. But President Trump is committed. We need to get behind him.

My proposal would at least give us the resources to accomplish that mission. Unfortunately, of course, there are people here, power brokers here in the United States House and throughout our government, who would like to get their hands on that money and spend it on other projects, special projects that they have in mind.

Right now, the Republican Party needs to unify. We need to hear from our base.

No. The number one priority for any of the money that would be derived from offering a citizenship to people from overseas, that money should be used to control our borders and create the security of our country.

Now, by the way, why haven't we acted before?

Why is it that from 1987 on that we have had this flow and we haven't been able to stop the flow, or do what I am doing right now should have been done 10, 20 years ago? Because we have people in this country who wanted that massive flow of illegals.

There are probably 30 million illegals in our country. That is not some kind of happenstance that just happened. That wasn't an accident.

No. We have had, and, unfortunately, on the Republican side of the argument, we have had Big Business who wants cheap labor, and that has prevented the Republicans from doing what we want.

And on the liberal side, on the left-wing side, on the Democratic aisle, you have ultra-left liberals who want what? Who want to make sure that we have masses of people that they can use to try to socialize our country. Change the fundamental nature of our country because they don't like the fundamental nature of our country.

So we have a political motive and an economic motive on both sides, manipulating these poor people from around the world and threatening the well-being of those working people and those lower middle-income people in our own country who are just struggling by. We could have solved this a long time ago.

But that is what Donald Trump was all about. Donald Trump spoke to those people in Wisconsin and working class people in Pennsylvania and elsewhere and said: We are going to watch out for you. We are watching out for you from now on.

□ 1945

Now, we need to join Donald Trump. The people have spoken. We need to build that wall, build it.

I was very proud during the Reagan years that I participated. I was one of Ronald Reagan's principal speech writers, and we all remember what his most important line was. What did he do that really changed the world? He had a policy that stood firm against the Soviet Union without sending our troops into military action; and he stood, and he was strong, and he stated and he argued our case aggressively to the world.

Ronald Reagan, when he went to the Berlin Wall and he said, ''Tear down this wall,'' it changed history and made our country safe for decades ahead. I did not write those remarks, but I am very proud that I helped smuggle those remarks to the President of the United States so that he had the option of saying it. And of course, once he read those remarks, he was bound to say it, even though his senior staff tried to prevent him from doing so.

Well, I am saying this: Donald Trump, listen in. Build that wall. We are behind you. The American people are behind you. You should be as aggressive on this issue as Ronald Reagan was in ''Tear down this wall.'' Because he, too, was villainized for—they claimed he was some kind of a warmonger for even being so tough with the Soviet Union; and, of course, what he did is lead to the disintegration of the Soviet Union.

So that is my first idea.

Mr. Speaker, I have another project that I have been working on, and I know this sounds perhaps a little bit disconcerting for people because people have the idea that everyone here is left and right, and they have stereotypes of who is on the left and who is on the right.

So let me just suggest that my next proposal is something that is usually associated with the liberal left, and that is I happen to believe that we have had a tremendous waste of our resources. It has had a horrible impact on our country that we have tried to regulate adults using marijuana, and especially our efforts to stamp out any use of marijuana, which is what the policy has been for decades, in a way that has prevented us from developing the medical uses of cannabis, marijuana.

Cannabis is a plant that has enormous potential for our economy. We can't even import it now. It was used to make all of our rope. The Constitution is written on cannabis paper. There are so many uses. Our farmers aren't even permitted to grow it. And on top of that, no one has been permitted the means necessary to see if there are some medical purposes. And just now, after a few decades, we have found there are significant medical uses for marijuana.

Now, it took me a long time to get to the point where I found out where we could work, a coalition could work on both sides of the aisle to try to just look at this issue with a realistic eye.

What is going on? What is this incredible hysteria over some adult smoking marijuana in his backyard that we have to waste the resources of our police forces?

The police should be out protecting people down the street, but instead they are going into the guy's backyard to make sure that he is not smoking marijuana. And then how about the jailer? How about the judge? How about the penal system? How about all of those? How about the loss of income of that individual?

Trying to control people's personal lives, especially their consumption of cannabis, has been a horrendous failure because it has not prevented people's use, and it has been dramatically costly.

And then, of course, there is the side effect of what? There is the side effect that we are financing drug cartels throughout the world who are actually putting democracy in those countries in jeopardy, and we are financing it.

The issue isn't whether or not people should smoke marijuana or have cannabis. The issues are:

If you are going to have that cannabis, shouldn't the person selling that be accountable so that they only sell it to adults?

Shouldn't it have a label on it so that you know it is not filled with opium or poisons?

Shouldn't it be a situation where a businessman has a bank account and is taxed and regulated and is treated like any other business, responsible business? Or we can let the drug cartels have the billions of dollars that that endeavor will be bringing in every year, and which it does.

So we have financed the drug cartels overseas. We have gangs here, domestically, all tied to the fact that we are trying to control people's private behavior for their own benefit.

It is time to unshackle people. An adult in the United States has every

right to make his own decision about whether or not he will consume cannabis, and that is especially true of doctors and patients. We believe, supposedly, Republicans believe in the doctor-patient relationship. We have talked about it with ObamaCare, et cetera.

Well, guess what? The doctor-patient relationship if we are saying, ''Yeah, you can do this, but you can't do anything with cannabis,'' that is not recognizing the doctor-patient relationship. So don't tell me about limited government. Don't tell me about individual freedom. Don't tell me about the doctor-patient relationship. Don't tell me about those things if you believe that adults should not be able to use cannabis, especially for medical purposes.

And the worst part is there are some medical reasons for it. We have already seen that Israel has, by the way, legalized marijuana, and they have done great research just in recent years on the medical uses of cannabis, of marijuana.

They have found that epilepsy, children's epilepsy in particular, this will stop seizures. Yet we are denying our own people the use of this. How insane.

Yes, we need to make sure that we watch out for our people, but we do not control their lives because we know better.

This is not a nanny state, but some people, interestingly enough, on the other side of the aisle, who believe in the nanny state, are the ones who believe mostly in allowing people to use medical marijuana if that will help them.

I just will say this: we have an epidemic of opiates in this country. And one of the reasons we have that is because we have our veterans who have been given these opiates at the VA.

I just had a call yesterday from a friend whose son came back from the war, and he was in convulsions on the floor, and they couldn't help him. They took him to the VA, and they put him on opiates, and it still didn't help. Finally, after a year, the doctors pulled him aside and said: Come to my office off the campus. They gave him a prescription for medical marijuana, and the man's son hasn't had a seizure since.

So what does that mean?

So he doesn't have a seizure. You have a veteran who has been filled with opiates. So now I got a call just yesterday. This poor young man who is smoking that marijuana does not have seizures, but they have filled him with opiates. He is trying to get off the opiates, but the process they have got him going through is he has to be dry of everything, including marijuana. And as soon as that level goes down, he begins having seizures again.

And then he went a few days ago—maybe a couple of weeks ago he was at the VA hospital. They were trying to get him off these opiates. He is going to feel a seizure. He went to the car to smoke a marijuana joint and was arrested because the people at the veterans hospital who run the parking lots are Federal employees. It is Federal property.

We have had votes right here in Congress saying that if a State legalizes the use of medical marijuana, the VA in that State is permitted to let their people utilize medical marijuana, and it failed. That vote failed.

I challenge my Republican colleagues to join with the Democratic colleagues who supported that resolution last time. If you really care about these people—yes, we have an opiate, an opium-based horrendous surge going on in our country, and it is bringing down our people, our veterans in particular. Let's not eliminate if the doctor believes that medical marijuana will have an impact. Let us not outlaw that doctor from doing this. Let us also remember that we know that it can end seizures.

This poor guy who called me the other day, his son, once the medical marijuana is going down—and they won't let him do this on the campus of the VA hospital—he ends up going back into seizures.

This is a type of catch-22 when you are trying to control people's private lives. It doesn't work. It is not right. It is not right for our veterans. It is not right for our senior citizens who are sitting in the senior citizens' homes. If they would like to take a gummy that is filled with a little cannabis, so what? So what? Let them enjoy themselves a little bit, for Pete's sake, in a way that is not harmful; bring back their appetite, or whatever.

No, we are trying to control people's lives, and it is having a harmful effect on the people themselves. And think about one last note of it. Who is most hurt by this is we have people in the poorest neighborhoods of our country who end up being arrested and being frisked to see if they have got any marijuana on them.

We have armed groups who look like Army personnel coming into our cities for drug raids. The Founding Fathers never meant criminal justice to be handled at the Federal level—they never did—but now we have the equivalent of SWAT squads going in and breaking people's doors down for providing medical marijuana. This is ridiculous. And those poor people in the Black areas and the Chicano areas get arrested. They are arrested, and that follows them for the rest of their life.

I have a bill that says that it is up to the States. And I would ask all of my colleagues and the people listening tonight to support the States' rights to make this decision. This is a State issue. And I have a bill that basically says that the Federal Government shall respect State marijuana laws. And when we do that, that will be left up to the people of those States to make these decisions.

That is what our Founding Fathers wanted, and that is why things didn't go haywire back in the old days. We left it up to the States. We especially left that issue of drug enforcement, but also law enforcement, at the local level for local police.

Mr. Speaker, so those are two ideas that I thought I would share with my colleagues tonight, that I think would save billions of dollars on the wall, and trying to change our attitude, trying to stop the waste that we are wasting lives, and billions of dollars, and creating drug cartels.

When it comes to marijuana, we need to change that law and leave it up to the States. And we can then—if people need help, we are going to give it to them. But if they are adults and Americans, they have a right to run their own lives.

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

PUBLICATION OF BUDGETARY MATERIAL

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET,
Washington, DC, May 2, 2017.

ACCOUNTS IDENTIFIED FOR ADVANCE APPROPRIATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2018

Mrs. BLACK. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to section 3(g) of H. Res. 5, I hereby submit for printing in the Congressional Record the list of programs eligible for advance appropriations for fiscal year 2018. If there are any questions, please contact Jim Bates, Chief Counsel of the Budget Committee.

ACCOUNTS IDENTIFIED FOR ADVANCE APPROPRIATIONS

ACCOUNTS IDENTIFIED FOR ADVANCE APPROPRIATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2018

(Subject to a General Limit of $28,852,000,000)

Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education

Employment and Training Administration
Education for the Disadvantaged
School Improvement
Career, Technical, and Adult Education
Special Education

Transportation, Housing and Urban Development

Tenant-based Rental Assistance
Project-based Rental Assistance

VETERANS ACCOUNTS IDENTIFIED FOR ADVANCE APPROPRIATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2018

(Subject to a Separate Limit of $66,385,032,000)

Military Construction, Veterans Affairs

Veterans Medical Services
Veterans Medical Support and Compliance
Veterans Medical Facilities
Veterans Medical Community Care

SENATE BILL REFERRED

A bill of the Senate of the following title was taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. 371. An act to make technical changes and other improvements to the Department of State Authorities Act, Fiscal Year 2017; To the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 7 o'clock and 58 minutes

p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, May 3, 2017, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

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

1223. A letter from the Senior Counsel, Legal Division, Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, transmitting the Bureau's final rule — Prepaid Accounts Under the Electronic Fund Transfer Act (Regulation E) and the Truth in Lending Act (Regulation Z); Delay of Effective Date [Docket No.: CFPB-2017-0008] (RIN: 3170-AA69) received May 1, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Financial Services.

1224. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, Department of Defense, transmitting the Army's proposed Letter of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Greece, Transmittal No. 17-15, pursuant to Sec. 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

1225. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, Department of Defense, transmitting the Navy's proposed Letter of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of New Zealand, Transmittal No. 17-13, pursuant to Sec. 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

1226. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, Department of Defense, transmitting the Navy's proposed Letter of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Australia, Transmittal No. 17-11, pursuant to Sec. 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

1227. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, Department of Defense, transmitting the Army's proposed Letter of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Slovakia, Transmittal No. 17-14, pursuant to Sec. 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

1228. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, Department of Defense, transmitting the Air Force's proposed Letter of Offer and Acceptance to the NATO Support and Procurement Agency, Transmittal No. 17-19, pursuant to Sec. 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

1229. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, Department of Defense, transmitting the Navy's proposed Letter of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Israel, Transmittal No. 16-87, pursuant to Sec. 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

1230. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, Department of Defense, transmitting the Air Force's proposed Letter of Offer and Acceptance to the NATO Support and Procurement Agency, Transmittal No. 17-06, pursuant to Sec. 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

1231. A letter from the Acting Under Secretary, Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Transmittal No. DDTC 17-010, pursuant to Section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

1232. A letter from the Acting Under Secretary, Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Transmittal No. DDTC 16-135, pursuant to Section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

1233. A letter from the Senior Vice President, Controller and Chief Accounting Officer, Federal Home Loan Bank of Boston, transmitting the 2016 management report of the Federal Home Loan Bank of Boston, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 9106(a)(1); Public Law 97-258 (as amended by Public Law 101-576, Sec. 306(a)) (104 Stat. 2854); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1234. A letter from the Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer, Federal Home Loan Bank of Chicago, transmitting the 2016 management report of the Federal Home Loan Bank of Chicago, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 9106(a)(1); Public Law 97-258 (as amended by Public Law 101-576, Sec. 306(a)) (104 Stat. 2854); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1235. A letter from the Acting Chief, Unified Listing Team, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department's final rule — Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Endangered Species Status for Rusty Patched Bumble Bee [Docket No.: FWS-R3-ES-2015-0112; 4500030113] received April 28, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

1236. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Special Local Regulation; Red Bull Air Race — San Diego 2017; San Diego Bay, CA [Docket No.: USCG-2017-0096] (RIN: 1625-AA08) received April 28, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1237. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Safety Zone; Ohio River Miles 803.5 to 804.5, Henderson, KY [Docket No.: USCG-2017-0174] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 28, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1238. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Special Local Regulation; Ohio River MM 598-602.7, Louisville, KY [Docket No.: USCG-2017-0238] (RIN: 1625-AA08) received April 28, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1239. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Special Local Regulation; Tred Avon River, between Bellevue, MD and Oxford, MD [Docket No.: USCG-2017-0077] (RIN: 1625-AA08) received April 28, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1240. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Special Local Regulation; Lake Ferguson; Greenville, MS [Docket No.: USCG-2017-0189] (RIN: 1625-AA08) received April 28, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1241. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Safety Zone; 2017 Key West Paddle Classic, Key West, FL [Docket No.: USCG-2017-0066] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 28, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1242. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Safety Zone; Unexploded Ordnance Detonation; Naval Base Kitsap, Elwood Point; Bremerton, WA [Docket No.: USCG-2017-0313] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received April 28, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1243. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's temporary final rule — Special Local Regulation; Wy-Hi Rowing Regatta; Detroit River, Trenton Channel; Wyandotte, MI [Docket No.: USCG-2017-0217] (RIN: 1625-AA08) received April 28, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

1244. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — 2017 Marginal Production Rates (Notice 2017-26) received April 28, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

1245. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — 2017 Section 43 Inflation Adjustment (Notice 2017-25) received April 28, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

1246. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — 2016 Section 45K(d)(2)(C) Reference Price (Notice 2017-24) received April 28, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

1247. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — Fringe Benefit Aircraft Valuation Formula (Rev. Rul. 2017-10) received April 28, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

1248. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's IRB only rule — PATH Act Amendments for Taxable Years after 2015 (Rev. Proc. 2017-33) received April 28, 2017, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

1249. A letter from the Acting Assistant Attorney General, Department of Justice, transmitting a report providing information regarding all applications made by the Government during calendar year 2016 for authority to conduct electronic surveillance for foreign intelligence purposes, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1807; Public Law 95-511, Sec. 107; (92 Stat. 1795) and 50 U.S.C. 1862(c); Public Law 95-511, Sec. 502(c) (as added by Public Law 109-177, Sec. 106(h)(3)); (120 Stat. 200) and 18 U.S.C. 659 note; Public Law 109-177, Sec. 307(d); (120 Stat. 240); jointly to the Committees on the Judiciary and Intelligence (Permanent Select).

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. SHUSTER: Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. H.R. 1679. A bill to ensure that the Federal Emergency Management Agency's current efforts to modernize its grant management system includes applicant accessibility and transparency, and for other purposes (Rept. 115–107). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. COLE: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 305. Resolution providing for consideration of the Senate amendments to the bill (H.R. 244) to encourage effective, voluntary investments to recruit, employ, and retain men and women who have served in the United States military with annual Federal awards to employers recognizing such efforts, and for other purposes (Rept. 115–108). Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. VELA (for himself, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. RICHMOND, Ms. MCSALLY, Mr. CORREA, and Ms. BARRAGÁN):

H.R. 2281. A bill to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to reauthorize the Border Enforcement Security Task Force program within the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. CICILLINE (for himself, Mrs. BUSTOS, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. CROWLEY, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Mr. CORREA, Mr. EVANS, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. BEYER, Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. PETERS, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. GALLEGO, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Mr. AGUILAR, Mr. FOSTER, Mr. HIMES, Mr. LEVIN, Mrs. MURPHY of Florida, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Ms. MENG, Mr. RUIZ, Ms. BARRAGÁN, Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. LAWSON of Florida, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. MOULTON, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mr. CAPUANO, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. POCAN, Mr. SOTO, Mr. BERA, Mr. SCHNEIDER, Ms. GABBARD, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. KIND, Mr. BROWN of Maryland, Mr. TAKANO, Miss RICE of New York, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. VEASEY, Mr. KILMER, Mr. LOEBSACK, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. NORCROSS, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. COOPER, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. JEFFRIES, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. ESPAILLAT, Mr. DELANEY, Mr. HOYER, Mrs. TORRES, Ms. TSONGAS, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. POLIS, Mr. GONZALEZ of Texas, Mr. DESAULNIER, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. O'HALLERAN, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. PAYNE, Mrs. BEATTY, Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire, Mr. CARBAJAL, Mr. GOTTHEIMER, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Ms. ESTY of Connecticut, Ms. ADAMS, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. SUOZZI, Mr. KILDEE, Mr. PANETTA, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Ms. PELOSI, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. PALLONE, Mrs. DEMINGS, Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. KIHUEN, Mr. MCEACHIN, Ms. JAYAPAL, Mr. NEAL, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Ms. ROSEN, Ms. HANABUSA, Mr. HECK, Mr. CRIST, Mr. RASKIN, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. VELA, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. COSTA, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. NADLER, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Ms. NORTON, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. SHERMAN, Ms. KAPTUR, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. RUSH, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Mr. PETERSON, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California, Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. BASS, Ms. MOORE, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. MCNERNEY, Ms. LEE, Mr. LYNCH, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. WELCH, Mr. DOGGETT, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. WALZ, Mr. VISCLOSKY, Ms. SÁNCHEZ, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. SIRES, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. KEATING, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. SERRANO, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. NOLAN, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. COHEN, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. SABLAN, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. CLAY, Mr. SCHRADER, Mr. GARAMENDI, Ms. BORDALLO, Ms. DELBENE, Mr. SARBANES, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. HIGGINS of New York, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. TONKO, Ms. TITUS, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. CUELLAR, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. KHANNA, Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHI, Ms. PLASKETT, and Mr. RICHMOND):

H.R. 2282. A bill to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, gender identity, and sexual orientation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committees on Education and the Workforce, Financial Services, Oversight and Government Reform, and House Administration, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi (for himself, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. KEATING, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. VELA, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. CORREA, Mrs. DEMINGS, Ms. BARRAGÁN, and Miss RICE of New York):

H.R. 2283. A bill to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to improve morale within the Department of Homeland Security workforce by conferring new responsibilities to the Chief Human Capital Officer, establishing an employee engagement steering committee, requiring action plans, and authorizing an annual employee award program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. LABRADOR (for himself, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia, and Mr. LAMALFA):

H.R. 2284. A bill to amend title 54, United States Code, to provide for congressional and State approval of national monuments and restrictions on the use of national monuments; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. ROE of Tennessee (for himself and Mr. HOYER):

H.R. 2285. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to increase the preference given, in awarding certain allergies and reversible lower airway disorders-related grants, to States that allow trained school personnel to administer rescue medications for allergies and reversible lower airway disorders, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas (for himself, Mr. WITTMAN, Mr. LOWENTHAL, and Mr. POE of Texas):

H.R. 2286. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Transportation to designate certain entities as centers of excellence for domestic maritime workforce training and education, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. TIPTON:

H.R. 2287. A bill to require the Secretary of the Interior to develop a strategy to relocate the headquarters of the Bureau of Land Management from Washington, DC, to a western State in a manner that will save the maximum amount of taxpayer money practicable, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. BOST (for himself, Ms. ESTY of Connecticut, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. WALZ, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. COFFMAN, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. WENSTRUP, Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire, Mrs. RADEWAGEN, Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. POLIQUIN, Miss RICE of New York, Mr. DUNN, Mr. CORREA, Mr. ARRINGTON, Mr. SABLAN, Mr. RUTHERFORD, Mr. PETERS, Mr. HIGGINS of Louisiana, Mr. BERGMAN, Mr. BANKS of Indiana, Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN of Puerto Rico, and Ms. TITUS):

H.R. 2288. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to reform the rights and processes relating to appeals of decisions regarding claims for benefits under the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. COHEN (for himself, Ms. NORTON, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. RASKIN, Ms. LEE, and Ms. MOORE):

H.R. 2289. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide tax incentives for the establishment of supermarkets in certain underserved areas; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. DELAURO (for herself, Mr. COLE, Mr. MULLIN, and Ms. DEGETTE):

H.R. 2290. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to provide a standard definition of therapeutic family care services in Medicaid; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. DUFFY:

H.R. 2291. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to expand the coverage of telehealth services under the Medicare program, to provide coverage for home-based monitoring for congestive heart failure and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease under such program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. FASO (for himself, Mr. ESPAILLAT, Ms. MENG, Mr. NADLER,

Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. TONKO, Mr. DONOVAN, and Mr. COLLINS of New York):

H.R. 2292. A bill to extend a project of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission involving the Cannonsville Dam; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. HOLDING (for himself and Mr. LEVIN):

H.R. 2293. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 for purposes of the tax on private foundation excess business holdings to treat as outstanding any employee-owned stock purchased by a business enterprise pursuant to certain employee stock ownership retirement plans; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. KING of New York (for himself and Mr. PASCRELL):

H.R. 2294. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide that for purposes of computing the annuity of certain law enforcement officers, any hours worked in excess of the limitation applicable to law enforcement premium pay shall be included in such computation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. LEVIN (for himself, Mr. ELLISON, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. NADLER, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. BEYER, Mr. POCAN, Ms. NORTON, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. LEE, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. BLUMENAUER, and Ms. MCCOLLUM):

H.R. 2295. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for the proper tax treatment of personal service income earned in pass-thru entities; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. MCKINLEY (for himself and Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania):

H.R. 2296. A bill to increase accountability with respect to Department of Energy carbon capture, utilization, and sequestration projects, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. MEEHAN (for himself, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. NEAL, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, and Mr. KIND):

H.R. 2297. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide an exception from the passive loss rules for investments in high technology research small business pass-thru entities; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. SENSENBRENNER:

H.R. 2298. A bill to amend the Former Presidents Act of 1958 to provide that former Presidents may not receive Government funded office space, staff, or free use of the mail, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and in addition to the Committee on Appropriations, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. TENNEY (for herself, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, and Mr. JONES):

H.R. 2299. A bill to save taxpayers money by improving the manufacturing and distribution of coins and notes, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California (for herself, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Ms. LEE, Mr. ELLISON, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, and Ms. SPEIER):

H.R. 2300. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to improve the determination of cohort default rates and provide for enhanced civil penalties, to ensure personal liability of owners, officers, and executives of institutions of higher education, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California (for herself, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. LEE, Ms. SPEIER, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, and Mr. ELLISON):

H.R. 2301. A bill to provide that chapter 1 of title 9 of the United States Code, relating to the enforcement of arbitration agreements, shall not apply to enrollment agreements made between students and certain institutions of higher education; and to prohibit limitations on the ability of students to pursue claims against certain institutions of higher education; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN (for herself, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. GOTTHEIMER, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. MACARTHUR, Mr. LANCE, Mr. SIRES, and Mr. NORCROSS):

H.R. 2302. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 259 Nassau Street, Suite 2 in Princeton, New Jersey, as the ''Dr. John F. Nash, Jr. Post Office''; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York (for herself, Mr. BILIRAKIS, and Mr. PAYNE):

H. Con. Res. 51. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of the Congress that the Parthenon Marbles should be returned to Greece; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. KEATING (for himself, Ms. BASS, Mr. BERA, Mr. BRAT, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. CORREA, Mr. COSTA, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. DESAULNIER, Mr. DONOVAN, Mr. ENGEL, Ms. GABBARD, Mr. GALLEGO, Mr. GROTHMAN, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. HIGGINS of New York, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. JONES, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. KILDEE, Mr. KIHUEN, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia, Mr. NEAL, Mr. NEWHOUSE, Mr. NOLAN, Mr. PASCRELL, Ms. PINGREE, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mrs. RADEWAGEN, Miss RICE of New York, Mr. RUSH, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. SCHNEIDER, Mr. SERRANO, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. SIRES, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. VELA, and Mr. WENSTRUP):

H. Con. Res. 52. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that an appropriate site in the Memorial Amphitheater in Arlington National Cemetery should be provided for a memorial marker to honor the memory of those who have been awarded or are eligible for the Korean Defense Service Medal who are missing in action, are unaccounted for, or died in-theater; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. BYRNE:

H. Res. 303. A resolution electing a Member to certain standing committees of the House of Representatives; considered and agreed to. considered and agreed to.

By Ms. SHEA-PORTER (for herself, Mr. ENGEL, and Mr. HARPER):

H. Res. 304. A resolution expressing support for designation of May as ''National Asthma and Allergy Awareness Month''; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. RYAN of Ohio (for himself, Mr. LIPINSKI, and Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania):

H. Res. 306. A resolution recognizing the impact of tribology on the United States economy and competitiveness in providing solutions to critical technical problems in manufacturing, energy production and use, transportation vehicles and infrastructure, greenhouse gas emissions, defense and homeland security, health care, mining safety and reliability, and space exploration, among others, and recognizing the need for increased research and development investments in tribology and related fields; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. VELA:

H.R. 2281.

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

Article 1, Section 8.

By Mr. CICILLINE:

H.R. 2282.

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

Article 1, Section 8

By Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi:

H.R. 2283.

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

The United States Constitution Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18, that Congress shall have the power to make all laws which shall be necessary and proper.

By Mr. LABRADOR:

H.R. 2284.

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

Article 4, Section 3, Clause 2—''The Congress shall have Power to dispose of and make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory or other Property belonging to the United States''

By Mr. ROE of Tennessee:

H.R. 2285.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18

By Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas:

H.R. 2286.

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

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution: ''The Congress shall have Power . . . to regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.''

By Mr. TIPTON:

H.R. 2287.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
ARTICLE I, SECTION 8, CLAUSE 18
By Mr. BOST:
H.R. 2288.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution
By Mr. COHEN:
H.R. 2289.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3 (relating to the power to interstate commerce).
By Ms. DELAURO:
H.R. 2290.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution.
By Mr. DUFFY:
H.R. 2291.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8
By Mr. FASO:
H.R. 2292.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution.
By Mr. HOLDING:
H.R. 2293.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Articlel, Section 8 of the United States Constitution
By Mr. KING of New York:
H.R. 2294.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
The Congress shall have Power . . . To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.
By Mr. LEVIN:
H.R. 2295.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8
By Mr. MCKINLEY:
H.R. 2296.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
According to Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution: The Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States but all duties, imposts, and excises shall be uniform throughout.
By Mr. MEEHAN:
H.R. 2297.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
This bill is enacted pursuant to: Article I, Section 8, Clause I
By Mr. SENSENBRENNER:
H.R. 2298.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution.
By Ms. TENNEY:
H.R. 2299.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.
By Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California:
H.R. 2300.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 18
The Congress shall have Power to make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by the Constitution In the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.
By Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California:
H.R. 2301.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 18
The Congress shall have Power to make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the. foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by the Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.
By Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN:
H.R. 2302.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 7 states: ''The Congress shall have Power . . . To establish Post Offices and post Roads.''

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

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

H.R. 36: Mr. GAETZ.
H.R. 113: Mr. CHABOT and Mr. SABLAN.
H.R. 140: Mr. OLSON.
H.R. 179: Mr. KATKO and Mr. BEYER.
H.R. 184: Mr. RUTHERFORD.
H.R. 216: Mr. MAST.
H.R. 227: Mr. WELCH, Ms. DELBENE, and Ms. HANABUSA.
H.R. 242: Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. HUFFMAN, and Ms. GABBARD.
H.R. 289: Mr. SIMPSON.
H.R. 361: Mr. OLSON.
H.R. 367: Mr. DAVIDSON.
H.R. 449: Mrs. COMSTOCK.
H.R. 489: Ms. CLARKE of New York, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. SCHRADER, and Mr. JEFFRIES.
H.R. 490: Mr. MAST, Mr. PALMER, Mr. HUDSON, Mr. EMMER, Mr. YOHO, Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia, and Mr. GROTHMAN.
H.R. 544: Mr. TAKANO, Mr. JONES, and Mr. BUTTERFIELD.
H.R. 606: Mr. HUNTER and Mr. ROYCE of California.
H.R. 613: Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio.
H.R. 619: Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. TURNER, and Mr. BANKS of Indiana.
H.R. 635: Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ and Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 681: Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. GARRETT, and Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana.
H.R. 721: Mr. KINZINGER.
H.R. 731: Mr. PANETTA, Ms. LOFGREN, and Mr. THOMPSON of California.
H.R. 743: Mr. SMITH of Nebraska.
H.R. 747: Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. JORDAN, and Mr. DESAULNIER.
H.R. 750: Mr. LARSEN of Washington.
H.R. 757: Mr. DESAULNIER.
H.R. 758: Mr. GONZALEZ of Texas and Mr. KNIGHT.
H.R. 770: Mr. TIBERI.
H.R. 785: Mrs. BLACKBURN and Mr. DESANTIS.
H.R. 787: Mr. PANETTA.
H.R. 807: Mr. QUIGLEY and Mr. OLSON.
H.R. 813: Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. SLAUGHTER, and Mr. BROWN of Maryland.
H.R. 820: Mr. STIVERS, Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, Mr. RUSH, Mr. FITZPATRICK, and Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.
H.R. 849: Mr. CARTER of Georgia and Mr. ROKITA.
H.R. 852: Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD and Mr. RYAN of Ohio.
H.R. 856: Mr. ENGEL.
H.R. 873: Mr. DONOVAN, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, and Mr. BOST.
H.R. 917: Mr. STIVERS.
H.R. 931: Mr. LOWENTHAL, Ms. MCSALLY, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, and Mr. MITCHELL.
H.R. 1022: Mr. DESAULNIER.
H.R. 1065: Mr. JORDAN.
H.R. 1090: Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire, Mr. CORREA, and Ms. ESTY of Connecticut.
H.R. 1114: Mr. SMITH of Washington.
H.R. 1116: Mr. VELA and Mr. CHABOT.
H.R. 1134: Mr. O'HALLERAN, Mr. VISCLOSKY, Ms. BARRAGÁN, and Ms. ROSEN.
H.R. 1136: Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Mr. WALKER, and Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee.
H.R. 1155: Mr. BIGGS.
H.R. 1156: Mr. PETERSON, Mr. BIGGS, and Mr. COOK.
H.R. 1164: Mr. CURBELO of Florida.
H.R. 1205: Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire, Mr. PETERS; Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. KHANNA, Mr. PERLMUTTER, and Ms. JAYAPAL.
H.R. 1240: Ms. HANABUSA, Ms, BARRAGÁN, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. JONES, and Mr. LOBIONDO.
H.R. 1243: Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. COSTA, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. KHANNA, Ms. WILSON of Florida, and Ms. ESTY of Connecticut.
H.R. 1251: Mr. LAWSON of Florida.
H.R. 1267: Mr. MOULTON.
H.R. 1272: Mr. PALLONE.
H.R. 1279: Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN and Mr. NOLAN.
H.R. 1299: Mr. CLEAVER and Ms. DELBENE.
H.R. 1316: Mr. BROOKS of Alabama.
H.R. 1318: Mr. SMITH of Washington.
H.R. 1332: Mr. LEVIN.
H.R. 1334: Mr. ARRINGTON.
H.R. 1405: Mr. KIHUEN and Ms. TITUS.
H.R. 1421: Ms. KAPTUR.
H.R. 1422: Mr. KIND.
H.R. 1446: Mr. JEFFRIES.
H.R. 1454: Mr. WELCH.
H.R. 1456: Ms. ESTY of Connecticut, Mr. CARBAJAL, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, and Ms. BONAMICI.
H.R. 1475: Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. DESAULNIER, and Mr. SMITH of Washington.
H.R. 1481: Ms. SHEA-PORTER.
H.R. 1485: Mr. BISHOP of Michigan and Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.
H.R. 1498: Ms. MATSUI, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, and Mr. PALLONE.
H.R. 1501: Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.
H.R. 1516: Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire and Mrs. MURPHY of Florida.
H.R. 1530: Mr. BISHOP of Michigan.
H.R. 1542: Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. LANGEVIN, and Mr. STEWART.
H.R. 1552: Mr. JORDAN.
H.R. 1566: Ms. LOFGREN.
H.R. 1625: Mr. SHERMAN, Ms. GABBARD, Mr. COHEN, Ms. MCSALLY, Mr. COOK, Mr. GARRETT, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. SCHNEIDER, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. ESPAILLAT, and Mr. MAST.
H.R. 1651: Mr. ROSKAM and Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 1660: Mrs. BEATTY.
H.R. 1676: Mr. HULTGREN.
H.R. 1677: Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, and Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ.
H.R. 1683: Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. ESPAILLAT, and Mr. RASKIN.
H.R. 1697: Mr. BANKS of Indiana, Mr. BLUM, Mr. MITCHELL, and Mr. REED.
H.R. 1698: Mr. HOLDING, Mr. MOULTON, and Ms. ADAMS.
H.R. 1711: Mr. MOULTON.
H.R. 1719: Mr. NOLAN.
H.R. 1753: Mr. CICILLINE and Mr. CÁRDENAS.
H.R. 1759: Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. MCNERNEY, and Ms. SPEIER.

H.R. 1812: Mr. SMITH of Washington.

H.R. 1815: Mr. KENNEDY.

H.R. 1825: Mr. WITTMAN, Mr. RUSH, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. SCHRADER, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, and Mr. ROTHFUS.

H.R. 1836: Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York.

H.R. 1844: Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, and Mr. DELANEY.

H.R. 1847: Ms. JAYAPAL, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, and Mr. MITCHELL.

H.R. 1873: Mr. JONES, Mr. AMODEI, Mr. PETERSON, Mr. SIMPSON, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. MEADOWS, and Mr. THOMAS J. ROONEY of Florida.

H.R. 1880: Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Ms. PINGREE, and Ms. LOFGREN.

H.R. 1884: Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. VALADAO, and Mr. BERGMAN.

H.R. 1886: Mr. GUTIÉRREZ.

H.R. 1919: Mr. COLLINS of Georgia and Mr. GRAVES of Georgia.

H.R. 1928: Mrs. DAVIS of California.

H.R. 1945: Mr. COLLINS of New York.

H.R. 1949: Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. KILDEE, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, Ms. DELAURO, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. MCNERNEY, and Ms. SINEMA.

H.R. 1953: Ms. LOFGREN and Mr. MOULTON.

H.R. 1955: Ms. TENNEY.

H.R. 1957: Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Ms. JUDY CHU of California, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mrs. DEMINGS, Mr. SCHRADER, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. YARMUTH, Ms. SLAUGHTER, and Ms. ESTY of Connecticut.

H.R. 1972: Mr. PAULSEN.

H.R. 1993: Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. YOUNG of Iowa, and Mr. KENNEDY.

H.R. 1997: Mr. BILIRAKIS.

H.R. 2004: Mr. LUCAS.

H.R. 2012: Mr. KENNEDY.

H.R. 2016: Mr. SMITH of New Jersey.

H.R. 2029: Mr. BURGESS and Mr. GOHMERT.

H.R. 2046: Mr. KENNEDY.

H.R. 2052: Ms. JENKINS of Kansas, Ms. LEE, Mrs. TORRES, and Mr. LOBIONDO.

H.R. 2063: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. GALLEGO, Mr. NADLER, Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. CICILLINE, and Mr. QUIGLEY.

H.R. 2091: Mr. HUDSON.

H.R. 2105: Ms. BONAMICI and Mr. MCNERNEY.

H.R. 2123: Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 2151: Mr. TED LIEU of California, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. DESAULNIER, Ms. SLAUGHTER, and Ms. ESTY of Connecticut.

H.R. 2155: Mr. GROTHMAN.

H.R. 2168: Mr. HILL.

H.R. 2188: Mr. BURGESS and Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.

H.R. 2192: Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania and Mr. TROTT.

H.R. 2196: Mr. FARENTHOLD.

H.R. 2207: Mr. LOWENTHAL and Ms. NORTON.

H.R. 2210: Mr. BARLETTA, Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. MARINO, and Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 2264: Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 2266: Mr. CRIST, Mr. DESANTIS, Mr. RASKIN, and Mr. NADLER.

H.R. 2268: Mr. ROKITA.

H.J. Res. 48: Ms. SPEIER.

H. Con. Res. 41: Mr. GALLAGHER.

H. Con. Res. 45: Mr. FASO, Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire, Mr. BACON, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. COLE, Mr. HECK, Mr. DELANEY, Mr. KEATING, and Mr. PERLMUTTER.

H. Res. 124: Mr. CICILLINE.

H. Res. 195: Mr. DONOVAN.

H. Res. 220: Ms. LOFGREN and Mr. CORREA.

H. Res. 276: Miss RICE of New York, Mr. SWALWELL of California, and Mr. LOWENTHAL.

H. Res. 277: Mr. TED LIEU of California.

H. Res. 279: Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ and Mr. LAMBORN.

H. Res. 281: Mr. COLE and Mr. SCOTT of Virginia.

H. Res. 295: Mr. SABLAN.

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PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 115th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 163 WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, MAY 2, 2017 No. 75

Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

God of love and laughter, we thank You for all of Your benefits. Your mercies to us are new each day. You send the sunshine and the rain. You provide us with seed time and harvest. You protect us from dangers and inspire us with Your abiding presence.

Lord, thank You for providing our lawmakers with the gift of Your peace, even in the midst of life's storms. Supply all their needs from the abundance of Your celestial riches. Transform their gratitude into service to those who must daily experience the pain of privation and despair. Help us all to express our faith in You with deeds of love.

And, Lord, please be with the Larkin family during this season of grief.

We pray in Your merciful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASSE). The majority leader is recognized.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING LEGISLATION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, yesterday, after months of committee work and bicameral negotiations, the government funding agreement that abides by the spending caps set in the bipartisan Budget Act of 2015 was filed over in the House. This legislation will promote a number of American and conservative priorities.

It will help to strengthen the border with the largest border security funding increase in a decade.

It will help to strengthen the military with funding for a pay raise for our troops, along with a critically needed downpayment on the long overdue task of rebuilding our military.

It will help to streamline the Federal bureaucracy with the elimination or consolidation of more than 150 government programs and initiatives.

It contains many other conservative wins, too, like freezing funding for the IRS, cutting funding for the EPA, prohibiting funding for President Obama's climate slush fund, and prohibiting a taxpayer bailout of ObamaCare's risk corridors. It maintains the Hyde Amendment, will help veterans, and will fund implementation of the law that shifts control of education back to parents, States, and local school districts.

Additionally, this legislation will provide more of the resources we need to help communities across our country that continue to suffer from the opioid epidemic. It also permanently extends healthcare for thousands of retired coal miners from States like Kentucky—something for which I have fought for a long time and something I was proud to secure in this bill, as we put together the final package.

Each of these measures is included in the funding bill we will take up later this week.

I wish to commend President Trump and his team, including Director Mulvaney, Secretary Mattis, and Secretary Kelly, for quickly identifying national security priorities and working with the Republican Congress to enact some of them. Secretary Mattis has made clear that rebuilding our military and restoring combat readiness for today and tomorrow will require a multiyear, bipartisan commitment to meet the needs of the force. The additional contingency operations funding provided in this legislation represents an important first step toward meeting that goal.

While this funding bill is the product of bipartisan negotiations, it delivers some important conservative wins, including critical steps forward on defense and border security. Senators should continue reviewing the bill text now so that we can pass it without delay after we receive it from the House.

NOMINATION OF JAY CLAYTON

Mr. MCCONNELL. Now, Mr. President, on another matter, Senators voted on a bipartisan basis yesterday to advance Jay Clayton's nomination to the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, and soon we will take another vote to confirm him.

As Chairman CRAPO noted at Clayton's confirmation hearing, this nominee has an impressive background. His extensive work in the private sector will serve him well as he looks to strengthen our financial markets, thereby supporting American businesses, boosting job creation, and spurring economic growth. I appreciate Mr. Clayton's willingness to take on this important task, as well as his vision, which he outlined at his hearing, to promote fair and transparent practices at the SEC.

I look forward to his confirmation and to his leadership at this agency.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING LEGISLATION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, first, I wish to respond to the President's latest tweets about the bipartisan, bicameral deal we just reached to fund the government through September.

Members of both parties worked very hard to come to this agreement. There was a real spirit of cooperation. I thank Majority Leader MCCONNELL and Speaker RYAN and Leader PELOSI, as well as Senators COCHRAN and LEAHY and Congress Members FRELINGHUYSEN and LOWEY, all who worked together often until the wee hours of the morning to make this happen. We all spent a lot of time working on it, and I think we got a very good outcome. So when the President threw cold water on this deal and actually recommended a government shutdown, I was deeply disappointed. Here we saw Democrats and Republicans working together in the best traditions of the Senate, and the President disparages it in a way that is destructive, essentially saying: Let's have a shutdown.

The President has been complaining about the lack of bipartisanship in Washington. Well, this deal is exactly how Washington should work when it is bipartisan. Both parties negotiated and came to an agreement on a piece of legislation we each can support. It is truly a shame that the President is degrading it because he didn't get 100 percent of what he wanted. Bipartisanship is best summed up by the Rolling Stones: You can't always get what you want—or at least everything you want.

THE PRESIDENT'S TAX PLAN

Mr. SCHUMER. On taxes, Mr. President, yesterday, Secretary Mnuchin, in an appearance at the Milken Institute Conference, admitted that the administration plans to go it alone on taxes. He said they are trying to design their proposal to fit into the rules of reconciliation so they need only Republican votes to pass their tax cut.

The message was clear as day. The President is not interested in working with Democrats to craft a proposal that both parties can support. He is just going to pass his plan with Republican votes or not pass it at all. What that means is that the Trump tax plan likely will not have to change much from the 200-word outline that they put out last week, and that means the Trump tax plan will benefit the incredibly wealthy and the special interests while leaving the middle-class, working Americans with crumbs, at best.

We Democrats support tax relief, so long as it is aimed at the middle class and those struggling to get there. Those are the folks who really need the help. College is getting ever more expensive. Take-home pay is being squeezed in so many different directions. The middle class and those working to get there should be able to keep more of what they make, but the Trump tax plan seems designed to benefit his Cabinet and the incredibly wealthy on Wall Street, not Main Street and the middle class.

There are many wealthy people doing very well in America. God bless them. Their lifestyles are getting better every year. Their incomes are getting better every day. They don't need the help, but the middle class does. But in the Trump plan, taxes on the very wealthy and big corporations would go down, while tax deductions that benefit the middle class would go away. For example, President Trump campaigned on getting rid of the carried interest loophole. Instead, his plan keeps the carried interest loophole and creates an even bigger loophole for the wealthiest by allowing the so-called passthrough entities, which include wealthy businessmen like President Trump, to pay just 15 percent. So with this 15-percent passthrough, hedge fund managers, corporate lawyers, and big business CEOs who make millions of dollars every year would pay 15 percent, while their workers will pay 20, 25, 30 percent.

To add insult to injury, the Trump tax plan would repeal the estate tax, a tax on estates only of over $10 million—very wealthy people. How many of us have a $10 million estate? And it would result in the 5,200 wealthiest families in America each year—or estates in America—receiving an average $3 million windfall. While the Trump plan eliminates taxes for the very wealthy, it also eliminates tax breaks that are most beneficial to the middle class, like the State and local deduction. The loss of this deduction for those who use it would cost New Yorkers an average of $4,500 a year.

The middle class has seen rising expenses and virtually stagnant incomes. They need tax relief, not the loss of key tax deductions that helped put a few more dollars in their pockets. And the biggest danger for the middle class might be what happens after the Trump tax plan gets passed, if that happens.

A tax cut for the wealthy of the size President Trump is proposing would explode the deficit, costing between $5.5 trillion and $7 trillion over 10 years, by some estimates. The Republicans might be willing to ignore the debt and deficit now in order to get their tax cut. But make no mistake about it, a few years down the line, they will start howling about the deficit again and say: Oh, we have no choice but to cut Social Security and Medicare to make up for the massive debt they created with their tax cut. This has been the nefarious goal of the hard right for decades.

In fact, the same story played out during the Bush years. President Bush passed a big tax break, primarily for the wealthy. It racked up debt, and then he pursued deep cuts to the social safety net to try to balance the ledger. He might have gotten it, but Democrats stood in his way. This could be deja vu all over again.

In sum, the very wealthy get a huge tax break while the middle class gets very little. And down the road, programs like Social Security and Medicare—so crucial to the middle class—would be endangered.

If this administration wants to pursue such a plan all on their own, that is their choice, but as we saw with healthcare, the go-it-alone approach doesn't guarantee success. What it does guarantee is a very partisan bill that will benefit the very wealthy and the special interests—a bill that I predict will be very, very unpopular with the American people.

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 assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the Clayton nomination, which the clerk will report.

The assistant bill clerk read the nomination of Jay Clayton, of New York, to be a Member of the Securities and Exchange Commission for a term expiring June 5, 2021.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 12:30 p.m. will be equally divided in the usual form.

The Senator from Wyoming.

THE PRESIDENT'S FIRST ONE HUNDRED DAYS

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, over the weekend, President Trump celebrated 100 days that he has been in office as President of the United States. Newspapers and magazines and pundits on television were all talking about

what the President has accomplished in those first 100 days.

From what I heard talking to people at home in Wyoming this past weekend, his first 100 days has been a huge success. People tell me that they think America is finally headed in the right direction again. I had a lot of people tell me they feel as if they have actually gotten a new spring in their step as a result of the Presidential election last year and President Trump taking office.

The other day when I was home, I was in line at the gas station behind a guy. A friend of his came and said: Hey, how are you doing? The guy said: Great. We are hiring again.

That is the kind of confidence that is happening all around Wyoming. The polling company Gallup says that it is happening not just in Wyoming but all across the country. For 24 straight weeks, more Americans have been more optimistic than pessimistic about the economy. As soon as Donald Trump was elected President, economic confidence soared, and it has stayed positive ever since. Gallup said that this is the exact opposite of what they had seen in the previous 8 years; that is, during the whole Obama administration, during the entire so-called economic recovery.

In another poll released last week, Gallup said that people are also less worried that they will lose the job they have. They found that American workers are less concerned about being laid off from their job than at any time since Gallup started asking questions way back in 1975. That is more than 40 years ago.

Why are people optimistic now? I think it is because they see that President Trump and the Republicans in Congress are serious about improving the economy. They see that we are serious about giving relief to Americans who have been getting buried under an avalanche of redtape. They see that the President is off to a very fast start in the White House.

Just look at what we have already done to help relieve the burdens on Americans. Congress has rolled back 13 different midnight regulations that President Obama tried to sneak through at the last minute. We struck down a stream buffer rule that was meant to block coal mining. We got rid of a rule that puts Americans at a competitive disadvantage when they are trying to develop energy resources overseas. We got rid of a regulation that took the control of local energy issues away from the State officials; we got rid of that regulation. And we got rid of one of the regulations that gave more control to Washington and less to States. These were regulations that harmed Americans and wiped out American jobs. Now those regulations are gone.

We have more that we can do to roll back terrible regulations like these. I have introduced a resolution to block another damaging rule that has come out by the Bureau of Land Management, which has to do with the Obama administration rules on methane that is produced at oil and gas wells. The new regulations created confusion by duplicating other rules that were already on the books.

That was the problem with so many of these regulations coming out by the Obama administration as they left office: regulation on top of regulation causing costs and confusion. They added costs that discourage energy production and kill energy jobs.

I hope that we can have a vote on this resolution very soon and get rid of this unnecessary red tape.

As active as Congress has been getting rid of these unfair, last-minute rules, President Trump has been even more active. He has already signed at least 30 Executive orders to help clear a path for the American economy to take off again. He signed a major Executive order promoting American energy independence. This has been an enormous shift away from the Obama-era approach of disruptive regulations, restrictions, and Washington overreach. All of these regulations did more to harm hard-working Americans than they did to actually help the environment. From now on, Washington will be looking for ways to protect our environment while helping our economy to grow.

Just last week, President Trump took another important step to keep his promises. He eased restrictions on drilling for oil and gas in offshore areas, like the Arctic and the Atlantic Oceans. These places have great potential for producing the energy America needs. President Trump is helping to create certainty that those resources will be available if we need them.

President Obama couldn't imagine that it was possible to have responsible energy development in America. President Trump knows differently. He knows it is possible. He knows that American workers can do the job. He knows that America will be stronger because of it. I think that is the kind of thing the American people mean when they tell me that they feel they have a spring in their step.

I can also tell you that this is just the beginning. Remember when President Obama bragged that he had a pen and a phone? Well, President Trump has proved that he has a whole drawer full of pens, and he intends to keep using them to help get the American economy growing again. He wants to hear more people saying that things are great; we are hiring again. That is what the President has been doing, and it is what Congress is doing. These are the kinds of things that will get this country back on track when it comes to our energy policy.

In Wyoming and in much of the country, energy means jobs. Our goal should be to make American energy as clean as we can, as fast as we can without raising costs on American families. All of us should be able to agree on that. It is time to restore that balance to America's energy policy. President Trump is dedicated to getting that balance right.

Republicans in Congress are dedicated to getting the economy back in gear, and I hope that more Democrats will join us with their ideas and with their support. That is what the American people want, and it is what they voted for. It is why people are confident and why they see better days ahead for this great country.

I yield the floor.

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

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

NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE PROGRAM

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I rise to discuss an issue of extraordinary importance to the people of Louisiana and to many Americans. Yet again, Americans are witnessing a dramatic, rumor-filled guessing game. I am not talking about the latest new release from Netflix, I am talking about the reauthorization of the extremely important National Flood Insurance Program—we call it the NFIP, which I can assure you has played more like an episode of ''Veep'' than ''House of Cards'' for the audience that watches it unfold every few years.

I am sorry to say, Congress has repeatedly and consistently mangled the reauthorization of this essential Federal program. In 2010, the NFIP expired four times—not once, not twice but four times, for a total of 53 days, which injected uncertainty throughout a fragile housing market that had just been devastated 2 years previously.

That was inexcusable. Local economies felt the sting of 1,400 home closing delays or cancellations per day that the program was expired. Now, along with many of the program's stakeholders and participants, I believe it is crucial that we avoid this type of congressionally imposed delay.

Congress should extend the program. Let me say that again. Congress should extend the National Flood Insurance Program for a multiyear reauthorization before the September 30 deadline of this year. Our economy demands it. Many Americans may remember when the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act was signed into law in 2012. I was not in the Senate then. I was State Treasurer in Louisiana, but I certainly remember it.

In an effort to bring the program closer to solvency after Superstorm Sandy, policyholders, as a result of Biggert-Waters, saw their premiums quickly rise to ''actuarial levels.'' For policyholders in my home State of Louisiana, this meant unaffordable levels. It doesn't do any good to offer

Americans insurance they cannot afford. That is what Biggert-Waters did, just like the Affordable Care Act.

FEMA's mishandling of Biggert-Waters implementation resulted in truly inaccurate rate hikes that placed the viability of the entire National Flood Insurance Program at risk. I even remember the local news stations in Louisiana, like WWL and WBRZ, broadcasting horror stories of exponential rate hikes as a result of Biggert-Waters, hitting hardest in South Louisiana's middle-class neighborhoods.

Residents of St. Charles Parish and Lafourche Parish—in my State we call our counties parishes. We are the only one in America, only State in America, Louisiana, that does it. We do it right. Everybody else does it wrong. I remember residents of St. Charles Parish and Lafourche Parish sending in copies of their house keys to congressional representatives to give to FEMA because they could not afford the flood insurance.

They were required to carry it. Therefore, they were just going to turn their home over. This was a sign that the government might as well take their homes because the insurance rates were so unaffordable.

In this way, Biggert-Waters also made their homes unsalable. Going forward with the extension of the National Flood Insurance Program, we have to find a way to deal with the solvency of the NFIP that is responsible. At the same time, we cannot move the program from red to black entirely on the backs of policyholders. It just will not work.

What do we need to do? We need to examine how FEMA spends every single dollar of premiums paid by policyholders into the system—every single dollar. We need to find solutions to improve the functionality and efficiency of the National Flood Insurance Program and to ensure that those who are mandated to carry flood insurance actually purchase flood insurance.

It is clear to the policyholders in Louisiana that the NFIP has to do a better job also in one other respect. That is by giving our local officials a seat at the table. It is not written in the Constitution that flood policy and flood mapping has to originate and end with the Federal bureaucracy in Washington, DC.

In fact, flood mapping and flood policy will benefit from having our local officials participate with a seat at the table. Our local levee boards and levee districts in Louisiana, along with the families who have lived on the land being insured for generations, know every single ditch, every single drainage canal from St. Tammany Parish to Terrebonne Parish. The NFIP bureaucrats ought to be asking them for guidance when rewriting flood maps and flood policy, not the other way around.

Instead, our folks only get invited to the dance after all the decisions have been made in Washington, when the cow is already out of the barn. I believe this is a commonsense principle that ought to be included in legislation to ultimately extend and reform the program: give our local officials who know the land best a seat at the table, not perfunctory, a real seat at the table, to contribute to flood mapping and flood policy. The NFIP will be better for it.

FEMA's mission, as we all know, is to lead America, to prepare for, prevent, respond to, and recover from disaster. That is why FEMA exists. The flood program is an extension of that mission. That is why, when consultants who work for FEMA—I am talking about contractors, I am talking about engineers, I am talking about lawyers, consultants who spend taxpayer money and are paid with taxpayer money working for FEMA, both contractors and subcontractors, if you wish to call them that, with the National Flood Insurance Program's Write Your Own Program, lose focus sometimes in helping flood victims.

Let me say that again. We spend millions of taxpayer dollars through the National Flood Insurance Program paying consultants, contractors, lawyers, engineers to help administer the program and adjust claims. When it works, it is a beautiful thing. When it doesn't work, it is an unmitigated disaster and is unfair to every taxpayer who put up his or her hard-earned money and every policyholder of the National Flood Insurance Program. On occasions it has not worked.

The vast majority of consultants do a fine job, but some don't. Those who have abused the program should be fired. That is why I am introducing a bill. It is called the National Flood Insurance Program Consultant Accountability Act. It is real simple. It will give the FEMA Administrator the authority to fire any consultant, contractor, lawyer, engineer, whomever, who engage in conduct detrimental to the mission of the National Flood Insurance Program.

The bill will be fair. It will have an appeals process to ensure that good consultants are not penalized for being falsely accused, but this is a simple, commonsense reform that frankly should have been put in place years ago. If a consultant commits activity that in the opinion of the FEMA Administrator is detrimental to a program—for example, if he falsifies an engineering report that shows flooding caused the insured's damage, if he falsifies a report to say it didn't cause damage—then that consultant should be fired. This bill is going to give the FEMA Administrator the authority to do it.

I believe the proper tools are not in place to hold government accountants accountable and to throw out bad actors. They are just not. During the Sandy recovery, major media reports claimed several firms actually altered engineering reports tied to flood insurance claims. The altered reports—engineering reports that originally said a flood caused the insured's damage and therefore the insured should be paid, those engineering reports were altered to say flooding did not contribute to the damage.

These altered reports—intentionally altered—cost families the insurance payments they deserved and delayed their recovery. These were Americans who did the right thing. They bought flood insurance, and because of some consultants working for the NFIP, they were not allowed, at least initially, to recover. Only one engineering company was actually convicted of wrongdoing, but a number participated. Many of those who participated in this tomfoolery are still participating in the program and are still receiving taxpayer funding to contract with FEMA.

On March 14, the head of FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program, Mr. Roy Wright, testified before the Banking Committee, on which I sit. He has testified that he can only fire contractors from participating in the National Flood Insurance Program if they are debarred, disbarred, or criminally convicted. He can't just pick up the phone and correct the situation.

If he sees a consultant misbehaving, not acting in the best interest of the National Flood Insurance Program or the insured or the American taxpayer, he can't do a doggone thing about it, according to Mr. Wright's testimony, unless they are actually criminally convicted or disbarred, if they happen to be a lawyer.

This bill is going to let the FEMA Administrator do something about it. There is nothing like a good firing every now and then to shake up an organization.

The NFIP is responsible for administering insurance payouts for the 29,600 flood insurance claims—30,000 flood insurance claims—in my State submitted for the historic, ''once in a thousand years'' flood that occurred in Louisiana last August and last March.

FEMA and its consultants and its contractors will be aiding in paying out, I hope, more than $2.4 billion in taxpayer money. Louisiana's insured and the American taxpayers need to know that these consultants can be trusted and are highly regarded by their peers.

As a member of the Senate Banking Committee, I plan to include this bill and other types of commonsense reforms during the reauthorization process of the National Flood Insurance Program, and I hope to do so on a bipartisan basis.

I encourage my colleagues not to play politics with this legislation. I encourage my colleagues not to play politics with the National Flood Insurance Program. It is central to the success of the American economy.

Let's try to work to avoid partisan battles and develop a National Flood Insurance Program that makes sense for the policyholders and for the American taxpayer.

I am not naive. I know that different coalitions and special interest groups, armed with their lobbyists, descend on the Hill. I hope we won't forget the people back home—in my hometown and in the Presiding Officer's hometown—who will feel the repercussions of our legislative actions with respect to this important program.

I am very much looking forward to working with my colleagues on the Banking Committee to make this a successful reauthorization of the National Flood Insurance Program for the 5.5 million Americans who rely on it.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FLAKE). The Senator from Arkansas.

CONGRESSIONAL REVIEW ACT

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I want to take this opportunity to highlight what I consider an unsung achievement of this administration and this Congress—the slow but steady rollback of the last administration's midnight regulations.

The numbers are impressive. Using the Congressional Review Act, we have repealed 13 regulations so far, which adds up to a $3.6 billion reduction in regulatory costs. To put it in more human terms, we have saved the American people 4.2 million hours of paperwork, which I can tell you is more than welcome news in Arkansas.

The other thing about these resolutions we have passed is that they are permanent. We haven't simply put these regulations on pause for a future President to revive them with a pen and phone. No, we have outlawed them forever. Any President who wants to reimpose them and their huge costs will have to pass a new law to do so, making the rules we live under and the people who make them accountable to the voters. That is a bit of a foreign concept to the people in Washington these days. But the way I see it, that is all the more reason to celebrate what we have achieved.

I know the other side will say: This is a dark day for America. To hear them tell it, blotting out all these regulations will leave a dark stain on our law books. To them, this rollback is a throwback to a dangerous, rough-and-tumble era—one filled with dirty air, dirty water, and a frighteningly low quality of life. But it just ain't so.

Stop and take a look at the regulations we have repealed, and then ask yourself: Why should Washington decide how we evaluate our teachers? Shouldn't parents, States, and cities do that? Why shouldn't States be able to test for drugs before handing out unemployment insurance? Is that such an unreasonable request? Why are bureaucrats who are sitting in an office thousands of miles away managing our land and wildlife? Shouldn't it be the people who live right there?

Why should Federal bureaucrats be able to override a law duly passed by Congress and signed by the President? Do any of these regulations add much to our quality of life?

Is this really about protecting the public interest? Or is it more about rewarding special interests? In fact, I can understand why liberals are bewildered at the idea that all these rules are hurting jobs, because these rules certainly are creating jobs—for lawyers and lobbyists. If there had been a bill, it would have been called ''The American Bar Association Full Employment Act.''

That, perhaps, is the real issue here. It is not a question of whether we are going to live under rules. We have rules—plenty of them. The question is this: What kinds of rules are we going to live under? Are we going to pass laws that impose costs on rural America, only to add more wealth to urban America? Are we going to kill blue-collar jobs so we can create more white-collar jobs? Or are we going to pass laws that help all Americans in all walks of life, as we should?

When you look at things this way, I would say we have scored a pretty impressive victory, indeed, over these last 3 months.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican whip.

TRAGEDY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, first, I would like to offer a brief word on some tragic events that occurred in my State over the last few days.

Yesterday, at the University of Texas in Austin, a man wielding a knife began attacking students on campus. He injured three and tragically killed another. My prayers are with the entire UT community, particularly the friends and families of those injured and the student who lost his life.

This was a senseless act of violence, and it is abhorrent. We don't yet know the details for why this deranged individual acted the way he did. Local officials are still gathering details about the case.

I am grateful to the University of Texas police for quickly apprehending the suspect and stopping further loss of life and injury. I offer them and the rest of the law enforcement community in Austin, around the State, and around the Nation my support as they seek justice and continue to protect, in this instance, one of the State's flagship institutions of higher learning.

DEADLY STORMS IN EAST TEXAS

Mr. President, many are aware that major storms ripped through parts of East Texas, including Van Zandt, Henderson, Rains, and Hopkins Counties, last weekend. On Saturday afternoon and evening, four tornadoes tore through the area, leaving a lot of damage in its wake, particularly in the town of Canton, in Van Zandt County. Dozens of people were injured and taken to the hospital, and, tragically, four people died.

I plan to speak to the mayor of Canton and to Judge Kirkpatrick, the Van Zandt County judge, later today to offer them my condolences but more importantly, perhaps, to offer our help in addition to our prayers.

I know they are working as hard as they can to continue to assess the damage done and to find a way forward to help bring assistance to those most in need.

I am particularly grateful and impressed by the work of local leaders across my great State and around the country who step up at a time of crisis like this and organizations like the American Red Cross, which always seem to show up to offer a helping hand, as well as local schools and churches that have come together to lend a hand in this area during such a difficult time. Some have lost their own homes, vehicles, and, of course, loved ones.

As I said, my thoughts and prayers are with all of them, and I stand ready to work alongside them in this resilient part of my great State as they recover from these deadly storms.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING LEGISLATION

Mr. President, as we all know by now, over the weekend an agreement was finally reached on the funding bill to keep the U.S. Government open and to provide much needed, long-term funding to our Federal agencies.

I am particularly glad we found a way forward. Now, that is not synonymous with saying I like everything in the bill, but a piece of legislation like this is inherently a compromise. Compromise means that usually people on both ends of the negotiation are not entirely happy because they have had to give up something in order to get something. This is the process, and we have to build consensus, even on controversial topics like this funding bill.

The agreed to bill consists of the 11 remaining appropriations bills, with additional funding set aside for our military, disaster relief, and border security. I, for one, have been encouraged to hear folks from both sides of the aisle—Republicans and Democrats alike—make clear that we actually agree more than we disagree when it comes to securing our border.

President Trump has made no secret of his position. He said from the beginning that border security would be a top priority for him. Coming from a border State, as does the Presiding Officer, we all understand particularly well how important this is to our communities along the border but also to our States and to the entire country.

I have been glad to read press reports and hear the minority leader, Senator SCHUMER, among others, talk about how providing more resources to secure our borders is necessary to keep us safe and to stem the tide of illegal drugs, illegal immigration, and contraband entering our country.

In fact, last week, the Senator from New York, the minority leader, said: ''Democrats have always been for border security.'' Well, I was glad to hear him say that.

Last month during the State work period, I had the chance to speak to hundreds of my constituents from all across the State—10 cities in all. Part

of that time was spent visiting with folks who live and work along the U.S.-Mexico border, specifically in Laredo and in the town of Mission, near McAllen.

All along the border, we talked about the significant ties between the United States and Mexico, how Mexico is Texas' largest trading partner, and how Texas farmers, ranchers, and manufacturers rely greatly on trade with our southern neighbor. They pointed out that the U.S. Chamber of Commerce has actually issued a chart that documents that 5 million American jobs depend on binational trade with Mexico. I think most people are unaware of that or don't pay enough attention to the fact that our economies are inextricably tied together.

During my visit to the border, I was fortunate enough to have the chance to talk about our mutual security concerns with Governor Cabeza de Vaca, the Governor of Tamaulipas, a State that shares its northern border with Texas.

I am grateful to Mexican leaders like the Governor and my friend Ambassador Gutierrez, the new Mexican Ambassador to the United States, who share our vision for a more secure border and more robust trade at the same time. They are not mutually exclusive. It is important that we have both—security and trade.

It goes without saying that free trade has been a cornerstone of the economy in Texas, adding billions to our economy annually and bolstering our relationship with our partner to the south. In other words, free-trade agreements, particularly NAFTA, or the North American Free Trade Agreement, are particularly important to many of my State's leading industries, such as agriculture and energy.

As I said, bilateral trade with Mexico supports 5 million jobs across our entire country, and this has led to a vibrant border, from El Paso, out in West Texas, and all the way to Brownsville in the south. Of course, like anything that is 20-plus years old, there is room for it to be updated and improved, and NAFTA is no different. I hope in moving forward that the President will work with us to modernize NAFTA.

As we consider this Omnibus appropriations bill and specifically more resources to enhance security along the border, I think we can all agree that our approach should be twofold: We must devote resources to not only enhance border security but also to fix aging infrastructure at our ports of entry. Fortunately, this bill does exactly that. It contains the most robust border security funding in 10 years, and that includes funding for infrastructure upgrades, increasing technology along the border, and improving TSA screening at airports too.

I am glad we found a way to fund the government and to actually govern while doing more for our national defense and security, particularly security along the border. But let's not lose sight of the ultimate aim here: Our country needs long-term, sustainable funding for our government, particularly for our national security, so they can plan and prepare in the years ahead, and the stop-start and short-term continuing resolutions or the threat of a government shutdown does not facilitate that sort of planning and preparation. That is how the appropriations process was designed to work best, and that is what I hope we are all working toward—a restoration of the normal appropriations process, with no more of these narratives about shutdowns.

We weren't elected, in my view—certainly not given the majority here in the Senate and in the House, as well as the President in the White House—to shut down the government; we were elected to govern. Yes, governing is hard. It is hard by design. It is hard for anything to navigate the maze of the legislature and this legislative process. It is hard to get people to agree in the House and then the Senate and then to get the signature of the President of the United States. But that is the way our Founding Fathers designed our constitutional system.

I think most of our colleagues in this Chamber would agree that we want to provide more stability, not less. It is important for our economy, if we want to see our economy grow.

I just heard from folks who visited my office. They said the political instability of rules changing from one administration to the next with Executive orders and the like really is a deterrent to investment because they don't know whether the business model they are employing today will be viewed the same way tomorrow with a new administration. So we need to provide more stability by getting back to the consensus-building process that is legislating, and we need to do away with short-term continuing resolutions and funding that actually hurts us strategically.

I know my family and most folks I know take a look at their budget. They consider what they want to do with it, including the things they absolutely have to pay for, and then from there decide if they have anything left for a vacation or if they want to save more or if they need to make an improvement in their home down the road. That is how we responsibly prepare for tomorrow in our personal lives, and governing is no different in that sense. That is how we can do better by the generations coming after us in the Senate—by putting our country on a budget and sticking to it. This bill, while not perfect, is a step in that direction. It complies with the budget caps of the Budget Control Act of 2011, which has kept discretionary spending roughly flat since 2011. That is an amazing accomplishment in many ways.

But if you look at the rest of what Congress does not appropriate—the so-called mandatory or entitlement spending—it has been going up, and it will go up next year 5.5 percent.

The fact is, until we have the courage to come to grips with all of the money the Federal Government spends so we can prioritize it in a fiscally responsible way—we will never adequately fund our military and we will never adequately fund our other national priorities as long as Congress and the White House are left with 70 percent of that spending untouchable because of the politics involved. I hope some day we will have the courage to deal with that.

Mr. President, just a couple other thoughts before I close. I hear people from time to time talk about whether a government shutdown is one of those tactics or tools one might use in a negotiation to actually gain advantage. I happen to think that a government shutdown is basically an abdication of our responsibility, particularly if we are in the majority.

On what basis would we argue to voters: Look, elect me, and I will shut down the government. Our voters, the people who elected Republican majorities in both Houses and elected this President, did not vote for us in order to shut down the government; they voted for us to govern, as hard as it is. As I said a moment ago, it is hard by design. People get frustrated. People don't get everything they want the first time they try to get it. Sometimes people just give up, which is what shutting down the government is—it is giving up.

I hear other people talk about things like the filibuster. It is important to recognize there are basically two types of things we do here in the Senate. One is that we take up the nominations of the President's nominees, as we did with Judge Gorsuch to the Supreme Court. We do that for his Cabinet and the like. Basically, there are two choices there: yes or no.

We have decided together that all of the President's Cabinet nominees and now all of the judges will get an up-or-down vote. So we have eliminated the so-called filibuster, or the 60-vote requirement, when it comes to nominations because you can't offer an amendment to a nomination. You can't shape it in order to try to develop consensus. So I think there is a good argument that we should never have headed down the road of a filibuster of nominees. They need to get a majority vote, and if they do, then they are going to be confirmed.

Legislation is fundamentally different. We have 535 Members of Congress, all of us coming with different experience and different points of view. Again, the Founding Fathers made it hard for us to build sufficient consensus in order for us to govern this big country of ours, some 320 million people. What they understood fundamentally was that the only way that happens is when we are forced to govern by consensus; that is, to build sufficient votes in order to have some stability and durability in the laws we pass. Laws having to do with Medicare and

Social Security were controversial in their day, but there was bipartisan consensus that supported them, and that is why they remain durable to this day.

I have heard people recently—actually since the election and actually as recently as today—say ''Well, maybe we ought to do away with the 60-vote cloture requirement,'' which is another way of saying ''Let's do away with the filibuster on legislation.'' Well, I think I know how Members of the Senate feel about that, by and large. If I am not mistaken, the Senator from Maine, our friend Ms. COLLINS, and others led an effort to get 61 signatures from Senators saying they didn't believe we should ever do away with the legislative filibuster, and I agree with that. It is very important that in a country as big and diverse as ours, with 535 Members of Congress, that we be forced or strongly encouraged, at least, to build consensus before we pass laws that are going to govern this great and vast country of ours. That is why the cloture requirement or the filibuster requirement is still important. It may be frustrating, it may take longer to get things done, but once we get them done by bipartisan consensus, then they are durable and they will last even beyond the next President and the next administration.

There is another reason it is important to keep the filibuster requirement on legislation. That is because when we are in the minority, as Republicans have been from time to time—when the majority can't get the 60 votes because there is sufficient dissension and different points of view that deny 60 votes, then legislation can't pass because we can't cut off debate under the cloture rule.

I have in my hand a document with 15 examples of bills that our Democratic friends, when they were in the majority, supported but that failed to reach the 60-vote threshold because Republicans were not convinced, and thus cloture was not achieved and the bills were not passed. I can think of tax increases. I can think of card check in the labor law environment. I can think of measures with regard to climate change, which remains politically controversial—not the fact of climate change but, rather, what government should do to respond to it. There are examples like that and others where Republicans, even when we were in the minority, were able to stop and force a more extended conversation, to force greater effort at consensus building before we passed legislation that might have such a dramatic impact on our great country.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that this document be printed in the RECORD at the conclusion of my remarks.

Mr. President, we will continue to debate this appropriations bill this week. My hope is that we will pass it by Thursday and we will move on to our other business. I know the House of Representatives is revisiting the healthcare bill that will, once passed the House, come to the Senate, and the Senate will have an opportunity to weigh in on that, and then the consensus building will continue until we ultimately get it to the President for his signature.

Shortly behind that is going to be a pro-growth tax reform bill, which is going to be an important element of what we do this year to help get our economy growing and back on track. Again, this is something on which no individual has all the good ideas, and we are going to have to work together to get it done. I think it is very important that we get the funding of the government behind us so we can move on to healthcare reform, so we can move on to tax reform.

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

WHY THE SENATE LEGISLATIVE FILIBUSTER PROTECTS AMERICANS

FIFTEEN EXAMPLES OF DEMOCRATIC BILLS WITH MAJORITY SUPPORT THAT FAILED TO REACH THE 60-VOTE THRESHOLD

S. 3036: Climate Security Act (Cap and Trade)—Vote: 48–36 (Jun. 6, 2008)

S. 3044: Consumer-First Energy Act (Increased taxes on energy producers)—Vote: 51–43 (Jun. 10, 2008)

S. 3268: Stop Excessive Energy Speculation Act (Imposed new regulations on energy trading)—Vote: 50–43 (Jul. 25, 2008)

S. 3816: Creating American Jobs and Ending Offshoring Act (Protectionist trade policies)—Vote: 53–45 (Sept. 28, 2010)

S. 1323: Sense of the Senate regarding the budget (Resolution expressing the need to increase taxes)—Vote: 51–49 (Jul. 13, 2011)

S. 1660: American Jobs Act of 2011 (Democratic stimulus bill/Tax Hike)—Vote: 50–49 (Oct. 11 2011)

S. 2204: Repeal Big Oil Tax Subsidies Act (Raised taxes on energy producers)—Vote: 51–47 (Mar. 29 2012)

S. 2230: Paying a Fair Share Act of 2012 (''Buffet Rule'' Tax Hike)—Vote: 56–42 (Apr. 16, 2012)

S. 2237: Small Business Jobs and Tax Relief Act (Democratic stimulus bill/Tax hike)—Vote: 53–44 (Jul. 12, 2012); Vote: 57–41 (Jul. 12 2012)

S. 3369: DISCLOSE Act of 2012 (Political free speech restrictions)—Vote: 51–44 (Jul. 16, 2012); Vote: 53–45 (Jul. 17, 2012)

S. 3364: Bring Home Jobs Act (Raised taxes on American-based global businesses)—Vote: 56–42 (Jul. 19, 2012)

S. 388: American Family Economic Protection Act (Dem. sequester alternative: raised taxes and cut defense spending)—Vote: 51–49 (Feb. 28, 2013)

S. 1845: Emergency Unemployment Compensation Extension Act (Extend length of unemployment benefits, adding billions to the deficit)—Vote: 52–48 (Jan. 14, 2014); Vote: 55–45 (Jan. 14, 2014); Vote: 58–40 (Feb. 6, 2014); Vote: 55–43 (Feb. 6, 2014)

S. 2223: Minimum Wage Fairness Act (Raised the minimum wage to $10.10)—Vote: 54–42 (Apr. 30, 2014)

S. 2569: Bring Jobs Home Act (Raise taxes on American-based global businesses)—Vote: 54–42 (Jul. 30, 2014)

Mr. CORNYN. 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.

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

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

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, when he was running for President, Donald Trump laid out a pretty clear vision of how he would deal with Wall Street. He said: ''Wall Street has caused tremendous problems for us.'' He claimed he wasn't ''going to let Wall Street get away with murder,'' and he called out Goldman Sachs as the prime example of a big bank that has too much influence over the political process. That was really powerful stuff.

When Candidate Trump became President Trump, he seemed to forget every scrap of his tough-on-Wall Street talk. Within weeks of taking office, he turned over his administration's economic agenda to none other than Goldman Sachs. His senior strategist, Steve Bannon, spent half a decade at Goldman Sachs as an investment banker. His National Economic Council Director, Gary Cohn, came directly from Goldman Sachs, where he spent 25 years and rose to become President of the bank. His Secretary of the Treasury, Steve Mnuchin, spent 17 years at Goldman Sachs before leaving to start his own hedge fund, which brings us to Jay Clayton, President Trump's nominee to run the Securities and Exchange Commission. To be fair, Mr. Clayton never worked at Goldman Sachs, he just worked for Goldman Sachs, taking their money and representing them for years as a lawyer at a major New York City law firm.

So here we are, just over 8 years after Wall Street triggered a financial crisis and brought the economy to its knees, and President Trump has put the Goldman Sachs gang in charge of holding Wall Street accountable. Trump's betrayal of his campaign promises on Wall Street is shameful, but it is also dangerous, especially when it comes to picking the person to lead the SEC. The SEC is supposed to be the cop on the beat for Wall Street. That is why Congress created it in the 1930s, after fraud and other misconduct on Wall Street led to an enormous stock market crash and the Great Depression. Congress gave the SEC the authority to oversee financial markets and to hold companies and individuals accountable when they defrauded investors.

When the SEC doesn't do its job, the consequences can be devastating. Look at what happened the last time the SEC was under Republican control in the years leading up to the 2008 crisis. The SEC was asleep at the switch. While Wall Street flooded the market with dangerous securities and lied to investors, the SEC heard nothing, saw nothing, stopped nothing. The Republican-led SEC did nothing. When the whole market blew up, it was ordinary

investors and working families who got asked to bail out Wall Street.

So what kind of SEC Chairman would Mr. Clayton be? Let's start by looking at how he would lead the SEC's enforcement efforts against Wall Street, how he would be as a cop on the beat. Under ethics rules, for the first half of his term, Mr. Clayton cannot participate in any enforcement action that involves one of his former clients. That means he cannot take part in any case against Goldman Sachs. OK. But there is more. Goldman Sachs is just one of his former big bank clients. Mr. Clayton also can't take action against Deutsche Bank or against UBS or against Barclays. These are some of Wall Street's biggest and most egregious repeat offenders, and Mr. Clayton would be barred from enforcing the law against them.

That is not all. Ethics rules also prevent Mr. Clayton from participating in any enforcement case against a party that is represented by his former law firm, Sullivan and Cromwell. Sullivan and Cromwell is a premier Wall Street firm, with a long client list that includes big banks like JPMorgan Chase and the credit rating agency Moody's. That means there will likely be even more cases against top Wall Street firms that Mr. Clayton can't work on.

Here is why that matters so much. For most enforcement actions, it takes a majority vote of the five SEC Commissioners. In other words, it takes three people to advance an enforcement action. In a number of recent cases, the two Democrats have voted for stronger enforcement and the two Republicans have voted against it. If the Chairman can't vote—and Mr. Clayton can't vote if some of the biggest and most disreputable banks are involved—then the Commission is likely to come up short of the necessary three votes. You know what that means. It means the banks walk free. Confirming Mr. Clayton to run the SEC will almost certainly result in weaker enforcement against the major players on Wall Street.

Mr. Clayton is also likely to pursue a Wall Street-friendly agenda when it comes to the SEC's rulemaking responsibilities. When he testified before me and before other members of the Banking Committee, Mr. Clayton refused to commit to completing the rules that Congress asked the SEC to write all the way back in 2010 as part of its postcrisis financial reforms. Mr. Clayton even refused to commit to implementing and enforcing some of the postcrisis rules that the SEC has already finalized and put in place.

I don't have any faith that Mr. Clayton will be the kind of tough, independent leader we need at the SEC. His nomination is just one more broken promise, one more time that Donald Trump has put Wall Street ahead of the interests of the American people. The last time a Republican President led us down this path, it resulted in the worst financial crash of our lifetime. We can't go down that path again.

I will be voting against Mr. Clayton's nomination, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

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 bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. SCOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at 5:20 p.m. today, all postcloture time on the Clayton nomination be considered expired and the Senate proceed to vote on the nomination with no intervening action or debate. I further ask that, if confirmed, the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action and that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

RECESS

Mr. SCOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in recess as under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 12:28 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 Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I rise in opposition to the nomination of Jay Clayton to serve as Chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission. Americans deserve a Chair who will run the SEC on their behalf, not for the benefit of Wall Street banks and big corporations. Far too many folks in this town have collective amnesia about the costs of the last financial crisis: $19 trillion lost in household wealth, 8 million jobs lost, more than 15 million foreclosures, hundreds and hundreds of them in the Presiding Officer's and my State.

Those numbers don't seem to get better as time goes by. All over the country, in Ohio and elsewhere, families want strong rules that prevent banks from doing as they please, enriching themselves at the expense of others and then handing the bill to American taxpayers. The most basic duty of the Chair of the SEC is leading his fellow Commissioners through tough issues and policing Wall Street.

Mr. Clayton will fall woefully short. His law firm, his former clients will create a steady stream of conflicts of interest, forcing him to recuse himself in cases involving former clients for 2 of the 4 years he would serve as Chair.

He will be sitting on the sidelines on potential enforcement actions because of his representation in the work he did prior to being at the SEC. That is not draining the swamp. Goldman Sachs, Deutsche Bank, Royal Bank of Canada, UBS—he will have to recuse himself on all of those cases. That does not sound like someone who will be in there fighting for the American people or working to protect America's financial markets.

It is not a theoretical concern. Former Chair White faced conflicts and recusals in more than four dozen enforcement investigations in her first 2 years. In those cases, big banks, like Bank of America, used those recusals to their advantage when the Commission was deadlocked. That undermines the Commission's authority. That is why I opposed Ms. White for her position—one of the same reasons I am opposing Mr. Clayton. Instead of confirming the same kind of nominees we have had in the past, with dozens of conflicts of interest and recusals, we should be considering someone who actually will work to protect investors.

At his hearing, Mr. Clayton failed to provide clear answers to questions about how he would approach enforcement matters. He gave empty answers about punishing bad actors and individual accountability.

Accounting fraud, selling toxic derivatives, and corporate foreign corruption usually involve senior management and happen because the tone from the top allows it to happen. Mr. Clayton does not see it that way. He spent his career representing—excuse me—protecting Wall Street banks. That history guides his view on how SEC enforcement should work.

According to Mr. Clayton, the SEC should proceed with caution, even before opening an investigation. That is not his job. His job is to open investigations when it looks like there is wrongdoing. He says it would have serious adverse impacts on respondents. He has it totally backward. Not investigating companies that may be committing fraud or other abuses because it might create problems for them—how about the American public?

How about the neighborhood I live in in Cleveland, OH, 44105? That ZIP Code had more foreclosures than any ZIP Code in the United States in 2007. That is partly because of a lack of enforcement at the SEC. I see it up close. I know what that means to our communities. I know what it means to our country.

Acting Chair Piwowar began undermining the SEC's enforcement division in his first month on the job. He reversed steps taken by the two previous Chairs that empowered the SEC's enforcement staff to open and pursue investigations.

I am concerned about Dodd-Frank rules. If he is confirmed, he will have

to answer for the unilateral rollback of final Wall Street reform rules that this acting SEC Chair, Mr. Piwowar, has already undertaken. Wall Street reform rules requiring disclosure of CEO-to-worker pay ratios—all the kinds of things that this Congress overwhelmingly decided Congress should do and the SEC should do.

For years, Congress has funded the SEC below the levels requested, despite more responsibilities and increasing marketplace complexity and sophistication. I am concerned about Mr. Clayton's likely behavior in that regard also.

Last, public service is important. It is valuable. It should not be viewed as a chance to push the favorite policies of big corporations. That is what we have seen too often in this town.

This nominee, Mr. Clayton, who comes from Wall Street, who is part of Wall Street, we know from past experience will protect Wall Street at the SEC—the wrong thing to do. From his background, his answers to the questions in the committee's hearing and questions for the record, I am not convinced that Mr. Clayton comes close to being the best person for the job. I will oppose his nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

AGRICULTURE

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, the past 8 years have been tough on Americans. Despite the fact that the recession officially ended in June of 2009, the economy never really rebounded. President Obama presided over the weakest economic recovery in 60 years. His Presidency was characterized by poor economic growth, a dearth of jobs and opportunities, and almost nonexistent wage increases.

In 2016, the economy grew at a dismal 1.6 percent, far below the level of growth displayed by a healthy economy. Typically 3 to 3½ percent is the average, going back to World War II. The GDP report for the first quarter of this year underscored the need to implement the kind of pro-growth policies that were lacking during the Obama years. Republicans in Congress and the White House have already acted to repeal a number of burdensome Obama regulations that were foisted onto the American people near the end of his Presidency. We plan to keep up our efforts.

Getting rid of unnecessary regulations will go a long way toward freeing up businesses to grow and create jobs and put more money in Americans pockets. Of course, repealing burdensome regulations is just one of the things we need to get our economy healthy again. Fixing our broken Tax Code is another. As a member of the tax-writing Senate Finance Committee, I will be introducing tax reform legislation in the near future, targeted primarily for Main Street businesses that pay taxes at the individual rate.

I am looking forward to working on comprehensive tax reform with Chairman HATCH and the rest of my colleagues on the Finance Committee as we move forward this year. It is critical that passthrough businesses, which are the main focus of my bill, are not left behind in this effort.

Today, I want to talk about spurring growth in a specific sector of our economy, one that is very important to my home state; that is, the agricultural sector. Like so many other Americans, farmers and ranchers in South Dakota and across the country have had a rough time of it over the past few years. Market prices for farm and ranch products have been on a steady decline since 2013, and net farm income has dropped substantially as a result of that. Worse, there is little expectation that prices will improve over the next few years, which means farmers' and ranchers' incomes are likely to continue to decrease.

Farmers are struggling to repay their debts. Between 2014 and 2016, the delinquency rates on farm non-real estate loans more than doubled. Delinquencies on farm real estate loans rose from $1.18 billion in 2014 to $1.66 billion in 2016. While these numbers are not all-time highs, the increases are disturbing and show no signs of reversing any time soon.

Farming and ranching are not just careers in South Dakota; they are a way of life, one that connects communities and families to the land and one generation to the next. Nearly 3,000 South Dakota farm families have been honored as operating century farms, meaning the same family has operated at least 80 acres of that farm for 100 years or more. But in today's weak agricultural economy, many families are afraid they will be the ones to lose the farm or ranch that has been in their family for generations. That would be a loss not just for them but for our country.

Few of us understand the sacrifices that go into this way of life. When we pick up a gallon of milk or a loaf of bread at the grocery store, we don't think of the farmer who rose long before the Sun and finished his day long after the Sun had set. Our country is made stronger by the hard work, fierce dedication, and unconquerable spirit of America's farmers.

We need to make a concerted effort to help farmers meet the challenges they are facing right now so that America can continue to help feed the world and Americans can continue to have access to the home-grown products they depend upon.

So how do we do that? One thing we can do that would immediately improve agricultural prices would be to quickly negotiate new bilateral trade agreements. Agriculture is heavily dependent upon trade, and in today's economic climate, we cannot afford to have our agricultural exports restricted by inadequate trade policies.

U.S. farmers have lost ground internationally. Our current share of the global grain market is just 30 percent, down from 65 percent in the mid-1970s. We need to take steps to level the playing field for American farmers and ranchers so they can be more competitive internationally. I have encouraged the President to start by negotiating a bilateral trade agreement with Japan.

Japan is one of our most important trading partners, but U.S. farmers too often face hefty tariffs on the products they sell in Japan. U.S. negotiators made important progress toward reducing these barriers during the Trans-Pacific Partnership negotiations.

We need to build on the work they did and negotiate a bilateral agreement with Japan as soon as possible. This would benefit a wide variety of American producers, including South Dakota beef producers who currently face a massive 38.5-percent tariff on the beef they sell in Japan.

Trade agreements would help tremendously, but there is more we need to do to ensure the long-term sustainability of production agriculture in the United States.

Every 5 years, Congress has the opportunity to reset Federal farm policy when it passes the farm bill. The current farm bill expires in 2018, and it is not too early to start the drafting process for the next bill.

I served on the Agriculture Committee in the House and now serve on the Senate Agriculture Committee under the strong leadership of my friend from Kansas, Chairmanship PAT ROBERTS. I will be working on my fourth farm bill, and I take this responsibility very seriously.

I spend a lot of time talking to farmers and ranchers while I am back home in South Dakota, and I have been developing legislation based on the feedback they give me about Federal programs. I have already introduced two key proposals that I hope will be part of the final farm bill that we pass next year, and I will be introducing several more farm bill legislative proposals this year.

All farmers are familiar with the Conservation Reserve Program, or CRP, which provides incentives for farmers to take environmentally sensitive land out of production for 10 to 15 years. But a lot of farmers have told me that they don't want to retire portions of their land for a decade or more. To address this, I am proposing a new program that would reduce operating costs by providing a modest rental payment and increasing crop insurance premium discounts.

The program I am proposing, the Soil Health and Income Protection Program, would provide a new, short-term option for farmers that would allow them to take their worst performing cropland out of production for 3 to 5 years, instead of the 10 to 15 years required by CRP rules. This program would result in improved soil health and reduced crop insurance costs, and it would provide beneficial areas for wildlife while also improving the bottom line for participating farms.

The other key proposal I have introduced would make a number of revisions and management improvements to the CRP program and other U.S. Department of Agriculture easement programs.

CRP plays a very significant role in South Dakota's economy, as it provides a major portion of the habitat for the Chinese ringneck pheasant, which brings more than $250 million each year to my State's rural areas, towns, and cities. Unfortunately, farmers have spent years frustrated by some of the ways the Department of Agriculture has managed this program.

We need to make sure that Federal farm programs don't discourage farmers and ranchers from participating, especially in times like these, when these programs are sorely needed to provide valuable safety net assistance and to help protect soil and water.

My conservation program legislation addresses major concerns that farmers have with CRP and other USDA conservation programs by allowing commonsense use and management of land enrolled in these programs, which improves these programs for farmers and at the same time saves taxpayers' money.

My legislation also expands the CRP acreage cap by 25 percent and uses historical acreage averages to make sure CRP will be available in States that have used it and that need it the most. Above all, the acres enrolled in CRP and other easement programs must be effectively used and managed to maximize their usefulness and effectiveness for land and water conservation and wildlife, and I will work to make that happen.

In addition, both of my legislative proposals contain provisions to provide additional support to young, beginning, and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, as well as to military veterans. We need to ensure that young and beginning farmers and ranchers and others have opportunities to succeed, especially now, when even seasoned farmers are struggling.

Along with trade agreements and the farm bill, there are other things we can do to help farmers and ranchers and small businesses. This year, we plan to take up major reform of our broken, bloated Tax Code. Making sure that we consider the needs of farmers and ranchers during this debate will be one of my priorities.

We can also help farmers and ranchers by removing burdensome government regulations that do little to help the environment but force farmers to spend untold hours and dollars on compliance.

One example of this kind of burdensome regulation is the so-called waters of the United States rule, something with which every farmer and rancher is familiar. This EPA regulation improperly used the Clean Water Act to justify expanding the EPA's regulatory authority to waters like small wetlands, creeks, stock ponds, and ditches. The rule specifically targeted the Prairie Pothole Region, which covers five States, including nearly all of eastern South Dakota. I am grateful that the President chose to protect farmers and ranchers by announcing a review of this rule in February of this year.

We could further support American farmers by removing yet another unnecessary regulatory hurdle, and that is the Reid vapor pressure regulation, which restricts the sale of E15 fuel during the summer driving season.

Providing a waiver for E15, as enjoyed by other fuels, is a bipartisan, no-cost way to roll back regulation and grant consumers real choice at the pumps, as well as to help our farmers.

Our Nation and the world depend on American farmers and ranchers. We need to make sure they can sustain their operations and continue to efficiently feed America and the world.

I look forward to continuing our work on tax, trade, regulatory, and farm bill policies that support farmers and ranchers in South Dakota and throughout our country.

When agriculture does well, I would argue, our national economy does well.

I yield the floor.

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

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

MONTANA AG SUMMIT

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, I have some good news from Montana. A week ago yesterday, the U.S. Senate voted to confirm former Georgia Governor Sonny Perdue to be our next Secretary of Agriculture. When we met prior to his confirmation hearing, Secretary Perdue and I discussed Montana ag and the need to expand agricultural access to foreign markets. I know he will prioritize the ag industry during his time in office, and I am pleased to share that I will be hosting the Secretary in Montana for the Montana Ag Summit that is going to be held in Great Falls at the end of this month.

Back in March, during the Secretary's confirmation hearing, I extended an invitation to join us in Montana's Golden Triangle as we discuss the issue of strengthening international relationships for Montana's agriculture. The Golden Triangle is where my great-great-grandmother homesteaded as she moved from Minnesota—a Norwegian immigrant—to Montana.

At the Ag Summit, we will showcase the technological advancements that are changing the way we produce crops and livestock, promote the next generation of ag producers, and discuss the challenges ag producers face as a result of our Federal policies and regulations. The Montana Ag Summit will bring together leaders from across the agricultural industry to hear from our keynote speakers, which include Secretary Perdue and my colleague and friend and the chairman of the U.S. Senate Ag Committee, Senator PAT ROBERTS from Kansas. Nothing takes the place of hearing directly from Montanans and seeing our great State with your own eyes.

I have been a strong advocate for Montana ag since coming to Washington, DC, and it is a privilege to serve as Montana's only representative on the U.S. Senate Ag Committee. Whenever I get the chance, I talk about Montana's ag industry and advocate for regulation reform and for additional opportunities for our ag producers to compete on a level playing field.

Another critical issue for farmers and ranchers in Montana and around the Nation is opening up more market opportunities for the ag industry. In fact, earlier this past month, 38 of my colleagues and I wrote to President Trump asking him to prioritize reopening China's markets to U.S. beef in his discussions with Chinese President Xi Jinping. China is Montana's third leading trade partner after Canada and South Korea.

It is important to remember that 95 percent of the world's consumers live outside of the United States. While the Chinese ban on U.S. beef imports was lifted last fall, more needs to be done to actually see U.S. beef on the shelves of Chinese grocery stores. You see, China is the second largest beef import market in the world.

I can say it was an honor to personally present some of Miles City's famous and finest beef to Chinese Premier Li Keqiang from Fred Wacker's ranch out of Miles City. I will get Montana beef in China if I have to take it over myself.

Montana's No. 1 industry and economic driver is agriculture. With over 27,000 farms in the State, Montana ag is nearly $5 billion strong. By the way, Montana is now the leading pulse crop producer in the Nation.

Last week, President Trump unveiled his tax reform plan, which, among many proposals, includes a full repeal of the death tax—a full, permanent repeal of the death tax. This is a tax that directly impacts many Montana farm and ranch families. In fact, I heard a story from a Montana rancher a couple of weeks ago of his having the sudden, unexpected passing of his mother and his father. It is a multigenerational ranch operation in Montana that had a huge tax liability—in the millions of dollars—that it had to pay to the IRS because of the death tax.

I have been calling for a repeal of the death tax since I first came to Washington, DC—one of the most immoral taxes on the books—because I understand how these taxes can cause family farms and family ranches to break up and to be sold off.

The bottom line is this. You cannot feed a nation without farmers and

ranchers, and you cannot have opportunity economies without actual opportunities to meet the needs of not only our State, of not only our Nation but of the world.

As the U.S. Congress and the Trump administration continue to work together, I am excited to see that ag is a priority. I look forward to working with my colleagues in the U.S. Senate, as well as in the Trump administration, to advance policies and solutions to the barriers that our Nation's ag producers face, and I really look forward to the upcoming Montana Ag Summit in Great Falls later this month.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HOEVEN). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MENENDEZ. 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. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I rise today to speak in opposition to the confirmation of Jay Clayton as Chair of the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission.

Just 100 days into the Trump administration, the truth is becoming crystal clear to the American people: There is no ''America first'' policy, and there certainly is no ''middle class first'' policy. There is just one policy, and that is a ''Wall Street first'' policy. It is a policy designed to steer even more wealth and more power to those who are plenty wealthy and plenty powerful, a policy built on the misguided view that our economy does better when banks do as they please, when CEOs receive runaway pay, and when bigger profits never translate into bigger paychecks for workers. That is why we have seen no Executive orders designed to hold big banks accountable, no Executive orders designed to protect borrowers from abusive student loan companies, no Executive orders helping more workers save for retirement. Instead, we see the administration rolling back protections for consumers and students and seniors, actively exploring how to put taxpayers back on the hook for Wall Street's recklessness, and ordering oversight agencies to, quite simply, conduct less oversight.

There is no greater example of the Trump administration's ''Wall Street first'' policy than its decision to nominate Jay Clayton as the Chair of the Securities and Exchange Commission.

The SEC is our Federal Government's cop on the Wall Street beat. And let's remember why we have a Securities and Exchange Commission and why it needs to be the cop on the beat. In 1929, the stock market crashed, and our Nation was sent into a deep and devastating depression. That is why President Franklin Roosevelt signed financial reforms into law aimed at curbing rampant speculation and risky behavior on Wall Street, and the creation of the Securities and Exchange Commission was one of those reforms.

The SEC was designed to enact safeguards and promote fairness in our markets, to protect investors and prosecute fraud, and to ensure that our businesses have access to capital so they can grow and create jobs. When we have a watchdog ensuring that everyone plays by the rules, risk is more distributed, markets are more stable, and capital is more available.

The American people know all too well what happens when we take our eyes off of Wall Street. Not even a decade has passed since the worst financial collapse in 80 years put taxpayers on the line for billions of dollars—billions of dollars—in bailouts.

In the years leading up to the crash, our regulators, including the SEC, turned a blind eye to excessive risk-taking and corporate misconduct. We needed a cop on the beat, but instead we had a regulator asleep at the switch. As a result, we suffered a crisis that cost 8.5 million Americans their jobs and 10 million Americans their homes—8.5 million Americans their jobs and 10 million Americans their homes—a crisis that destroyed $19 trillion in household wealth and left small businesses devastated nationwide, a crisis that sank local and State governments into a sea of red ink. And, of course, it left us with the great recession. It took us years to dig this economy out of that ditch. Now, after all we have been through, is it really time to go easier on Wall Street?

Since the financial crisis, the SEC has been instrumental in reshaping the rules of the road and holding corporation wrongdoers accountable. Now, less than a decade since that devastating crisis, this administration wants to give the keys to the castle to one of Wall Street's most loyal guardians.

We need someone at the helm willing to root out bad behavior in our financial sector, but Mr. Clayton is not that someone. He is no expert in enforcing the law. Indeed, Mr. Clayton has made a career out of fighting the SEC and other financial regulators on behalf of Wall Street's biggest institutions. His resume is built around defending Wall Street's most notorious offenders from ever being held accountable.

Let me again remind my colleagues that the SEC was not created to be Wall Street's support group in Washington. Investors and the American public at large deserve an SEC Chair who will fight to hold firms accountable, who will prosecute misconduct and wrongdoing, and who will improve investor protections. Mr. Clayton has not met that burden.

There are three reasons why I am concerned that an SEC led by Mr. Clayton would be an SEC that bends the rules for corporations and ignores the needs of hard-working Americans.

First is Mr. Clayton's singular focus on corporate bottom lines. When asked to lay out his vision for the agency, Mr. Clayton offered no path to preventing another financial crisis. He provided no commitment to strengthening the agency's enforcement abilities, and he callously overlooked investor protections. Mr. Clayton failed to give an iota of support to anything other than boosting corporate bottom lines. He spoke exclusively about reducing compliance and registration costs for companies, and that is all fine, but not at the expense of critical investor protections and of healthy, stable, and fair markets for the economy at large.

Let's remember why this is important. Without strong protections and disclosures, we will sacrifice investor confidence. And when we sacrifice investor confidence, less capital will flow through our markets. When less capital flows through markets, businesses will struggle to grow and to innovate. In other words, a stable and fair financial sector is vital to our economy as a whole.

My second concern involves Mr. Clayton's potential conflicts of interest. Mr. Clayton has spent his entire career representing big players on Wall Street before, during, and after the crisis. His work has undoubtedly produced many conflicts of interest. As a result, Mr. Clayton will be forced to sit out of numerous important decisions integral to the role of the SEC Chair. This is a problem because the SEC currently has just two Commissioners. The absence of Mr. Clayton could very well undermine the agency's ability to prosecute wrongdoing on Wall Street.

Finally, I was alarmed by Mr. Clayton's refusal to answer any questions of substance during his confirmation hearing.

When asked if he would implement congressionally mandated rules, like the provision I wrote into Dodd-Frank requiring corporations to disclose how much money CEOs make in comparison to their employees, Mr. Clayton gave no straight answer.

When asked if he would fairly consider the 1.2 million comments—the greatest number of comments ever received on any SEC rulemaking process by the SEC—urging that companies disclose their political spending, Mr. Clayton gave no straight answer.

Finally, when asked if he would restore the subpoena power of the SEC attorneys so that they can initiate investigations, Mr. Clayton showed his true colors. When it comes to enforcement at the SEC, he said we had to be ''mindful that even the commencement of an investigation can have significant adverse impacts'' on public companies. So instead of explaining his vision as SEC's Chair and the SEC's role as a cop on the beat, he said the agency should consider a company's bottom line before investigating potential wrongdoing. This, to me, is in essence what defines this nominee's approach and this administration's approach: Wall Street profits that prevail over Main Street protections, no matter the risks

posed to the American people. It is precisely this kind of thinking that made our system too vulnerable to a financial crisis of epic proportions.

Given Mr. Clayton's inability and refusal to answer basic questions about important issues—like whether he would restore the authority of the Securities and Exchange Enforcement Division or implement the CEO-to-worker pay ratio rule mandated by Congress or require disclosure of corporate political spending—1.2 million citizen comments, the greatest in the history of the SEC—or ensure that retail investors receive advice that is in their best interests—I can't help but conclude that Mr. Clayton appears best suited to continue representing Wall Street rather than to working on behalf of the American people.

The President's nomination of Mr. Clayton is a bow to Wall Street and a cold shoulder to hard-working, middle-class families. I will not be voting for his confirmation.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I rise in opposition to the nomination of Jay Clayton to be Chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission, SEC.

Mr. Clayton has achieved great personal success as a corporate attorney, where for years he represented some of our Nation's largest financial institutions, such as Bear Stearns, Lehman Brothers, and Goldman Sachs. Personal success is not the same as being willing to safeguard the interests of all who participate in and rely on our capital markets, especially working-class Americans, as I believe a good SEC Chairman must. Based on Mr. Clayton's testimony and his answers to my questions and those of my colleagues on the Banking Committee, I am unable to support his confirmation.

As more and more working-class Americans know, pensions are becoming rarer, and more American families, assuming they even have extra money to spare from their paychecks, must invest in securities to save for retirement or send their kids to college. The integrity and efficiency of our capital markets then are not only of great importance to the megabanks and tycoon investors, but also to working-class Americans.

It is therefore in all of our interests to have strong and vigilant Federal financial regulators who can help ensure we avoid another financial crisis. While the megabanks have bounced back after staring into the abyss, the last financial crisis, which began in the Bush administration, had devastating consequences on working-class Americans, too many of whom lost their jobs, their nest eggs, and their homes. While the Dow Jones Industrial Average has recovered, the impacts are still felt by too many in Rhode Island and throughout the country.

While it is vitally important to help small businesses raise capital and grow their companies by actually creating jobs here in the United States, it is also equally essential that we have a strong cop on the beat that upholds and improves the integrity of our capital markets.

Initially, I was encouraged to read in Mr. Clayton's testimony before the Senate Banking Committee that ''there is zero room for bad actors in our capital markets'' and that ''I am 100 percent committed to rooting out any fraud and shady practices in our financial system.''

During his confirmation hearing, I asked Mr. Clayton if he would support my bipartisan legislation with Senator GRASSLEY that would deter fraud by increasing the statutory limits on civil monetary penalties. Our legislation responds to former SEC Chair Mary Shapiro's statement that ''the Commission's statutory authority to obtain civil monetary penalties with appropriate deterrent effect is limited in many circumstances.'' In his response to me, Mr. Clayton said, ''I am very willing to take a look at the issue and work with you on it and give you my views after I've been better educated on it.'' I accepted this response for the time being and wrote to Mr. Clayton after the hearing to ask for his thoughts on this matter now that he had time to study the issue.

He responded: ''As a general matter, I believe that the effective empowerment and functioning of the SEC Enforcement Division are fundamental to the fair and efficient functioning of our markets and the protection of investors. Under existing law, the Commission has the authority to seek civil monetary penalties in a number of circumstances. I would not want the Division or Commission to be unnecessarily or inappropriately constrained in pursuing civil monetary penalties, which can serve an important deterrent effect in appropriate circumstances. If confirmed as Chair, I will work with my fellow Commissioners and the Enforcement Division staff to enforce the law as it is written, including with respect to civil monetary penalties. I also would be willing to engage with Congress regarding any changes to the SEC's statutory authority to seek monetary penalties that Congress deems appropriate.''

I am glad Mr. Clayton agrees that penalties can serve as deterrents, and I appreciate the fact that Mr. Clayton would not want the SEC to be ''unnecessarily or inappropriately constrained in pursuing civil monetary penalties.'' Indeed, what appears to be constraining the SEC in part is exactly what former Chair Schapiro said, that penalty limits are not high enough to serve as effective deterrents. Given this, I do not understand Mr. Clayton's hesitation in clearly supporting my bipartisan legislation with Senator GRASSLEY. This does not sound like a 100 percent commitment to ''rooting out any fraud and shady practices in our financial system.''

This is just one example, but based on a review of his record and his responses to the committee's questions, I am not confident Mr. Clayton will vigorously work to protect all investors, in the same way as he throughout his career has defended the interests of his corporate and megabank clients, particularly when those interests may come into conflict, as we know they will. In my opinion, there should be no question of an SEC chairman's willingness to stand up and fight for working-class Americans and mom-and-pop investors.

Indeed, as Senator BROWN, the ranking member of the Senate Banking Committee, has stated himself, ''it's not the first time we've seen a nominee like Mr. Clayton. I was concerned about Mary Jo White's conflicts and corporate law background. She was conflicted in dozens of high-profile cases, and then a month after stepping down as Chair, she returned to her old law firm. As a lawyer might say—that's bad precedent.''

What we need is a strong SEC Chair that will vigorously protect and defend the interests of all American investors. I hope he proves me wrong, but based on the record before me, I am not convinced Mr. Clayton is up to this task, and therefore, I cannot vote to confirm him.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, I oppose the confirmation of Jay Clayton to be a member of the Securities and Exchange Commission.

When the stock market crashed in 1929, public confidence in the markets plummeted as well. Investors large and small lost their life's savings. Congress responded with laws to help rebuild public faith in the markets. Thus in the wake of the Great Depression, Congress created the Securities and Exchange Commission to protect investors and maintain fair, orderly, and efficient markets.

Congress designed the SEC to see that investors and the markets have reliable information and clear rules for honest dealing. The SEC's job is to make sure that brokers, dealers, and exchanges put investors' interests first. The SEC ensures that companies offering securities for investment tell the public the truth about their businesses, the securities they are selling, and the risks involved.

Congress took pains to create the SEC to have some distance from Wall Street. The law provides that no Commissioner can engage in any business or employment other than serving as Commissioner. The law prohibits any Commissioner from participating in any stock transactions of a type that the Commission regulates.

Mr. Clayton has extensive experience working in capital markets. He has represented a long list of financial firms. His numerous conflicts may make him captive to the industry that President Trump nominated him to police. One of his better-known clients is Goldman Sachs. The Department of Justice found that Goldman Sachs falsely assured investors that sound

mortgages backed securities that Goldman sold, when Goldman knew that these securities were full of mortgages that were likely to fail.

During his confirmation hearing, I asked Mr. Clayton about Goldman Sachs' $5 billion settlement with the Department of Justice. I asked Mr. Clayton if he felt that Goldman Sachs had been engaged in shady practices, but Mr. Clayton said only that he felt the case stood on its own. I cannot comprehend why Mr. Clayton demurred on this topic. We should all be able to agree that if a firm pays $5 billion in a settlement, it was engaged in shady practices, to say the least.

Duriing Mr. Clayton's confirmation hearing, he said that he is ''100 percent committed to rooting out any fraud and shady practices in our financial system.'' If he is confirmed, I hope he stands by that pledge.

The SEC, investors, and the American people need an independent voice. They need a politically independent voice, as well as a voice that can be independent enough to make tough enforcement decisions about the financial firms it regulates. I have serious doubts that Mr. Clayton can be that voice; thus I oppose his nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING LEGISLATION

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, I rise to talk about the short-term budget resolution we will be voting on within the next couple of days and a quote the President made this morning.

The bipartisan agreement we are going to tackle on the floor to extend the Federal budget past the CR deadline through the end of September is salutary. It is salutary because the two Houses worked together to find an agreement.

I can see things in the agreement I like, and I can see things in the agreement I don't like. That is the nature of budget agreements. My principal disappointment with the agreement is that we should have done it in December. I will actually give credit to my Senate colleagues on both sides of the aisle. We were ready to do this deal in December. The Appropriations Committees in both Houses had met. We were ready to do a deal that would then give everybody in government—but, more importantly, all of our citizens and all of our businesses—some certainty about what would happen between that vote in December and the end of the fiscal year, September 30.

The incoming administration, not yet in office, dispatched the Vice President and others to the Hill and said: Don't do a budget. Don't do the omnibus bill. We want to have the ability to work on it ourselves.

I think this was against the better judgment of both sides in the Senate. A decision was made: We won't do an omnibus bill in December. We recessed on the 10th. We had plenty of time to get work done. Instead, we would do a CR through April 28.

I think my colleagues were right to want to do it in December. Nevertheless, we put everybody through the hoops of this: Is there going to be a shutdown, or what are we going to do?

Now, apparently, we will have a deal. We will discuss it, and I hope we will vote in favor of it.

We could have gotten the same deal in December. We would have given people more certainty. They could have adjusted. We could have not frightened people about a shutdown and done other productive work. Nevertheless, we have a deal which I plan to support.

But I was very interested this morning—very interested and, I will be blunt, very disturbed—with the President's words. At 8:07 this morning, he put out a tweet about the deal, about a bipartisan deal reached by two Republican Houses, with Democrats included—as we ought to be, because we represent a lot of the American public. This is the quote:

> Either elect more Republican Senators in 2018 or change the rules now to 51%. Our country needs a good ''shutdown'' in September to fix mess!

So what I want to talk about today is whether there is a good shutdown of the government of the United States—whether there is such a thing as a good shutdown. Is it right for the President of the United States to hope for a good shutdown of the government of the greatest Nation on Earth?

I can't imagine that a CEO—any CEO we would admire—would call for a shutdown of his own company. That is what President Trump now is. He is the Commander in Chief and the Chief Executive of the government of the greatest Nation on Earth. He apparently believes there could be a good shutdown of this government in September.

I want to take us back to the fall of 2013. In the fall of 2013, the government was shut down for about 16 days in October. It was my first year as a Senator. That was bad. It was bad in Virginia, a State with 170,000 Federal employees, who didn't know whether or not there would be work to do, when they would return to work, or whether they would be paid for those days. It was bad for veterans whose claims to get a disability benefit were already too backed up and who couldn't get their calls and questions answered. It was bad for veterans whose requests for medical appointments were already too backed up and, in the uncertainty of a shutdown, they didn't know when they would be resolved. It was in October, which is the high season of tourism in Virginia. It was bad for one of my smallest communities, Accomack County, on the Eastern Shore of Virginia, which is adjacent to the Chincoteague National Seashore. They count on October tourism as a huge part of their local economy, but when the Federal parks shut down, it was bad for their economy. It was bad for economies near Shenandoah National Park to have that park shut down in the heart of fall leaf season, which is the time they count on to help their small businesses succeed. It was bad for people on military bases, when DOD civilians were being furloughed—civilians like nurses at hospitals, and childcare workers who provide childcare to military families on military bases. They didn't know when they would be reopening. I see nothing good about a shutdown of the Government of the United States.

In fact, it was the first Republican President in the address at Gettysburg who said: The question that we always have to grapple with is whether government by, of, and for the people shall perish from the Earth. I think the answer to that question is that it should not perish from the Earth—not for a year, not for a month, not for a week, not for a day, not for an hour. There should not be a shutdown of the government of the United States. There is no such thing as a good shutdown.

So I just wanted to come to the floor today and be very, very blunt. On behalf of anybody in Virginia and in this country who is afraid of how a government shutdown could impact them or their communities; on behalf of troops, veterans, military families, and members of our Department of Defense who keep us safe every day; on behalf of veterans who fought for this country and who need the Federal Government to cut the backlog on disability claims or medical appointments at the VA; on behalf of every senior citizen or disabled person who has a case awaiting resolution by Social Security or Medicare or CMS; on behalf of 170,000 Federal employees living in Virginia and the people and communities they serve; on behalf of cities and counties around Virginia that rely on Federal support for infrastructure projects, economic development assistance, opioid prevention efforts, export promotion, and so many other critical programs; on behalf of Virginians struggling with disease and illness who pray for lifesaving cures developed through federally funded medical research; on behalf of our dynamic businesses and all of their workers, who need certainty from Washington in order to create jobs and expand the economy; on behalf of Virginia students and families who rely on Head Start Programs or rely on federally funded work study programs so they can work their way through college; on behalf of all Virginians and all Americans who deserve to have clean water, breathable air, beautiful open space, safe food and drugs, violence-free communities, a functional immigration system, and protection from cyber threats; and on behalf of the reputation of this Nation and the values that we proudly claim as American values, I will do anything and everything in my power as a U.S. Senator to stop any Trump shutdown, to stop any good shutdown of the government of the greatest Nation on this Earth, either now or during September or during the remainder of his term. I call on all of my colleagues to take a similar pledge.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

SPACE WEATHER RESEARCH AND FORECASTING ACT

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, I rise today to ask for Senate approval of legislation that I sponsored, along with my friend and colleague from across the aisle, Senator CORY GARDNER of Colorado.

Earlier this year, we introduced the Space Weather Research and Forecasting Act with Senators Booker, Wicker, and Klobuchar, and it went on to pass unanimously by the full Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation in January.

Space weather, which includes solar flares and coronal mass ejections caused by the constantly changing conditions in the Sun's magnetic fields, regularly hurls ionized gas toward the Earth. This can potentially devastate our infrastructure and significantly disrupt our economy. The chances of Earth being hit by a severe space weather event are roughly the same as a magnitude 8 earthquake striking the United States, but the impact to our way of life would be absolutely catastrophic.

According to NASA, Earth was narrowly missed by a large space weather event in 2012, which could have resulted in a worst-case scenario impact to Earth. A report by Lloyd's of London estimates that a worst-case scenario space weather event could cost up to $2.6 trillion and impact as many as 40 million people by causing outages at electric utilities, disrupting GPS communication networks, and forcing airlines to reroute air traffic.

The potential disruption to these critical sectors of our economy makes space weather a threat we must understand better. Scientists across the globe, including in my home State of Michigan, are working to improve our understanding of space weather and how outputs from the Sun interact with the Earth's magnetic field and atmosphere. For years, NASA, NOAA, the National Science Foundation, and the Department of Defense have funded this critical research.

The work of scientists and engineers at these agencies and universities across the country will help us better predict solar events and improve our ability to protect the infrastructure of the United States. But as we increasingly realize the magnitude of this threat, we need national leadership to focus our resources, coordinate planning, and prepare for space weather events.

This bipartisan legislation sets national priorities to increase and improve space weather observations, science, and forecasting abilities. This research will improve our efforts to predict and to mitigate the effects of space weather events on Earth and in space.

Space weather is not science fiction. If we don't prepare ourselves, the impact could be catastrophic. But by learning to make better predictions, issue more effective warnings, and take precautions for when that inevitable day comes to pass, we can prevent space weather from wreaking costly havoc or disrupting our daily lives.

It is imperative that we invest in science and technologies to better understand space weather. It is imperative that we act on that knowledge and understanding to protect our critical infrastructure. It is, therefore, imperative that we move quickly to sign into law the Space Weather Research and Forecasting Act.

As in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 29, S. 141.

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

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 141) to improve understanding and forecasting of space weather events, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Space Weather Research and Forecasting Act''.

SEC. 2. SPACE WEATHER.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle VI of title 51, United States Code, is amended by adding after chapter 605 the following:

''CHAPTER 607—SPACE WEATHER

''60701. Space weather.
''60702. Observations and forecasting.
''60703. Research and technology.
''60704. Space weather data.

''§ 60701. Space weather

''(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

''(1) Space weather events pose a significant threat to humans working in the space environment and to modern technological systems.

''(2) The effects of severe space weather events on the electric power grid, satellites and satellite communications and information, airline operations, astronauts living and working in space, and space-based position, navigation, and timing systems could have significant societal, economic, national security, and health impacts.

''(3) Earth and space observations provide crucial data necessary to predict and warn about space weather events.

''(4) Clear roles and accountability of Federal departments and agencies are critical for an efficient and effective response to threats posed by space weather.

''(5) In October 2015, the National Science and Technology Council published a National Space Weather Strategy and a National Space Weather Action Plan seeking to integrate national space weather efforts and add new capabilities to meet increasing demand for space weather information.

''(b) FEDERAL AGENCY ROLES.—

''(1) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

''(A) the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration provides operational space weather forecasting and monitoring for civil applications, maintains ground and space-based assets to provide observations needed for forecasting, prediction, and warnings, and develops requirements for space weather forecasting technologies and science;

''(B) the Department of Defense provides operational space weather forecasting, monitoring, and research for the department's unique missions and applications;

''(C) the National Aeronautics and Space Administration provides increased understanding of the fundamental physics of the Sun-Earth system through space-based observations and modeling, develops new space-based technologies and missions, and monitors space weather for NASA's space missions;

''(D) the National Science Foundation provides increased understanding of the Sun-Earth system through ground-based measurements, technologies, and modeling;

''(E) the Department of the Interior collects, distributes, and archives operational ground-based magnetometer data in the United States and its territories, and works with the international community to improve global geophysical monitoring and develops crustal conductivity models to assess and mitigate risk from space weather induced electric ground currents; and

''(F) the Federal Aviation Administration provides operational requirements for space weather services in support of aviation and for coordination of these requirements with the International Civil Aviation Organization, integrates space weather data and products into the Next Generation Air Transportation System, and conducts real-time monitoring of the charged particle radiation environment to protect the health and safety of crew and passengers during space weather events.

''(2) OFFICE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY POLICY.—The Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy shall—

''(A) coordinate the development and implementation of Federal Government activities to improve the Nation's ability to prepare, avoid, mitigate, respond to, and recover from potentially devastating impacts of space weather events; and

''(B) coordinate the activities of the space weather interagency working group established under subsection (c).

''(c) SPACE WEATHER INTERAGENCY WORKING GROUP.—In order to continue coordination of executive branch efforts to understand, prepare, coordinate, and plan for space weather, the National Science and Technology Council shall establish an interagency working group on space weather.

''(d) MEMBERSHIP.—In order to understand and respond to the adverse effects of space weather, the interagency working group established under subsection (c) shall leverage capabilities across participating Federal agencies, including—

''(1) the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration;

''(2) the National Aeronautics and Space Administration;

''(3) the National Science Foundation;

''(4) the Department of Defense;

''(5) the Department of the Interior;

''(6) the Department of Homeland Security;

''(7) the Department of Energy;

''(8) the Department of Transportation, including the Federal Aviation Administration; and

''(9) the Department of State.

''(e) INTERAGENCY AGREEMENTS.—

''(1) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the interagency collaboration between the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration on terrestrial weather observations provides—

''(A) an effective mechanism for improving weather and climate data collection while avoiding unnecessary duplication of capabilities across Federal agencies; and

''(B) an agency collaboration model that could benefit space weather observations.

''(2) INTERAGENCY AGREEMENTS.—The Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration shall enter into one or more interagency agreements providing for cooperation and collaboration in the development of space weather spacecraft, instruments, and technologies in accordance with this chapter.

''§ 60702. Observations and forecasting

''(a) POLICY.—It is the policy of the United States to establish and sustain a baseline capability for space weather observations.

''(b) INTEGRATED STRATEGY.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy, in coordination with the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the Director of the National Science Foundation, and the Secretary of Defense, and in consultation with the academic and commercial communities, shall develop an integrated strategy for solar and solar wind observations beyond the lifetime of current assets, that considers—

''(A) the provision of solar wind measurements and other measurements essential to space weather forecasting; and

''(B) the provision of solar and space weather measurements important for scientific purposes.

''(2) CONSIDERATIONS.—In developing the strategy under paragraph (1), the Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy shall consider small satellite options, hosted payloads, commercial options, international options, and prize authority.

''(c) CRITICAL OBSERVATIONS.—In order to sustain current space-based observational capabilities, the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration shall—

''(1) in cooperation with the European Space Agency, maintain operations of the Solar and Heliospheric Observatory/Large Angle and Spectrometric Coronagraph (referred to in this section as 'SOHO/LASCO') for as long as the satellite continues to deliver quality observations; and

''(2) prioritize the reception of LASCO data.

''(d) ADDITIONAL CAPABILITY FOR SOLAR IMAGING.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration shall secure reliable secondary capability for near real-time coronal mass ejection imagery.

''(2) OPTIONS.—The Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, in coordination with the Secretary of Defense and the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, shall develop options to build and deploy one or more instruments for near real-time coronal mass ejection imagery.

''(3) CONSIDERATIONS.—In developing options under paragraph (2), the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration shall consider commercial solutions, prize authority, academic and international partnerships, microsatellites, ground-based instruments, and opportunities to deploy the instrument or instruments as a secondary payload on an upcoming planned launch.

''(4) COSTS.—In implementing paragraph (1), the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration shall prioritize a cost-effective solution.

''(5) OPERATIONAL PLANNING.—The Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration shall develop an operational contingency plan to provide continuous space weather forecasting in the event of a SOHO/LASCO failure.

''(6) BRIEFING.—Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of the Space Weather Research and Forecasting Act, the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration shall provide a briefing to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives on the options for building and deploying the instrument or instruments described in paragraph (2) and the operational contingency plan developed under paragraph (5).

''(e) FOLLOW-ON SPACE-BASED OBSERVATIONS.—The Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, in coordination with the Secretary of Defense, shall develop requirements and a plan for follow-on space-based observations for operational purposes, in accordance with the integrated strategy developed under subsection (b).

''(f) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of the Space Weather Research and Forecasting Act, the Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives a report on the integrated strategy under subsection (b), including the plans for follow-on space-based observations under subsection (e).

''(g) GROUND-BASED OBSERVATIONS.—The National Science Foundation, the Air Force, and where practicable in support of the Air Force, the Navy shall each—

''(1) maintain and improve, as necessary and advisable, ground-based observations of the Sun in order to help meet the priorities identified in section 60703(a); and

''(2) provide space weather data by means of its set of ground-based facilities, including radars, lidars, magnetometers, radio receivers, aurora and airglow imagers, spectrometers, interferometers, and solar observatories.

''(h) GROUND-BASED OBSERVATIONS DATA.—The National Science Foundation shall—

''(1) provide key data streams from the platforms described in subsection (g) for research and to support space weather model development;

''(2) develop experimental models for scientific purposes; and

''(3) support the transition of the experimental models to operations where appropriate.

''§ 60703. Research and technology

''(a) USER NEEDS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Secretary of the Air Force, and where practicable in support of the Air Force, the Secretary of the Navy, in conjunction with the heads of other relevant Federal agencies, shall conduct a comprehensive survey to identify and prioritize the needs of space weather forecast users, including space weather data and space weather forecast data needed to improve services and inform research priorities and technology needs.

''(2) CONTENTS.—In conducting the comprehensive survey under paragraph (1), the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Secretary of the Air Force, and where practicable in support of the Air Force, the Secretary of the Navy, at a minimum, shall—

''(A) consider the goals for forecast lead time, accuracy, coverage, timeliness, data rate, and data quality for space weather observations;

''(B) identify opportunities to address the needs identified under paragraph (1) through collaborations with academia, the private sector, and the international community;

''(C) identify opportunities for new technologies and instrumentation to address the needs identified under paragraph (1); and

''(D) publish a report on the findings under subparagraphs (A) through (C).

''(3) PUBLICATION.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the Space Weather Research and Forecasting Act, the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Secretary of the Air Force, and where practicable in support of the Air Force, the Secretary of the Navy, shall—

''(A) make the results of the comprehensive survey publicly available; and

''(B) notify the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives of the publication under subparagraph (A).

''(b) RESEARCH ACTIVITIES.—

''(1) BASIC RESEARCH.—The Director of the National Science Foundation, Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and Secretary of Defense shall continue to carry out basic research activities on heliophysics, geospace science, and space weather and support competitive, merit-based, peer-reviewed proposals for research, modeling, and monitoring of space weather and its impacts, including science goals outlined in Solar and Space Physics Decadal surveys conducted by the National Academy of Sciences.

''(2) MULTIDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH.—

''(A) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that the multidisciplinary nature of solar and space physics creates funding challenges that require coordination across scientific disciplines and Federal agencies.

''(B) MULTIDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH.—The Director of the National Science Foundation, the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration shall pursue multidisciplinary research in subjects that further our understanding of solar physics, space physics, and space weather.

''(C) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and Director of the National Science Foundation should support competitively awarded Heliophysics Science Centers.

''(c) SCIENCE MISSIONS.—The Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration shall seek to implement missions that meet the science objectives identified in Solar and Space Physics Decadal surveys conducted by the National Academy of Sciences.

''(d) RESEARCH TO OPERATIONS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the Director of the National Science Foundation, the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Secretary of the Air Force, and where practicable in support of the Air Force, the Secretary of the Navy, shall—

''(A) develop a formal mechanism to transition National Aeronautics and Space Administration, National Science Foundation, Air Force, and Navy research findings, models, and capabilities, as appropriate, to National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and Department of Defense space weather operational forecasting centers; and

''(B) enhance coordination between research modeling centers and forecasting centers.

''(2) OPERATIONAL NEEDS.—The Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the Secretary of Defense, in coordination with the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and the Director of the National Science Foundation, shall develop a formal mechanism to communicate the operational needs of space weather forecasters to the research community.

''(e) TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT.—

''(1) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that observations and measurements closer to the Sun and advanced instrumentation would provide for

more advanced warning of space weather disturbances (as defined in section 3 of the Space Weather Research and Forecasting Act).

''(2) TECHNOLOGY AND INSTRUMENTATION DEVELOPMENT.—The Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and the Director of the National Science Foundation shall support the development of technologies and instrumentation to improve space weather forecasting lead-time and accuracy to meet the needs identified by the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

''§ 60704. Space weather data

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and the Director of the National Science Foundation shall—

''(1) make space weather related data obtained for scientific research purposes available to space weather forecasters and operations centers; and

''(2) support model development and model applications to space weather forecasting.

''(b) RESEARCH.—The Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration shall make space weather related data obtained from operational forecasting available for scientific research.''.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) REPEAL OF SECTION 809.—Section 809 of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2010 (42 U.S.C. 18388) and the item relating to that section in the table of contents under section 1(b) of that Act (124 Stat. 2806) are repealed.

(2) TABLE OF CHAPTERS.—The table of chapters of title 51, United States Code, is amended by adding after the item relating to chapter 605 the following:

''607. Space weather ..... 60701''.

SEC. 3. SPACE WEATHER METRICS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) SPACE WEATHER DISTURBANCE.—The term ''space weather disturbance'' includes geo-electric fields, ionizing radiation, ionospheric disturbances, solar radio bursts, and upper atmospheric expansion.

(2) SPACE WEATHER BENCHMARK.—The term ''space weather benchmark'' means the physical characteristics and conditions describing the nature, frequency, and intensity of space weather disturbances.

(b) BENCHMARKS.—

(1) PRELIMINARY.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Space Weather Interagency Working Group, established under section 60701 of title 51, United States Code, in consultation with academic and commercial experts, shall—

(A) assess existing data, the historical record, models, and peer-reviewed studies on space weather; and

(B) develop preliminary benchmarks, based on current scientific understanding and the historical record, for measuring solar disturbances.

(2) FINAL.—Not later than 18 months after the date the preliminary benchmarks are developed under paragraph (1), the Space Weather Interagency Working Group shall publish final benchmarks.

(3) REVIEW.—The Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration shall contract with the National Academy of Sciences to review the benchmarks established under paragraph (2).

(4) REVISIONS.—The Space Weather Interagency Working Group shall update and revise the final benchmarks under paragraph (2), as necessary, based on—

(A) the results of the review under paragraph (3);

(B) any significant new data or advances in scientific understanding that become available; or

(C) the evolving needs of entities impacted by solar disturbances.

SEC. 4. PROTECTION OF CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, in consultation with the heads of other relevant Federal agencies, shall provide information about space weather hazards to the Secretary of Homeland Security for purposes of this section.

(b) CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE.—The Secretary of Homeland Security, in consultation with sector-specific agencies, the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the heads of other relevant agencies, shall—

(1) include, in meeting national critical infrastructure reporting requirements, an assessment of the vulnerability of critical infrastructure to space weather events, as described by the space weather benchmarks under section 3; and

(2) support critical infrastructure providers in managing the risks and impacts associated with space weather.

(c) PROHIBITION ON NEW REGULATORY AUTHORITY.—Nothing in subsection (b) may be construed to grant the Secretary of Homeland Security any authority to promulgate regulations that was not in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this Act.

(d) DEFINITION OF SECTOR-SPECIFIC AGENCY.—In this section, the term ''sector-specific agency'' has the meaning given the term in Presidential Policy Directive–21 of February 12, 2013 (Critical Infrastructure Security and Resilience), or any successor.

SEC. 5. PROTECTION OF NATIONAL SECURITY ASSETS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The National Security Council, in consultation with the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, the Secretary of Defense, and the heads of other relevant Federal agencies, shall—

(1) assess the vulnerability of the national security community to space weather events, as described by the space weather benchmarks under section 3; and

(2) develop national security mechanisms to protection national security assets from space weather threats.

(b) COOPERATION.—The Secretary of Defense, in consultation with the heads of other relevant Federal agencies, shall provide information about space weather hazards to the National Security Council, Director of National Intelligence, and heads of Defense Agencies for purposes of this section.

SEC. 6. ENSURING THE SAFETY OF CIVIL AVIATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, in consultation with the heads of other relevant Federal agencies, shall—

(1) assess the safety implications and vulnerability of the national airspace system by space weather events, as described by the space weather benchmarks under section 3;

(2) assess methods to mitigate the safety implications and effects of space weather on aviation communication systems, aircraft navigation systems, satellite and ground-based navigation systems, and potential health effects of radiation exposure; and

(3) assess options for incorporating space weather into operational training for pilots, cabin crew, dispatchers, air traffic controllers, meteorologists, and engineers.

(b) SPACE WEATHER COMMUNICATION.—The Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, in consultation with the heads of other relevant Federal agencies, shall develop methods to increase the interaction between the aviation community and the space weather research and service provider community.

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported substitute amendment be considered and agreed to; that the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The committee-reported amendment in the nature of a substitute was agreed to.

The bill (S. 141), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

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

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. STRANGE). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ALEXANDER. 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.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

NATIONAL CHARTER SCHOOLS WEEK

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I am here today to celebrate the 18th Annual National Charter Schools Week and thank the students, parents, and teachers from charter schools across the United States for their ongoing contributions to education. Senator BENNET of Colorado and I introduced a resolution marking this event, which the Senate approved yesterday.

Let me tell you my favorite story about charter schools. It was 24 years ago, 1992. I was in my last month as U.S. Secretary of Education, and as my last official act, I wrote a letter to every school superintendent in the country asking them to consider replicating the early success of the State of Minnesota in creating charter schools. There were about a dozen of them then, and they were created by the Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party of Minnesota. That was consistent with what President George H.W. Bush and I had been encouraging, which was what we called start-from-scratch schools—schools that gave teachers more freedom and parents more choices. We thought that could improve education in the country and might lead to what we call new American schools.

The first charter schools were created in the State of Minnesota nearly a quarter of a century ago, led by the Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party, and there were about a dozen of them. Since then, there has been broad bipartisan, mainstream support for charter schools.

Let's remember that charter schools are public schools. They are simply public schools which are freer from government rules, Federal rules, State rules, and union rules and which give teachers more freedom to teach the children who are presented to them and parents more freedom to choose those public schools.

Some of those who supported the creation of charter schools include Albert Shanker, the late head of the American Federation of Teachers. In 1997, President Clinton said: We need 3,000 charter schools by the year 2002. George W. Bush, in the No Child Left Behind legislation, supported charter schools. President Obama was a strong supporter of charter schools while he was in office. His first U.S. Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, called himself a ''strong supporter'' of charter schools. President Obama's second U.S. Education Secretary, John King, founded a charter school and ran a system of charter schools. Secretary Betsy DeVos, the current Secretary of Education, has spent most of her life as a strong supporter of charter schools. In 1994, 1998, 2001, and 2015, the U.S. Congress supported charter schools by large margins and in a bipartisan manner. Over 44 States and the District of Columbia have created an environment through their laws for charter schools.

In 30 years, public charter schools have grown from a dozen in Minnesota to more than 6,900 today. Today, charter schools are serving over 3.1 million students. Over 6 percent of all public school students in America today now attend charter schools, and another 1 million students are on waiting lists for charter schools. This past year saw an estimated enrollment increase of over 200,000 students, representing a 7-percent growth in just one school year.

Over half of the students served by these institutions are eligible for free or reduced-priced lunches, over half are students of color, and 17 percent are limited English proficient—all higher percentages than those served in traditional public schools.

As I said earlier, charter schools are about freedom for teachers, choices for parents, and more and better opportunities for students. Charter schools enable people. They enable parents to help their children get a real opportunity by choosing better schools or at least schools that fit them better and help them succeed. They enable students to learn and succeed. They enable teachers to succeed by giving them the freedom to use their first-hand knowledge. They enable administrators to succeed by ending bureaucratic mandates and giving them a chance to use their own good judgment.

In amending the No Child Left Behind Act, which we called the Every Student Succeeds Act, we made a number of changes to strengthen and expand the Federal Charter Schools Program, which since 1994 has given grants to States to start new charter schools.

ESSA, as we call it, made improvements to that program to ensure that those funds are used as effectively as possible to increase the number of high-quality charter schools. Specifically, ESSA invests more Federal funds in the replication and expansion of high-quality charter schools with a proven record of success, while still giving States the flexibility to invest in innovative new methods. ESSA continues Federal support for nonprofit organizations which help charter schools find suitable facilities, while also encouraging States to assist charter schools in this task.

Now these hard-working and creative educators who are seeking to open charter schools have greater flexibility in how they use Federal startup funds—for example, by allowing them to use the funds for transportation or facilities improvement, if that is what they decide is the best use of those funds for their children and their community.

Finally, the Every Student Succeeds Act encourages States to provide charter schools with the support they need to be successful and to hold them accountable when they fail to demonstrate positive results.

Charter schools are public schools stripped of many Federal, State, and union rules and constraints that are placed on traditional public schools. The money the State would ordinarily spend on the district school follows each child to the charter school instead.

Across Tennessee, more than 30,000 students now have that same opportunity to attend one of 107 charter schools, and they are thriving as a result. A recent study by Stanford University found that on average, Tennessee students attending charter schools gained the equivalent of 86 additional days of instruction in reading and 72 additional days of instruction in math each year than did students attending traditional district schools. In other words, they make almost a year and a half's worth of progress in a single school year.

More than 80 percent of students attending charter schools in Tennessee are low income, and more than 94 percent are African American or Hispanic. In other words, charter schools in Tennessee are making a difference for those students who have traditionally been least well-served by our Nation's public schools. That is a worthy event to celebrate in this 18th annual National Charter Schools Week, to celebrate how charter schools have grown from a dozen start-from-scratch schools in the State of Minnesota 25 years ago to more than 6,900 today.

I thank the Presiding Officer.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, Scott Pruitt, Mike Flynn, Betsy DeVos—there is a pattern here. This administration keeps choosing people who seem like the wrong fit to run their agency, and now we are about to add Jay Clayton to the list.

He is different in a lot of ways. I met with him. He is a good person. He is a sensible person desiring to be a public servant, and he is a very smart lawyer. But he is not the right candidate to lead the SEC because it is on the frontlines of making sure that Wall Street follows the rules. And that is the No. 1 issue here because Mr. Clayton has too many ties to the industry that he would be in charge of overseeing.

Wall Street is full of his friends and business contacts, and there is nothing wrong with that, generally. We need lawyers in the securities industry. We need honorable people who help companies to do an IPO, but that doesn't mean that individual is appropriate to be in charge of the SEC and in charge of reining in Wall Street. That causes the problem.

I do not question Mr. Clayton's integrity. I have no doubt that he is a good person. But how can we say that the best person to hold Wall Street in check is someone with strong ties to the big banks, someone who has built his career there, who very well may go back to his old law firm in a few years?

I talked with Mr. Clayton at his confirmation hearing about whether he would go back to Wall Street after his time at the SEC ended, and he said he couldn't rule it out. That is just one of several concerns that I have. If we look at Mr. Clayton's statements about the SEC, it is clear that he is not the right person to be the cop on the Wall Street beat.

He has talked about ''monitoring'' the financial sector; that is the word he used—''monitoring.'' But the United States does not need someone to ''monitor'' Wall Street. We need someone who will aggressively enforce the rules, to make sure we don't have a repeat of 2008, when the big banks made so many bad and reckless decisions that our economy failed.

We have a very short memory in Washington about what happened to our country less than 10 years ago, but the rest of the country remembers. There are far too many communities still working to recover from the great recession.

Now is not the time to walk back the small steps toward progress we have made in protecting the economy from bad actors on Wall Street. But I am afraid this is what could happen under this administration, including if Mr. Clayton should be confirmed.

In his confirmation hearing, he said he wants to lighten the penalties companies face when they get into trouble with the SEC, and that is not something I can support. We cannot expect big banks and investment firms to play by the rules when they know they can pay a small fine and keep behaving badly as a cost of doing business. Regulation and enforcement has a cost, but that cost is meant to put the burden on the actors who are causing the problem

instead of allowing the burden to fall on the rest of us—to fall on American families.

The cost is there, one way or the other. The question is, Who should pay it?

Even if the Senate disagrees on enforcement and regulation, I hope we can agree that conflicts of interest have gone too far. This administration has diminished the meaning of public service in the context of conflicts of interest. Instead of looking out for conflicts of interest, it has leaned into them. Instead of protecting the country from corruption, it is putting our country in real danger. And at some point, it is up to the Senate to be a Senate—to do something. We have to decide where to draw the line. How long do we let this go on?

I am a ''no'' on Mr. Clayton's nomination. I urge all Senators who care about ending conflicts of interest and putting a tough cop on the Wall Street beat to join me and vote no on this nomination.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Idaho.

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, I rise today in support of Mr. Jay Clayton, who has been nominated to serve on the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission.

On January 4, 2017, then President-elect Trump announced his intention to nominate Jay Clayton to be the next chairman of the SEC. He noted that ''Jay Clayton is a highly talented expert on many aspects of financial and regulatory law, and he will ensure our financial institutions can thrive and create jobs while playing by the rules.''

This sentiment was proven by Mr. Clayton's testimony and interactions during his nomination hearing. In fact, he passed out of the Banking Committee by a vote of 15-to-8, with bipartisan support.

Mr. Clayton is a highly regarded and exceptionally qualified candidate. As a partner at a prominent law firm, he built a reputation as a highly skilled financial markets expert, representing clients of all types and sizes, both domestically and internationally. He has also invested in a younger generation of lawyers, passing on his knowledge as an adjunct professor at the University of Pennsylvania.

Throughout the nomination process, Mr. Clayton has proved his dedication to unbiased and fair conduct.

Mr. Clayton's comments, experience, and actions provide me with confidence that he will lead the SEC with the highest integrity and effectiveness.

The SEC has an important three-part mission: to protect investors, maintain fair, orderly, and efficient markets, and to facilitate capital formation. At his nomination hearing, Mr. Clayton echoed the importance of the SEC's mission and how the SEC can do more to ensure that our markets remain the envy of the world.

Although the United States capital markets remain the most robust in the world, they have been challenged by competition from abroad. During his hearing, Mr. Clayton observed that our capital markets have become less attractive to businesses than they ever have been before. Capital markets drive innovation and job creation, and access to them is the lifeblood of our economy.

The JOBS Act helped revitalize primary markets, and both Congress and the SEC should continue to find ways to help companies go public and allow investors to share in their successes. Mr. Clayton pledged to do just that. He committed to working with his fellow Commissioners, with SEC staff, with Congress, and with the President to support and defend our capital markets.

Mr. Clayton also repeatedly committed at his nomination hearing that he would protect investors. He stated that he is ''100 percent committed to rooting out any fraud and shady practices in our financial system.''

During the Banking Committee's hearings on Mr. Clayton, some raised the concern that he previously represented many firms on Wall Street and that he would continue to look out for their best interests. He appropriately responded by pledging to the American people that he will show no favoritism to anyone and maintain a high degree of transparency.

Given Mr. Clayton's strong qualifications and his pledge to work to improve capital formation and uphold investor protections, I urge my colleagues to support his nomination. Congress and the SEC, led by Mr. Clayton and the American people, can ensure that the U.S. financial system and markets remain the preferred destination for investors throughout the world. I urge all of my colleagues to vote yes on the nomination of Mr. Jay Clayton.

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

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

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 5 minutes and delay the vote until 5:25 p.m., until the completion of my remarks.

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

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I appreciate the Presiding Officer's forbearance and also the cooperation always of the chairman of the Banking Committee, Senator CRAPO. We had a good hearing today on reinsurance and on European Union issues on insurance regulation. I appreciated the work we were able to do there and the work we are doing on Russian sanctions, which is increasingly important, as we see, as the clear links between Russia and the American elections are becoming clearer. The links are becoming clearer and clearer to Senators in both parties.

I rise in opposition to the nomination of Jay Clayton to the Securities and Exchange Commission. We have seen this movie before, where we nominate someone to chair the Securities and Exchange Commission who starts off almost handcuffed with their hands behind their back because he has—as did his predecessor—far too many conflicts of interest, far too many demands for recusal, far too many cases he has worked on.

We hear of a President who talks about draining the swamp, who wants regulators and people in Washington who don't have conflicts of interest and who can look at this in a fairminded, clear-eyed way. Instead, we see a White House that is full of Goldman Sachs former officials. In fact, the White House on some days looks like a retreat of Goldman Sachs executives. That is a long way from clearing the swamp.

What we are seeing in the case of Mr. Clayton—and we had a good meeting with him, and I thought his testimony was pretty good—is that he is smart, he is educated, he knows these issues well, but he is going to have to recuse himself because of conflicts with UBS, Deutsche Bank, and Goldman Sachs. He has worked on so many of these cases as a Wall Street lawyer for so many years that at this Securities and Exchange Commission—where the President still hasn't appointed a Democrat, which really he is supposed to do but hasn't seemed to have gotten around to it—that we are going to see all kinds of opportunities for mischief, we are going to see all kinds of delays and tie votes, and we will see an inability for the SEC to operate when they should.

I oppose the confirmation of Jay Clayton. I think he is capable, but he will not serve this country well. He will not keep corporations and, especially, banks honest on all kinds of corporate governance issues. He will not be as supportive of the investor public because of these recusals and conflicts that he faces. I think it is a bad idea, again. I opposed the previous Democratic nominee for this job because she had far too many recusals and conflicts that she had to do. I think this is a mistake to do this again.

I ask my colleagues to vote no, to oppose the confirmation of Jay Clayton to the Securities and Exchange Commission.

I yield back my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Clayton nomination?

Mr. BROWN. 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 assistant bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON).

Mr. SCHUMER. I announce that the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. DURBIN). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 61, nays 37, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 118 Ex.]

YEAS—61

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

NAYS—37

Baldwin	Gillibrand	Peters
Blumenthal	Harris	Reed
Booker	Hassan	Sanders
Brown	Heinrich	Schatz
Cantwell	Hirono	Schumer
Cardin	Kaine	Stabenow
Casey	Klobuchar	Udall
Coons	Leahy	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Markey	Warren
Donnelly	Menendez	Whitehouse
Duckworth	Merkley	Wyden
Feinstein	Murphy	
Franken	Murray	

NOT VOTING—2

Durbin	Isakson

The nomination was confirmed.

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

(At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

• Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I was necessarily absent for the votes on the nomination of Jay Clayton to be a Member of the Securities and Exchange Commission, Executive Calendar No. 36.

On vote No. 118, had I been present, I would have voted nay on the confirmation of the Clayton nomination, Executive Calendar No. 36.•

75TH ANNIVERSARY OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 9066

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, May 6, 2017, marks a 75-year-old moral stain on Oregon's history. On this day in 1942, the city of Portland was declared free of all Japanese Americans.

As part of the Nation's response to the bombing of Pearl Harbor, President Franklin Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066 in February 1942. In doing so, the President authorized the removal of anybody deemed ''threatening.'' The President's action was based in fear and prejudice rather than any actual threat, and many Japanese Americans paid the price as innocent people were separated from their families and traumatized.

The United States would ultimately incarcerate more than 120,000 U.S. citizens and lawful permanent residents of Japanese ancestry. The Federal Government deemed Japanese Americans who lived on the west coast a ''threat,'' putting my State of Oregon on the frontlines of this injustice.

Forced out of their homes and businesses, many of Oregon's Japanese American families moved into the animal stalls of what was then the Pacific International Livestock and Exposition Center in north Portland. Eventually, a total of 3,700 men, women, and children from Oregon and parts of Washington were held at the center. These families were later sent off with thousands of other Japanese Americans to quickly erected camps across the United States.

Despite the anti-Japanese fever burning across the United States, thousands of Japanese Americans were serving valiantly on the battlefields of Europe. We throw around the word ''patriot'' a lot these days, but I can't think of a more patriotic story than those Japanese Americans who signed up to defend the same country that had locked up their families.

Units like the famed 442nd and men like my friend and former colleague Senator Dan Inouye displayed an exceptional degree of courage and valor abroad. Back home, Japanese American civil rights leaders like Minoru Yasui and Fred Korematsu were challenging the prejudices that led to Executive Order 9066, the internment, and other injustices faced by Japanese Americans and permanent residents.

As the son of Jewish parents who fled Nazi Germany, I feel especially compelled today to remind my colleagues and my countrymen of this dark chapter in our Nation's history. It is especially important to recall this history today because it seems some Americans have slipped back into an era of fear-mongering, bigotry, and hate.

I have seen countless expressions of kindness and decency in my years representing Oregon, which is why I have faith that people across our State and the country will continue to stand up and say ''no more.'' That is why I also want to honor the truly courageous Japanese Americans and others who fought the pain and fear caused by Executive Order 9066. They were on the right side of the argument then and now.

Finally, I would like to recognize the Oregon Nikkei Endowment for all its work to bring us together to reflect on this day. Thank you to all the partners who have and will continue to fight for the rights of every American. I stand with them in solidarity today and always.

TRIBUTE TO HENSON MOORE

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, Today I wish to honor Congressman Henson Moore and recognize his years of service, including his leadership on the Battle of New Orleans Bicentennial Commission.

Raised in Hackberry, LA, Henson moved to Baton Rouge where he graduated from Baton Rouge High School and later Louisiana State University, LSU. He also received his law degree in 1965 and master's degree in 1973 from LSU. Henson honorably served in the Army from 1965 to 1967 and, in 1974, was elected to Congress where he represented Louisiana's Sixth Congressional District for 12 years.

In 1987, Henson was named commissioner of the Panama Canal Consultative Committee by President Reagan. In 1989, he was named Deputy Secretary at the Department of Energy and, in 1992, was named White House Deputy Chief of Staff for President George H.W. Bush.

Following his retirement as president and CEO of American Forest and Paper Association in 2006, Henson and his wife, Carolyn, returned to Baton Rouge.

Henson's public service and involvement with numerous for-profit and nonprofit boards has earned him many noteworthy honors and awards, among them the Secretary Gold Medal, U.S. Department of Energy, induction into the Louisiana Political Hall of Fame, induction into the LSU Alumni Association Hall of Distinction, and the chancellor's Sesquicentennial Service Award. More recently, he was honored as the 2011 LSU Alumnus of the Year. Henson also served as chairman of the Forever LSU Campaign, the most successful fundraising effort in the university's history, and in 2014 was named chairman of the Battle of New Orleans Bicentennial Commission.

Fought on January 8, 1815, the Battle of New Orleans was the final major battle of the War of 1812 and a decisive victory for the United States. As chairman of the Bicentennial Commission, Henson planned and ran a number of activities throughout the New Orleans area. The commission and chairman were all volunteers; they received no money in exchange for their work, and there was no State money used for this commission. In his address on the bicentennial, Henson joked, ''When the Legislature created the Bicentennial Commission, it had the foresight to

provide no money and no staff but a lot of obstruction.'' The bicentennial commission was tasked with commemorating a significant moment in both U.S. and Louisiana history. Under Henson Moore's leadership, that mission was achieved.

I would like to honor and congratulate Henson for his work on both the bicentennial commission and for his service to our country and the State of Louisiana.

TRIBUTE TO DR. GEORGE E. KELLER II

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. President, it is my honor today to recognize Dr. George E. Keller II for his outstanding achievements in the areas of engineering, innovation, and leadership. Dr. Keller was born and raised in Charleston, WV, and has a bachelor's degree from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and a master's degree and Ph.D. in chemical engineering from Pennsylvania State University. Dr. Keller's wisdom is evidenced in his personal life as he has been married to his wife, Judy Keller, for decades, allowing for his legacy to live on through his many children and grandchildren.

Dr. Keller served as a lecturer in President Eisenhower's ''Atoms for Peace Program'' in Chemical and Nuclear Engineering from 1958 to 1959. He went on to have an illustrious and highly accomplished 36-year career at the Union Carbide Corporation in research and development at the South Charleston Technical Center and achieved national and international accolades for pioneering contribution in separation science, reaction engineering, catalysis, and novel process technology development.

After retiring from the Union Carbide Corporation, Dr. Keller became the cofounder and vice president of New Carbon, LLC, with the purpose of commercializing various aspects of the WVU Chemical Engineering Department's coal to advanced carbon products programs. Dr. Keller also inspired leadership under the BIDCO organization for local economic development, which ultimately led to the birth of the Mid-Atlantic Technology Research & Innovation Center, MATRIC, Inc., in 2003. Dr. Keller served as MATRIC vice chairman until 2014, as well as MATRIC's chief engineer. He currently serves on the MATRIC board of directors and continues service as the company's chief engineer.

In 1988, Dr. Keller was elected to the National Academy of Engineering, NARE, for his invention and insightful analysis of novel separation processes. Recently, Dr. Keller was recognized as ''one of the nation's top 100 chemical engineers of the modern era'' by the premier industry association, the American Institute of Chemical Engineers, AIChE.

He is a recipient of many prestigious awards including the Chemical Pioneer Award by the American Institute of Chemists for his breakthrough work in long-range hydrocarbon technology, as well as the Institute Lecture Award, the Clarence Gerhold Award, and the Institute Award for Excellence in Industrial Gases Technology, all awarded by the AIChE. The Chemical Engineering Magazine awarded Dr. Keller's team with the Kirkpatrick Honor Award for the most innovative chemical technology successfully commercialized in the world: development of highly efficient pressure-swing parametric pumping for gas-gas separations. Pennsylvania State University also awarded Dr. Keller with the Outstanding Engineering Alumnus Award in 1989.

Dr. George Keller has coauthored and edited more than 35 publications in refereed journals and is the coauthor of two major books in the area of industrial separations. He also holds 21 U.S. patents in key technologies. Dr. Keller has lectured at more than 30 universities around the world and has served as chairman for many prestigious international conferences. At West Virginia University, Dr. Keller serves as chair of the visiting committee of the College of Engineering and Mineral Resources, as well as a longtime member of the visiting committees of several chemical engineering departments at WVU, Virginia Tech, Penn State, University of Wisconsin, University of Texas, and University of Virginia. He has also served on the National Research Council's board on chemical science and technology, BCST, and as an adjunct professor of chemical engineering at WVU and Virginia Tech.

In addition to Dr. George Keller's many awards, honors, and service, he also has an abundance of major technical accomplishments. Dr. Keller was a pioneer in discovering ways for converting methane to hydrocarbon feedstock for the chemical industry and was awarded by the American Institute of Chemists for doing so.

When Dr. Keller joined Union Carbide in 1961, he was a trailblazer in implementing amongst the first computer-controlled pilot plants in the industry worldwide. Under his leadership, the separations and process fundamentals skill center developed such disparate processes as the most advanced technology for producing oxygen via miniature adsorption units in the homes of people with severe lung problems in the 1970s, creating a better and longer life for countless millions around the world, and the world's largest commercial pervaporation facility in the 1990s.

Dr. Keller's personal expertise in membranes, adsorption, distillation, and extraction operations has resulted in reducing the generation of process wastes, developing more cost-effective ways to treat industrial waste streams, and, in some cases, resulted in recovery of valuable coproducts from traditional waste streams. In addition to his Carbide contributions, Dr. Keller has also worked on several next-generation technologies for carbon capture from fossil fuel combustion. His work in this area will be impactful for years to come, especially in industries touched by the development of shale gas in the United States.

Dr. Keller has recruited exceptional, diverse talent to WV and to Union Carbide, including over 100 of the world's premier doctoral-level engineers and scientists. He has served and continues to serve as an excellent mentor to countless individuals. In turn, this aspect of Dr. Keller's efforts paid exceptionally rich dividends to Union Carbide and West Virginia in developing and sustaining a world-class, market-driven, R&D technical center at South Charleston for many decades. This culture still lives on today at MATRIC. The company is a growing multidivisional company with long-term strategy levering both market opportunity and its own internal expertise. It is noteworthy that MATRIC has delivered more than $95 million to the West Virginia economy that would never have existed without exceptional leaders like George Keller.

It is with great respect that I ask my colleagues in the U.S. Senate to recognize the accomplishments and dedication of Dr. George E. Keller II. Dr. Keller is an excellent example of perseverance and commitment to innovation, enhancing the lives of others and inspiring the next generation of scientists and engineers.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO DAVID HOLT

• Mr. KING. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize David Holt, who has been a town manager in Maine since 1976, serving four communities.

In 1999, David received the Linc Stackpole Manager of the Year Award, chosen by his peers in the Maine Town and City Managers Association in recognition of his exemplary leadership qualities, professional ethics, and commitment to public service. Over the past 40 years, David has been a mentor, trusted adviser, and role model to many younger managers.

David was raised in rural western Maine, the son of a farmer. This upbringing instilled a strong work ethic in him at a young age and an appreciation for preserving the natural environment, as well as empathy for the hard-working people of Maine. He has a strong intellect, a keen sense of humor, and is gifted writer, chronicling his life and times in his book of autobiographical short stories ''Man about Town.''

He got involved in local government early by being elected as the youngest member of the board of selectmen in his hometown of Greenwood at the age of 18. His interest in public service was kindled by this experience, and he later attended the University of Maine where he received a degree in public management.

David served as the first town manager of the town of Princeton. While

there, he developed an airport by receiving grants to move the historic train station to be reused as a terminal building. These efforts resulted in the establishment of regular air service with a local carrier, promoting economic development and easy access to the area by sportsmen. He enlisted the Maine National Guard to do their summer training session in Princeton, and with the work of hundreds of military personnel with heavy equipment, a new mile-long major access road to the airport from Route 1 was completed in just 2 weeks.

While serving in the town of Dexter, he prepared successful applications to the Community Development Block Grant Program that resulted in the renovation of the entire downtown area by adding new decorative streetlights, improved sidewalks, better drainage, and related road work. This effort revitalized the downtown area and spurred private investment in the Main Street buildings.

In the town of Standish, he worked extensively on the growth management plan, which established a roadmap for future community development.

In the town of Norway, where he has served for the past 28 years, David has worked diligently to ensure that the town stays in sound financial condition, as well as keeping the Main Street economically and culturally vibrant. He instituted a sidewalk building program that has resulted in Norway becoming one of Maine's most walkable communities. Perhaps his crowning achievements were the successful grant application and efforts to save the town's historic opera house. David will be long remembered in all the towns he has served for his commitment to community betterment and his forward-thinking positive management style.●

RECOGNIZING FIN FUN MERMAID TAILS

● Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, the American dream is alive and well today. Entrepreneurs across this country are innovators, leaders, and visionaries who exemplify many of the characteristics that make this country great. Idaho's small businesses and the entrepreneurs behind them share a dedication to producing the highest quality products and services. Hard work, dedication, and passion are among some of the other traits that successful entrepreneurs share, whether they be from Idaho or anywhere else in our great country. All of these qualities are on display in this month's Small Business of the Month. As chairman of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, it is my pleasure to recognize Fin Fun Mermaid Tails as the Senate Small Business of the Month for May 2017.

Fin Fun got its start in 2009 when its founder, Karen Browning, was asked by her granddaughter to design and make a mermaid tail. Even with over 50 years of experience sewing, she was not sure she could complete her granddaughter's request. With some creativity and ingenuity, Mrs. Browning designed the mermaid fins out of spandex swimsuit material and a rigid body for the fin. The design proved so popular that, when Emily and her sister, Sarah, swam with the fins on at the local pool, all their friends asked where they could get a tail of their own. Mrs. Browning began selling the product on eBay and Etsy in 2010. With demand increasing, Mrs. Browning's sons, Eric and Steve Browning, returned to Idaho to run the Fin Fun business. Sales of Fin Fun products increased dramatically since its opening, from selling 200 mermaid tails per month in 2011 to more than 500,000 in 2016.

Fin Fun offers a number of products including their famous mermaid tails, patented Monofin, swimwear, animal blankets, pool toys, and other accessories. In 2012, Eric and Steve Browning took over the day-to-day operations of the company as the founders Jerry and Karen went on a mission for their church. In 2015, Fin Fun purchased a 10,000-square-foot building located on the Lewisville Highway, where the company continues to grow. In that same year, Fin Fun was highlighted by various media outlets, including the Wall Street Journal. In 2016, the company was named to Inc. 500's fastest growing companies list, as the 119th fastest growing company with 3,000 percent growth over a 3-year period. Through the leadership of Eric and Steve Browning and the success of Fin Fun, the company has created more than 75 full-time and part-time jobs within the Idaho Falls area.

As a family-run business, Fin Fun continues to set an example by donating a percentage of its profits to more than 18 charitable organizations annually, in addition to providing employment and support to the local community. Fin Fun is the manifestation of the entrepreneurial spirit that epitomizes the essence of the great State of Idaho. I would like to extend my sincerest congratulations to the employees and owners of Fin Fun Mermaid for being selected as the May 2017 Small Business of the Month. You make our great 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.)

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

At 10:02 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bill:

S .496. An act to repeal the rule issued by the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration entitled ''Metropolitan Planning Organization Coordination and Planning Area Reform''.

The enrolled bill was subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

At 11:43 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 657. An act to amend title 5, United States Code, to extend certain protections against prohibited personnel practices, and for other purposes.

H.R. 910. An act to direct the Securities and Exchange Commission to provide a safe harbor related to certain investment fund research reports, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1242. An act to establish the 400 Years of African-American History Commission, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1312. An act to amend the Small Business Investment Incentive Act of 1980 to require an annual review by the Securities and Exchange Commission of the annual government-business forum on capital formation that is held pursuant to such Act.

H.R. 1366. An act to amend the Investment Company Act of 1940 to terminate an exemption for companies located in Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and any other possession of the United States.

MEASURES REFERRED

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

H.R. 657. An act to amend title 5, United States Code, to extend certain protections against prohibited personnel practices, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 910. An act to direct the Securities and Exchange Commission to provide a safe harbor related to certain investment fund research reports, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

H.R. 1312. An act to amend the Small Business Investment Incentive Act of 1980 to require an annual review by the Securities and Exchange Commission of the annual government-business forum on capital formation that is held pursuant to such Act; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

ENROLLED BILL PRESENTED

The Secretary of the Senate reported that on today, May 2, 2017, she had presented to the President of the United States the following enrolled bill:

S. 496. An act to repeal the rule issued by the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration entitled ''Metropolitan Planning Organization Coordination and Planning Area Reform''.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. CRAPO (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. CASSIDY, and Mr. ALEXANDER):

S. 1001. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to modernize payments for ambulatory surgical centers under the Medicare program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MORAN (for himself, Mr. TESTER, Ms. HEITKAMP, and Mr. TILLIS):

S. 1002. A bill to enhance the ability of community financial institutions to foster economic growth and serve their communities, boost small businesses, increase individual savings, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself and Mr. CASEY):

S. 1003. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to add standards for drug compendia for physician use for purposes of Medicaid payment for certain drugs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. KAINE (for himself, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. YOUNG, and Ms. HASSAN):

S. 1004. A bill to amend the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 to support innovative approaches to career and technical education and redesign the high school experience for students by providing students with equitable access to rigorous, engaging, and relevant real world education through partnerships with business and industry and higher education that prepare students to graduate from high school and enroll into postsecondary education without the need for remediation and with the ability to use knowledge to solve complex problems, think critically, communicate effectively, collaborate with others, and develop academic mindsets; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. WYDEN:

S. 1005. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modernize the tax treatment of derivatives and their underlying investments, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MERKLEY (for himself, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. BENNET, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BROWN, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. CARPER, Mr. CASEY, Mr. COONS, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. FRANKEN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. HARRIS, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. HEITKAMP, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. KAINE, Mr. KING, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. MARKEY, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. MURPHY, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. NELSON, Mr. PETERS, Mr. REED, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. SCHUMER, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. TESTER, Mr. UDALL, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. WARNER, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Mr. WYDEN):

S. 1006. A bill to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, gender identity, and sexual orientation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. GARDNER (for himself, Mr. HATCH, Mr. HELLER, Mr. SULLIVAN, and Mr. DAINES):

S. 1007. A bill to require the Secretary of the Interior to develop a strategy to relocate the headquarters of the Bureau of Land Management from Washington, DC, to a western State in a manner that will save the maximum amount of taxpayer money practicable, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. GARDNER (for himself, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. HATCH, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. LEE, Mr. JOHNSON, Ms. BALDWIN, and Mr. WARNER):

S. 1008. A bill to amend the Controlled Substances Act to exclude cannabidiol and cannabidiol-rich plants from the definition of marihuana, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. KING (for himself and Mr. FRANKEN):

S. 1009. A bill to amend the Natural Gas Act to require the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and the Secretary of Energy to consider certain factors in making a public interest determination under that Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. LEAHY, and Mr. HATCH):

S. 1010. A bill to amend title 17, United States Code, to provide additional responsibilities for the Register of Copyrights, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. WARNER, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Mr. COONS):

S. 1011. A bill to prevent the Iranian Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps from using Mahan Air for material support for terrorist activities; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. UDALL (for himself and Mr. HEINRICH):

S. 1012. A bill to provide for drought preparedness measures in the State of New Mexico, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. WICKER (for himself and Mr. COONS):

S. Res. 149. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of World Malaria Day; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 54

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 54, a bill to prohibit the creation of an immigration-related registry program that classifies people on the basis of religion, race, age, gender, ethnicity, national origin, nationality, or citizenship.

S. 66

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 66, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to permit certain retired members of the uniformed services who have a service-connected disability to receive both disability compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs for their disability and either retired pay by reason of their years of military service or Combat-Related Special Compensation, and for other purposes.

S. 139

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 139, a bill to implement the use of Rapid DNA instruments to inform decisions about pretrial release or detention and their conditions, to solve and prevent violent crimes and other crimes, to exonerate the innocent, to prevent DNA analysis backlogs, and for other purposes.

S. 200

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 200, a bill to prohibit the conduct of a first-use nuclear strike absent a declaration of war by Congress.

S. 236

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 236, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reform taxation of alcoholic beverages.

S. 352

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

S. 482

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 482, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to treat certain amounts paid for physical activity, fitness, and exercise as amounts paid for medical care.

S. 563

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 563, a bill to amend the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 to require that certain buildings and personal property be covered by flood insurance, and for other purposes.

S. 593

At the request of Mr. BENNET, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 593, a bill to amend the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act to facilitate the establishment of additional or expanded public target ranges in certain States.

S. 662

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the names of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND), the Senator

from Delaware (Mr. COONS), the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY), the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) and the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) were added as cosponsors of S. 662, a bill to provide incentives for hate crime reporting, grants for State-run hate crime hotlines, a Federal private right of action for victims of hate crimes, and additional penalties for individuals convicted under the Matthew Shephard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act.

S. 682

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 682, a bill to amend title 31, United States Code, to require the Secretary of the Treasury to provide for the purchase of paper United States savings bonds with tax refunds.

S. 722

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) was added as a cosponsor 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. 733

At the request of Ms. MURKOWSKI, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 733, a bill to protect and enhance opportunities for recreational hunting, fishing, and shooting, and for other purposes.

S. 766

At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 766, a bill to amend titles 10 and 32, United States Code, to improve and enhance authorities relating to the employment, use, status, and benefits of military technicians (dual status), and for other purposes.

S. 819

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 819, a bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to provide more effective remedies to victims of discrimination in the payment of wages on the basis of sex, and for other purposes.

S. 978

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 978, a bill to direct the Secretary of Education to establish an award program recognizing excellence exhibited by public school system employees providing services to students in prekindergarten through higher education.

S. 992

At the request of Mr. MCCAIN, the names of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY) were added as cosponsors of S. 992, a bill to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to conduct an independent review of the deaths of certain veterans by suicide, and for other purposes.

S.J. RES. 40

At the request of Mr. MURPHY, the names of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) were added as cosponsors of S.J. Res. 40, a joint resolution to provide limitations on the transfer of air-to-ground munitions from the United States to Saudi Arabia.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. KAINE (for himself, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. YOUNG, and Ms. HASSAN):

S. 1004. A bill to amend the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 to support innovative approaches to career and technical education and redesign the high school experience for students by providing students with equitable access to rigorous, engaging, and relevant real world education through partnerships with business and industry and higher education that prepare students to graduate from high school and enroll into postsecondary education without the need for remediation and with the ability to use knowledge to solve complex problems, think critically, communicate effectively, collaborate with others, and develop academic mindsets; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Madam President. In today's increasingly competitive global market, it is more important than ever that students develop the right skills and knowledge to succeed in postsecondary education and enter the workforce. Our nation's future depends on providing students with an engaging experience that is relevant to the workforce and integrates partnerships with industry and higher education. Unfortunately, many high schools currently lack these opportunities, leaving students unprepared for 21st century careers. In fact, nearly 80 percent of college instructors and 60 percent of employers indicate that public high schools fall short in preparing students for postsecondary education.

The cornerstone of high-quality career and technical education (CTE) is a strong focus on academics. The National Research Center for Career and Technical Education conducted a four-year longitudinal study in three states and found that students participating in CTE programs or career pathways outperformed their peers on the number of credits they earned in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) and AP classes. These students also earned higher grade point averages in their CTE classes. Nonetheless, CTE is often overlooked in discussions on increasing relevancy and rigor in our nation's schools.

That is why I am introducing with my colleagues, Senators PORTMAN, BALDWIN, CAPITO, and YOUNG, the CTE Excellence and Equity Act. This bipartisan legislation supports funding for innovation in career and technical education to help redesign the high school experience for historically underserved students. The bill would support the integration of rigorous academics with CTE in courses. It would also authorize grants to partnerships among school districts, employers, and institutions of higher education in Virginia and other states that help students earn industry recognized credentials or credit toward a postsecondary degree or certificate. The bill also places an emphasis on understanding the relevance of coursework in the context of a future career by placing an emphasis on teaching workplace skills through job shadowing, internships, and apprenticeships. Preparing our students for the careers of tomorrow puts them in the pipeline for the good-paying jobs that are the future of our workforce.

CTE programs are critical components to every student's education. I am pleased to be introducing this bipartisan legislation to strengthen CTE programs in high school so that students are better prepared for postsecondary studies and the workforce. I hope that my colleagues consider this legislation as we move to reauthorize the Carl D. Perkins CTE Act.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. LEAHY, and Mr. HATCH):

S. 1010. A bill to amend title 17, United States Code, to provide additional responsibilities for the Register of Copyrights, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

Mr. President. I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 1010

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 ''Register of Copyrights Selection and Accountability Act of 2017''.

SEC. 2. REGISTER OF COPYRIGHTS.

(a) AMENDMENTS.—Section 701 of title 17, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) by striking ''(a) All administrative'' and inserting the following:

''(a) REGISTER AND DIRECTOR.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—All administrative'';

(B) by striking ''director'' and inserting ''Director'';

(C) by inserting after the first sentence the following: ''The Register of Copyrights shall be a citizen of the United States with a professional background and experience in copyright law, shall be capable of identifying and supervising a Chief Information Officer or

other similar official responsible for managing modern information technology systems, and shall be appointed by the President from the individuals recommended under paragraph (6), by and with the advice and consent of the Senate.''; and

(D) in the last sentence, by striking ''shall be appointed'' and all that follows through ''and shall act'' and inserting ''shall act'';

(2) in subsection (b), by redesignating paragraphs (1) through (5) as subparagraphs (A) through (E), respectively, and adjusting the margins accordingly;

(3) by redesignating subsection (b) as paragraph (2), and adjusting the margins accordingly;

(4) in paragraph (2), as so redesignated, by inserting ''DUTIES.—'' before ''In addition'';

(5) by inserting after paragraph (2) the following:

''(3) OATH.—The Register of Copyrights shall, before taking office, take an oath to discharge faithfully the duties of the Copyright Office described in paragraph (2).

''(4) REMOVAL.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Register of Copyrights may be removed from office by the President.

''(B) NOTIFICATION.—The President shall provide notification to both Houses of Congress of a removal under subparagraph (A).

''(5) TERM OF OFFICE.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subparagraph (B), the Register of Copyrights—

''(i) shall be appointed for a term of 10 years; and

''(ii) may serve until a successor is appointed, confirmed, and taken the oath of office.

''(B) LIMITATION.—The Register of Copyrights may not continue to serve after the date on which Congress adjourns sine die after the date on which the 10-year period described in subparagraph (A)(i) ends.

''(C) REAPPOINTMENT.—An individual appointed to the position of Register of Copyrights, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, may be reappointed to that position in accordance with the requirements of this section.

''(6) PANEL FOR REGISTER OF COPYRIGHTS RECOMMENDATIONS.—There is established a panel to recommend a list of at least 3 individuals to the President for appointment as the Register of Copyrights. The panel shall be composed of the following:

''(A) The Speaker of the House of Representatives.

''(B) The President pro tempore of the Senate.

''(C) The majority and minority leaders of the House of Representatives and the Senate.

''(D) The Librarian of Congress.'';

(6) by redesignating subsections (c) through (f) as subsections (b) through (e), respectively;

(7) in subsection (b), as so redesignated, by inserting ''SEAL.—'' before ''The Register'';

(8) in subsection (c), as so redesignated, by inserting ''ANNUAL REPORT.—'' before ''The Register'';

(9) in subsection (d), as so redesignated, by inserting ''APPLICABILITY OF TITLE 5.—'' before ''Except as provided''; and

(10) in subsection (e), as so redesignated, by inserting ''COMPENSATION.—'' before ''The Register''.

(b) APPLICABILITY.—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall apply with respect to any vacancy for the Register of Copyrights after January 1, 2017. If a Register of Copyrights is appointed during the period beginning on January 1, 2017 and ending on the day before the date of the enactment of this Act, that Register shall meet the requirements of the amendments made by this Act or shall be replaced in accordance with such amendments.

SEC. 3. CONSTRUCTION.

Nothing in this Act may be construed to impact the mandatory deposit requirements in title 17, United States Code.

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. WARNER, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Mr. COONS):

S. 1011. A bill to prevent the Iranian Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps from using Mahan Air for material support for terrorist activities; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 1011

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 ''Mahan Air and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2017''.

SEC. 2. REPORT ON AIRPORTS USED BY MAHAN AIR.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter through 2020, the Secretary of Homeland Security, in consultation with the Secretary of Transportation, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of the Treasury, and the Director of National Intelligence, shall submit to Congress a report that includes—

(1) a list of all airports at which aircraft owned or controlled by Mahan Air have landed during the 2 years preceding the submission of the report; and

(2) for each such airport—

(A) an assessment of whether aircraft owned or controlled by Mahan Air continue to conduct operations at that airport;

(B) an assessment of whether any of the landings of aircraft owned or controlled by Mahan Air were necessitated by an emergency situation;

(C) a determination regarding whether additional security measures should be imposed on flights to the United States that originate from that airport; and

(D) an explanation of the rationale for that determination.

(b) FORM OF REPORT.—Each report required by subsection (a) shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may include a classified annex.

(c) PUBLICATION OF LIST.—The list required by subsection (a)(1) shall be publicly and prominently posted on the website of the Department of Homeland Security on the date on which the report required by subsection (a) is submitted to Congress.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 149—SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF WORLD MALARIA DAY

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

S. RES. 149

Whereas April 25 of each year is recognized internationally as World Malaria Day;

Whereas malaria is a leading cause of death and disease in many developing countries, despite being preventable and treatable;

Whereas fighting malaria is in the national interest of the United States because reducing the risk of malaria protects members of the Armed Forces and other people of the United States serving overseas in malaria-endemic regions, and reducing malaria deaths helps to lower risks of instability in less developed countries;

Whereas United States support for efforts to fight malaria—

(1) is in the diplomatic and moral interests of the United States;

(2) generates goodwill toward the United States; and

(3) highlights the values of the people of the United States through the work of governmental, nongovernmental, and faith-based organizations of the United States;

Whereas, in 2015, 91 countries and areas had ongoing malaria transmissions;

Whereas nearly ½ of the population of the world is at risk for malaria, with sub-Saharan African carrying a disproportionately high burden, with 90 percent of malaria cases and 92 percent of malaria deaths in the world;

Whereas young children and pregnant women are particularly vulnerable to, and disproportionately affected by, malaria;

Whereas malaria greatly affects the health of children, since children under the age of 5 account for an estimated 70 percent of malaria deaths each year;

Whereas the World Malaria Report 2016 by the World Health Organization states that, in 2015, approximately 429,000 people died of malaria, which is a 50-percent decrease since 2000;

Whereas the United States Government has played a leading role in the recent progress made toward reducing the global burden of malaria, particularly through the President's Malaria Initiative and the contribution of the United States to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria; and

Whereas the United States Government is pursuing a comprehensive approach to ending malaria deaths through the President's Malaria Initiative, which is led by the United States Agency for International Development and implemented with assistance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Department of State, the Department of Health and Human Services, the National Institutes of Health, the Department of Defense, and private sector entities: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of World Malaria Day;

(2) recognizes the importance of reducing malaria prevalence and deaths to improve overall child and maternal health, especially in sub-Saharan Africa;

(3) commends the recent progress made toward reducing global malaria morbidity, mortality, and prevalence, particularly through the efforts of the President's Malaria Initiative and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria;

(4) welcomes ongoing public-private partnerships to research and develop more effective and affordable tools for malaria diagnosis, treatment, and vaccination;

(5) recognizes the goals, priorities, and authorities to combat malaria set forth in the Tom Lantos and Henry J. Hyde United States Global Leadership Against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria Reauthorization Act of 2008 (Public Law 110–293; 122 Stat. 2918);

(6) supports continued leadership by the United States in bilateral, multilateral, and private sector efforts to combat malaria and to work with developing countries to create

long-term strategies to increase ownership over malaria programs; and

(7) encourages other members of the international community to sustain and increase their support for, and financial contributions to, efforts to combat malaria worldwide.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. SCOTT. Mr. President, I have 6 requests for committees to meet during today's session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority leaders.

Pursuant to Rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today's session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

The Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, May 2, 2017, at 9:30 a.m.

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

The Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, May 2, 2017, at 10 a.m. to conduct a hearing entitled ''Examining the U.S.-EU Covered Agreement.''

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

The Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate in order to hold a hearing on Tuesday, May 2, 2017, at 10 a.m. in Room 366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building in Washington, DC.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Senate Select Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, May 2, 2017, at 10 a.m., to hold a hearing entitled ''Nominations.''

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, May 2, 2017, at 10:30 a.m., in room SD–226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Senate Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during the session of the 115th Congress of the U.S. Senate on Tuesday, May 2, 2017, at 2 p.m.

MODERNIZING GOVERNMENT TRAVEL ACT

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 40, H.R. 274.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 274) to provide for reimbursement for the use of modern travel services by Federal employees traveling on official Government business, and for other purposes.

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

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The bill (H.R. 274) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

DHS SAVE ACT

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 41, H.R. 366.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 366) to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to direct the Under Secretary for Management of the Department of Homeland Security to make certain improvements in managing the Department's vehicle fleet, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, with amendments, as follows:

(The part of the bill intended to be stricken is shown in boldface brackets and the parts of the bill intended to be inserted are shown in italics.)

H.R. 366

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''DHS Stop Asset and Vehicle Excess Act'' or the ''DHS SAVE Act''.

SEC. 2. DHS VEHICLE FLEETS.

Section 701 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 341) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(5), by inserting ''vehicle fleets (under subsection (c)),'' after ''equipment,'';

(2) by redesignating subsections (c) and (d) as subsections (d) and (e), respectively; and

(3) by inserting after subsection (b) the following new subsection:

''(c) VEHICLE FLEETS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out responsibilities regarding vehicle fleets pursuant to subsection (a)(5), the Under Secretary for Management shall be responsible for overseeing and managing vehicle fleets throughout the Department. The Under Secretary shall also be responsible for the following:

''(A) Ensuring that components are in compliance with Federal law, Federal regulations, executive branch guidance, and Department policy (including associated guidance) relating to fleet management and use of vehicles from home to work.

''(B) Developing and distributing a standardized vehicle allocation methodology and fleet management plan for components to use to determine optimal fleet size in accordance with paragraph (4).

''(C) Ensuring that components formally document fleet management decisions.

''(D) Approving component fleet management plans, vehicle leases, and vehicle acquisitions.

''(2) COMPONENT RESPONSIBILITIES.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Component heads—

''(i) shall—

''(I) comply with Federal law, Federal regulations, executive branch guidance, and Department policy (including associated guidance) relating to fleet management and use of vehicles from home to work;

''(II) ensure that data related to fleet management is accurate and reliable;

''(III) use such data to develop a vehicle allocation tool derived by using the standardized vehicle allocation methodology provided by the Under Secretary for Management to determine the optimal fleet size for the next fiscal year and a fleet management plan; and

''(IV) use vehicle allocation methodologies and fleet management plans to develop annual requests for funding to support vehicle fleets pursuant to paragraph (6); and

''(ii) may not, except as provided in subparagraph (B), lease or acquire new vehicles or replace existing vehicles without prior approval from the Under Secretary for Management pursuant to paragraph (5)(B).

''(B) EXCEPTION REGARDING CERTAIN LEASING AND ACQUISITIONS.—If exigent circumstances warrant such, a component head may lease or acquire a new vehicle or replace an existing vehicle without prior approval from the Under Secretary for Management. If under such exigent circumstances a component head so leases, acquires, or replaces a vehicle, such component head shall provide to the Under Secretary an explanation of such circumstances.

''(3) ONGOING OVERSIGHT.—

''(A) QUARTERLY MONITORING.—In accordance with paragraph (4), the Under Secretary for Management shall collect, on a quarterly basis, information regarding component vehicle fleets, including information on fleet size, composition, cost, and vehicle utilization.

''(B) AUTOMATED INFORMATION.—The Under Secretary for Management shall seek to achieve a capability to collect, on a quarterly basis, automated information regarding component vehicle fleets, including the number of trips, miles driven, hours and days used, and the associated costs of such mileage for leased vehicles.

''(C) MONITORING.—The Under Secretary for Management shall track and monitor component information provided pursuant to subparagraph (A) and, as appropriate, subparagraph (B), to ensure that component vehicle fleets are the optimal fleet size and cost effective. The Under Secretary shall use such information to inform the annual component fleet analyses referred to in paragraph (4).

''(4) ANNUAL REVIEW OF COMPONENT FLEET ANALYSES.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—To determine the optimal fleet size and associated resources needed for each fiscal year beginning with fiscal year 2018, component heads shall annually submit to the Under Secretary for Management a vehicle allocation tool and fleet management plan using information described in paragraph (3)(A). Such tools and plans may be submitted in classified form if a component head determines that such is necessary to protect operations or mission requirements.

''(B) VEHICLE ALLOCATION TOOL.—Component heads *shall* develop a vehicle allocation tool in accordance with subclause (III) of paragraph (2)(A)(i) that includes an analysis of the following:

''(i) Vehicle utilization data, including the number of trips, miles driven, hours and days used, and the associated costs of such mileage for leased vehicles, in accordance with such paragraph.

''(ii) The role of vehicle fleets in supporting mission requirements for each component.

''(iii) Any other information determined relevant by such component heads.

''(C) FLEET MANAGEMENT PLANS.—Component heads shall use information described in subparagraph (B) to develop a fleet management plan for each such component. Such

fleet management plans shall include the following:

''(i) A plan for how each such component may achieve optimal fleet size determined by the vehicle allocation tool required under such subparagraph, including the elimination of excess vehicles in accordance with paragraph (5), if applicable.

''(ii) A cost benefit analysis supporting such plan.

''(iii) A schedule each such component will follow to obtain optimal fleet size.

''(iv) Any other information determined relevant by component heads.

''(D) REVIEW.—The Under Secretary for Management shall review and make a determination on the results of each component's vehicle allocation tool and fleet management plan under this paragraph to ensure each such component's vehicle fleets are the optimal fleet size and that components are in compliance with applicable Federal law, Federal regulations, executive branch guidance, and Department policy (including associated guidance) pursuant to paragraph (2) relating to fleet management and use of vehicles from home to work. The Under Secretary shall use such tools and plans when reviewing annual component requests for vehicle fleet funding in accordance with paragraph (6).

''(5) GUIDANCE TO DEVELOP FLEET MANAGEMENT PLANS.—The Under Secretary for Management shall provide guidance, pursuant to paragraph (1)(B), on how component heads may achieve optimal fleet size in accordance with paragraph (4), including processes for the following:

''(A) Leasing or acquiring additional vehicles or replacing existing vehicles, if determined necessary.

''(B) Disposing of excess vehicles that the Under Secretary determines should not be reallocated under subparagraph (C).

''(C) Reallocating excess vehicles to other components that may need temporary or long-term use of additional vehicles.

''(6) ANNUAL REVIEW OF VEHICLE FLEET FUNDING REQUESTS.—As part of the annual budget process, the Under Secretary for Management shall review and make determinations regarding annual component requests for funding for vehicle fleets. If component heads have not taken steps in furtherance of achieving optimal fleet size in the prior fiscal year pursuant to paragraphs (4) and (5), the Under Secretary shall provide rescission recommendations to the Committee on Appropriations and the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Appropriations and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate regarding such component vehicle fleets.

''(7) ACCOUNTABILITY FOR VEHICLE FLEET MANAGEMENT.—

''(A) PROHIBITION ON CERTAIN NEW VEHICLE LEASES AND ACQUISITIONS.—The Under Secretary for Management and component heads may not approve in any fiscal year beginning with fiscal year 2019 a vehicle lease, acquisition, or replacement request if such component heads did not comply in the prior fiscal year with paragraph (4).

''(B) PROHIBITION ON CERTAIN PERFORMANCE COMPENSATION.—No Department official with vehicle fleet management responsibilities may receive annual performance compensation in pay in any fiscal year beginning with fiscal year 2019 if such official did not comply in the prior fiscal year with paragraph (4).

''(C) PROHIBITION ON CERTAIN CAR SERVICES.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no senior executive service official of the Department whose office has a vehicle fleet may receive access to a car service in any fiscal year beginning with fiscal year 2019 if such official did not comply in the prior fiscal year with paragraph (4).

''(8) MOTOR POOL.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Under Secretary for Management may determine the feasibility of operating a vehicle motor pool to permit components to share vehicles as necessary to support mission requirements to reduce the number of excess vehicles in the Department.

''(B) REQUIREMENTS.—The determination of feasibility of operating a vehicle motor pool under subparagraph (A) shall—

''(i) include—

''(I) regions in the United States in which multiple components with vehicle fleets are located in proximity to one another, or a significant number of employees with authorization to use vehicles are located; and

''(II) law enforcement vehicles;

''(ii) cover the National Capital Region; and

''(iii) take into account different mission requirements.

''(C) REPORT.—The Secretary shall include in the Department's next annual performance report required under current law the results of the determination under this paragraph.

''(9) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

''(A) COMPONENT HEAD.—The term 'component head' means the head of any component of the Department with a vehicle fleet.

''(B) EXCESS VEHICLE.—The term 'excess vehicle' means any vehicle that is not essential to support mission requirements of a component.

''(C) OPTIMAL FLEET SIZE.—The term 'optimal fleet size' means, with respect to a particular component, the appropriate number of vehicles to support mission requirements of such component.

''(D) VEHICLE FLEET.—The term 'vehicle fleet' means all owned, commercially leased, or Government-leased vehicles of the Department or of a component of the Department, as the case may be, including vehicles used for law enforcement and other purposes.''.

[SEC. 3. GAO REPORT AND INSPECTOR GENERAL REVIEW.

(a) GAO REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate a report on the following:

(1) The status of efforts at achieving a capability to collect automated information as required under subsection (c)(3) of section 701 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 341), as added by section 2 of this Act, and any challenges that remain with respect to achieving the capability to collect, assess, and report vehicle fleet (as such term in defined in subsection (c)(9) of such section 701) data for the purpose of determining vehicle utilization.

(2) The extent to which the Under Secretary for Management has identified and addressed any relevant security concerns, including cybersecurity risks, related to such automation.

(3) The extent to which the Under Secretary collects, assesses, and reports on vehicle fleet event data recorder data.

(b) INSPECTOR GENERAL REVIEW.—The Inspector General of the Department of Homeland Security shall—

(1) review implementation of subsection (c)(4) of section 701 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 341), as added by section 2 of this Act, for fiscal years 2018 and 2020, and shall provide, upon request, to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate information regarding any such review; and

(2) submit to the committees specified in paragraph (1) a report, not later than 6 months after completion of the second review required under such paragraph, regarding the effectiveness of such subsection with respect to cost avoidance, savings realized, and component operations.]

SEC. 3. INSPECTOR GENERAL REVIEW.

The Inspector General of the Department of Homeland Security shall—

(1) conduct a review of the implementation of subsection (c)(4) of section 701 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 341), as added by section 2 of this Act, for fiscal year 2019, which shall include analysis of the effectiveness of such subsection (c)(4) with respect to cost avoidance, savings realized, and component operations; and

(2) provide, upon request, to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives information regarding the review required under paragraph (1).

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported amendments be considered and agreed to, the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The committee-reported amendments were agreed to.

The amendments were ordered to be engrossed, and the bill to be read a third time.

The bill was read the third time.

The bill (H.R. 366), as amended, was passed.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF NATIONAL SAFE DIGGING MONTH

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be discharged from further consideration of and the Senate now proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 137.

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

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 137) supporting the goals and ideals of National Safe Digging Month.

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

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 137) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of April 24, 2017, under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF WORLD MALARIA DAY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 149, submitted earlier today.

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

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 149) supporting the goals and ideals of World Malaria Day.

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

Mr. MCCONNELL. I know of no further debate on the measure.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. If there is no further debate, the question is on agreeing to the resolution.

The resolution (S. Res. 149) was agreed to.

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

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

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under ''Submitted Resolutions.'')

ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY, MAY 3, 2017

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 9:30 a.m., Wednesday, May 3; further, that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; finally, that following leader remarks, 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.

PROGRAM

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, for the information of all Senators, we expect to have a rollcall vote on the motion to proceed to H.J. Res. 66, the States' savings CRA resolution of disapproval, between 10:30 and 11 a.m. tomorrow morning.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M. TOMORROW

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

There being no objection, the Senate, at 5:59 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, May 3, 2017, at 9:30 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

MARSHALL BILLINGSLEA, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR TERRORIST FINANCING, DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY, VICE DANIEL L. GLASER.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

RUSSELL VOUGHT, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET, VICE BRIAN C. DEESE.

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate May 2, 2017:

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

JAY CLAYTON, OF NEW YORK, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION FOR A TERM EXPIRING JUNE 5, 2021.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZE THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF KAPPA ALPHA PSI FRATERNITY, INC.

HON. CEDRIC L. RICHMOND

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 2, 2017

Mr. RICHMOND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the achievements of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Incorporated.

Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Incorporated is a collegiate Greek-letter fraternity with a predominantly African-American membership. Since the fraternity's founding on January 5, 1911 on the campus of Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana, the fraternity has never limited membership based on color, creed or national origin. The fraternity has over 150,000 members with 721 undergraduate and alumni chapters in every state of the United States, and International chapters in the United Kingdom, Germany, Korea, Japan, United States Virgin Islands, Nigeria, and South Africa. Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Incorporated celebrated its 100th anniversary on January 5, 2011, and is one of only four predominantly African American collegiate fraternities to do so.

Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Incorporated was founded by ten African-American college students, the Elder Watson Diggs, Dr. Ezra Dee Alexander, Dr. Byron K. Armstrong, Attorney Henry T. Asher, Dr. Marcus P. Blakemore, Paul W. Caine, George W. Edmond, Dr. Guy L. Grant, Edward G. Irvin, John M. Lee.

The fraternity sponsors programs providing community service, social welfare and academic scholarship through the Kappa Alpha Psi Foundation and is a supporter of the United Negro College Fund and Habitat for Humanity, the Saint Jude Children's Research Hospital, the Guide Right Service Program, along with the Kappa Leadership and Development League.

In addition to the community service contributions made by Kappa men, these gentlemen also make contributions and achieve in every field of human endeavor. Kappa men are leaders in the fields of law, business, education, healthcare, athletics and entertainment. Also, eight members of the Congressional Black Caucus are proud members of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Incorporated: SANFORD D. BISHOP, Jr.; WILLIAM LACY CLAY, Jr.; JOHN CONYERS, Jr.; ALCEE L. HASTINGS; HAKEEM JEFFRIES; AL LAWSON; DONALD MCEACHIN; and BENNIE G. THOMPSON.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud the philanthropic and achieving spirit of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Incorporated. As a hard-working and generous group of men, you are admired by many for the vigor that you possess and for the service that you render to others.

CONGRATULATING WILLIAM A. SCOTT ON HIS 100TH BIRTHDAY

HON. ADAM KINZINGER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 2, 2017

Mr. KINZINGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate William A. Scott of New Brunswick, New Jersey on turning 100 this May. Mr. Scott is the grandfather of my constituent, Michael Koolidge—a fellow veteran and syndicated radio host in Rockford, Illinois.

When World War II broke out, Mr. Scott answered the call of duty and enlisted in the U.S. Navy. "Scotty" as his fellow sailors called him, was a Seaman Second Class and spent time working on torpedo bomber planes that were eventually deployed throughout the world in the Allied war effort. During his service, Mr. Scott was awarded the American Theater Ribbon and the World War Two Victory Medal.

Following America's victory, Mr. Scott returned to work at the Calco Chemical Company in Bound Brook, New Jersey, working there for the next several decades as a Plastics and Banbury Operator. After retirement, Mr. Scott traveled with his wife, Betty to all 48 continental states in the same car, a Volkswagen Beetle to see everything this great country of ours had to offer.

In addition to volunteering in his community for the Meadows Foundation historic preservation group, Mr. Scott has been a member of the American Legion Post 12 in Somerville, New Jersey for four decades, where he held several key positions, such as Sergeant at Arms and Honor Guard. He has continued to provide numerous memorial services for fellow veterans and servicemen during his time at the American Legion Post 12.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Sixteenth Congressional District, I would like to sincerely congratulate William, his grandson, Michael, and the rest of their family on this amazing milestone and life achievement.

CELEBRATING COMMERCE TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY LIBRARY

HON. DAVID A. TROTT

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 2, 2017

Mr. TROTT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the opening of the new Commerce Township Community Library.

Since 2005, the Commerce Township Community Library has served the residents of Commerce Township and Wolverine Lake by providing a wealth of knowledge for those of every generation.

This year, they moved to a new location, one more centrally located within our community, representing the vital role they play as an educational epicenter for residents.

Commerce Township Community Library's new location now offers a children's reading room, allowing our community's youngest minds to foster their creativity and imagination in a space created just for them.

The over 10,000 additional square feet offered by their new facility allows staff to continue to curate and grow their collection while preserving the vast knowledge already housed on their shelves.

In an age of ever-changing technology, the dedicated staff who serve at Commerce Township Community Library have ensured they continue to evolve in a 21st century world, offering eBooks, eAudiobooks, and eMagazines, along with free technology classes.

As a place of learning and discovery, I applaud the Commerce Township Community Library for the vital role they play in fostering the continued learning and intellectual growth of our entire community. I look forward to witnessing all of the great work they continue to do as they serve our community from their new facility.

ANNIVERSARY OF THE L'AMBIANCE PLAZA COLLAPSE

HON. JAMES A. HIMES

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 2, 2017

Mr. HIMES. Mr. Speaker, April 23rd marked the thirtieth anniversary of one of the gravest tragedies in the history of the State of Connecticut: the collapse of L'Ambiance Plaza, a 16-story tower under construction in Bridgeport.

I rise today to extend my condolences and pay tribute to the 28 workers who lost their lives in the collapse, the 22 survivors whose lives were forever changed, and the countless first responders and volunteers who spent ten days searching the debris for their friends and neighbors. The victims were family in the House of Labor—a collection of carpenters, ironworkers, and pipefitters—whose tragic and preventable deaths remind us that we must never give up the fight for safer workplaces.

Today, 30 years on since this tragedy at L'Ambiance Plaza, I give my sincere thanks to the Fairfield County Labor Council, the Fairfield County Building Trades, the Connecticut State Building Trades and the Connecticut AFL–CIO—all of whom have advocated for safer construction sites and workplaces. We owe it to the victims of this disaster to advocate for measures that make Connecticut's workplaces safer and protect the good men and women of Connecticut's workforce.

THE FIRST 100 DAYS OF THE TRUMP PRESIDENCY AND ITS IMPACT ON MINORITY COMMUNITIES

SPEECH OF

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 1, 2017

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, thank you, Congressman VEASEY, Congressman MCEACHIN and Congresswoman PLASKETT, for organizing tonight's special order hour on environmental justice and Trump's 100 days: ''What do we have to lose?'' I'd also like to thank Chair RICHMOND for his tireless leadership as the CBC continues to be the conscience of the Congress.

Mr. Speaker, we have a lot to lose under this administration—who at every turn—wants to roll back protections for our communities and for our environment. And make no mistake: communities of color are most impacted by these decisions and often bear the brunt of climate change and pollution.

In my home district, West Oakland residents are disproportionately exposed to dirty air pollution that is 90 times higher than the average Californian. 90 times. As a result, many West Oakland residents experience more asthma attacks, heart failures and strokes. On average, West Oakland residents have a higher death rate than other Californians just because of where they live. This is a shame and a disgrace. But these inequalities are not new.

In 2013, the American Academy of Allergy and Asthma found that one in six African American children and one in nine Latino children suffered from asthma compared to just 1 in 15 white children. These numbers are unacceptable and they should be a wake-up call to all of us to do more to fight for environmental justice. But with the current administration we must be ready for an uphill battle.

Last weekend marked President Trump's 100 days in office—which is really just 100 days of chaos, corruption, and dysfunction. In fact, the Trump administration has shown in the past 100 days that they are more committed to padding their pockets than protecting our planet. In three months, they have:

Approved the Keystone pipeline

Approved the Dakota Access Pipeline

Proposed devastating cuts to the EPA

And allowed dumping of coal mining waste into our streams.

And with every executive order rolling back President Obama's progress on climate change issues, the current administration lives up to its belief that saving our planet is ''a waste of [America's] money.'' But I stand here today to say ''Not on our watch.''

Our children's air, drinking water and futures depend on our ability to hold corporations accountable for their emissions and waste.

For some in our country, this is literally a matter of life and death, as communities of color are more likely to live near polluting facilities or be ignored when they notice high levels of lead in their water systems. We are all connected to our environment. It impacts everyone. It is time we recognize that an injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.

Mr. Speaker, the past 100 days have shown us that this will be a long and arduous battle. But we cannot afford to get tired—our very existence is at stake. We must continue to build a movement that can fight back against the constant attacks on our communities and on our planet. That's why we're here today as members of the Congressional Black Caucus: to show unified resistance by fighting for our communities, our environment, and especially our planet.

RECOGNIZING DR. CLIFF L. WOOD

HON. NITA M. LOWEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 2, 2017

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Dr. Cliff L. Wood, who will retire from his position as President of Rockland Community College in Suffern, New York, this June.

Dr. Wood has dedicated more than 50 years of service to community college education, having served in senior management positions at five institutions. In his 13 years as President of Rockland Community College, Dr. Wood has spearheaded several important initiatives including a subsidized childcare center for students and teachers and a new technology center, and has overseen growth in the College's enrollment, community involvement and workforce development. His tireless efforts at the College have helped improve the lives of thousands of students.

In addition to his work at Rockland Community College, Dr. Wood has volunteered his leadership to many organizations, including Big Brothers Big Sisters, the Rockland Holocaust Museum & Study Center, Rockland Business Association, and Rockland Economic Development Corporation. He served as President of the New York Community College Association of Presidents, and is a member of New York Governor Andrew Cuomo's Mid-Hudson Regional Economic Development Council.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. Wood's many accomplishments in higher education, economic development and civic involvement have had an undeniably positive impact on the communities he has served. I commend him for his outstanding work, and I urge my colleagues to join me in congratulating him for his five decades of dedicated service.

MAHAM SEWANI SELECTED TO REPRESENT TEXAS AT CONGRESS OF FUTURE MEDICAL LEADERS

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 2, 2017

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Maham Sewani of Sugar Land, for being chosen to represent Texas as a Delegate at the Congress of Future Medical Leaders by the National Academy of Future Physicians and Medical Scientists.

Maham was nominated for this position thanks to her excellent academic record and desire to enter the medical profession. Through this program, she will meet some important leaders in the medical field, including Nobel Prize winners and top medical school deans. The Congress of Future Medical Leaders is hosted to help motivate the top students in the country to pursue their desired careers in the medical field. Maham is a student at Awty International School and a member of its debate team.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Maham Sewani for being selected for this honor. We are extremely proud and expect great things from her in the future.

IN RECOGNITION OF MATTHEW BUTSON ON HIS OFFER OF APPOINTMENT TO ATTEND THE UNITED STATES NAVAL ACADEMY

HON. ROBERT E. LATTA

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 2, 2017

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Speaker, it is my great pleasure to pay special tribute to an outstanding student from Ohio's Fifth Congressional District. I am pleased to announce that Matthew Butson of Metamora, Ohio has been offered an appointment to the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland.

Matthew's offer of appointment permits him to attend the United States Naval Academy this fall with the incoming Class of 2021. Attending one of our nation's military academies not only offers the opportunity to serve our country, but also guarantees a world-class education while undertaking one of the most challenging and rewarding experiences of their lives.

Matthew brings an enormous amount of leadership, service, and dedication to the incoming Class of 2021. While attending St. John's Jesuit High School in Toledo, Ohio, Matthew was a member of the National Honor Society, as well as serving on student council and as class vice president his senior year.

Throughout high school, Matthew participated in football and basketball, serving as co-captain of the football team his senior year. I am confident that Matthew will carry the lessons of his student and athletic leadership to the Naval Academy.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Matthew Butson on the offer of his appointment to the United States Naval Academy. Our service academies offer the finest military training and education available. I am positive that Matthew will excel during his career at the Naval Academy, and I ask my colleagues to join me in extending their best wishes to him as he begins his service to our Nation.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TOM MARINO

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 2, 2017

Mr. MARINO. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to attend votes on May 1, 2017 due to a family medical issue. Had I been present, I would have voted as follows: YEA for rollcall vote 237, YEA for rollcall vote 238, and YEA for rollcall vote 239.

PRESIDENT TRUMP'S FIRST 100 DAYS LEAVE AMERICA WEAKER

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 2, 2017

Ms. McCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, this past Saturday marked President Donald Trump's 100th day in the White House. Over the last 100 days, Mr. Trump's policy proposals, irresponsible rhetoric, and controversial appointments have made our families and communities less secure, our businesses less confident about the future, and our nation more isolated in the world.

Despite total Republican control of Congress, President Trump has been incapable of governing responsibly. Just this week—because of Republican dithering—Congress was forced to pass another stopgap spending bill to keep the government open for just seven days, denying Americans the certainty they deserve.

The first 100 days have revealed a President who is proposing legislation and taking executive actions that hurt working Americans at every turn.

TrumpCare, the Republicans' disastrous health care bill, leaves 24 million Americans uninsured and causes out-of-pocket costs to skyrocket. It forces older Americans to pay higher premiums, rations health care for vulnerable children, seniors, and people with disabilities, and weakens the solvency of Medicare.

Huge opposition from Democrats and active, engaged citizens has stopped this legislation for now, but Mr. Trump is still working to sabotage the Affordable Care Act. He has even threatened to cause the total collapse of our health care system and undermine the coverage we all depend on for purely political purposes. That is despicable.

If working families were unsettled by Mr. Trump's threat to their health care, his proposed budget shows just how far backwards he wants to take our country. He wants to slash job training programs, hurt American seniors by cutting Meals on Wheels, slow down our communities by gutting infrastructure funding, and eliminate important investments in health research, education, and the arts and humanities. And Mr. Trump's backwards budget strips the Environmental Protection Agency of the resources it needs to protect public health and safety.

As the Ranking Member of the House Interior-Environment Appropriations Subcommittee, I know that the attack on the EPA's budget is just one part of Mr. Trump's all-out war on clean air, clean water, and our public lands. In his first 100 days, Mr. Trump and EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt have undone protections for clean water, allowed the continued use of dangerous neurotoxins, and reversed clean air rules that help stem the threat of climate change. In doing so, they have repeatedly ignored the findings of their own scientists.

Mr. Trump and Mr. Pruitt's denial of climate science and pledges to withdraw the United States from the Paris Climate Agreement are transforming our nation from the global leader in combating climate change into an environmental rogue state. The only winners? Billionaires, the fossil fuel industry, and polluters that profit at the expense of our families, our communities, and our planet.

Billionaires and big corporations are also the big winners in Mr. Trump's so-called tax reform plan. His proposal amounts to a massive giveaway to the wealthiest Americans adding trillions to the federal debt and leaving working families holding the bag. Since Mr. Trump has broken with precedent and kept his tax returns secret, we can only speculate about how much he and his family businesses will benefit from his tax plan.

In fact, until Mr. Trump releases his tax returns, a cloud of suspicion will hang over his entire White House. Given that Russia interfered in our electoral process to help Mr. Trump win the election and his first National Security Adviser, Michael Flynn, left amid a Russia-related scandal, Americans deserve a complete and independent investigation. Yet Congressional Republicans continue to cover up for President Trump and are still blocking accountability and transparency.

Every time President Trump has made alarming decisions, from an unconstitutional ban on immigrants and refugees to attacks on women's health care at home and abroad, millions of engaged Americans have spoken up and spoken out against his dangerous and divisive policies.

In Minnesota, I have seen engaged citizens make their voices heard at my town hall meetings and vibrant demonstrations, like the Women's March, the Tax March, and the March for Science. There is a consensus among the tens of thousands of Minnesotans I have spoken to: We want America to move forward and we will work to resist and stop Trump administration policies and proposals that take our nation backwards.

After President Trump's first 100 days, it is clear that we must join together to hold his White House accountable. In the next 100 days, and all the days that follow, I will keep standing alongside my constituents fighting for the values we believe in.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 47TH ANNUAL CAP-TO-CAP PROGRAM

HON. DORIS O. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 2, 2017

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Sacramento Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce—and, in particular, Program Chair Erica Taylor—for leading the 47th Annual Capitol-to-Capitol program this year. As this delegation of business, civic and political representatives from the six-county Sacramento region concludes its program in Washington, D.C., I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing these fine Sacramentans.

For nearly 50 years, the Sacramento Metro Chamber has organized an annual delegation lobbying program in Washington, D.C. This year, over 300 leaders from the Sacramento region descended on the capital for a series of meetings, field tours, and receptions to speak collectively as a unified voice for Sacramento's business community. The delegation of volunteers organized itself into 12 policy committees covering key priority issues for the Sacramento region, such as flood protection, transportation, health care, and workforce development. I always enjoy meeting with the delegation teams and hearing about a variety of topics that are important to my hometown.

I would especially like to commend the 2017 Cap-to-Cap Chair, Erica Taylor of Golden One Credit Union. As a leader in the community, Erica spends her time serving on boards and organizations with the goal of improving Sacramento for all. She has immersed herself in Chamber activities for years, including serving as a founding member of MetroEDGE, graduating from the Chamber's Leadership Sacramento Program, and serving on the Chamber's board of directors. Outside of the Chamber, Erica currently serves on the board of directors for KVIE, the Los Rios Foundation, and Sacramento Covered. Her commitment to the Sacramento Region is clear from her extensive civic involvement, and I want to congratulate her on the impeccable job she did organizing and leading this year's Cap-to-Cap program.

Mr. Speaker, in large part due to Erica's leadership, Cap-to-Cap this year was a significant success for the Sacramento region. I am honored to recognize the Metro Chamber's delegation for its economic and civic contributions to the Sacramento Region. On behalf of the people of Sacramento and the Sixth Congressional District of California, I ask all my colleagues to join me in commending their unwavering commitment to Sacramento's growth and development.

JUN-YONG WINS TEXAS STATE BAR ESSAY CONTEST

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 2, 2017

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Jun-Yong Kim of Katy, for placing first in the State Bar of Texas Law Day writing contest.

The theme of this year's competition was "The 14th Amendment: Transforming American Democracy." Jun-Yong won first with his essay, "Monsters of My American Dream," which explores the meaning of the 14th Amendment through his perspective—a South Korean immigrant. Jun-Yong represented the Katy Bar Association and will be recognized for his first place win at the Texas Law Center in Austin, TX, where he will receive a $1,000 scholarship. Jun-Yong is a student at Seven Lakes High School.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Jun-Yong for winning first place in the State Bar of Texas Law Day contest. We are very proud of his talented work and look forward to his future successes.

IN RECOGNITION OF ABIGAIL YEAGER ON HER OFFER OF APPOINTMENT TO ATTEND THE UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY

HON. ROBERT E. LATTA

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 2, 2017

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Speaker, it is my great pleasure to pay special tribute to an outstanding student from Ohio's Fifth Congressional District. I am pleased to announce that Abigail Yeager of Holland, Ohio has been offered an appointment to the United States Military Academy in West Point, New York.

Abigail's offer of appointment permits her to attend the United States Military Academy this fall with the incoming Class of 2021. Attending one of our nation's military academies not only offers the opportunity to serve our country, but also guarantees a world-class education while undertaking one of the most challenging and rewarding experiences of their lives.

Abigail brings an enormous amount of leadership, service, and dedication to the incoming Class of 2021. While attending Springfield High School in Holland, Ohio, Abigail established a tutoring program at Holland Elementary School, received a Youth Jefferson Award for Public Service, and was ranked third in her class.

Throughout high school, Abigail participated in soccer, cross-country, track and field, and swimming, earning multiple varsity letters. Abigail also served as a Student Ambassador to the Springfield Local Schools Board of Education. I am confident that Abigail will carry the lessons of her student and athletic leadership to the Military Academy.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Abigail Yeager on her offer of appointment to the United States Military Academy. Our service academies offer the finest military training and education available. I am positive that Abigail will excel during her career at West Point, and I ask my colleagues to join me in extending their best wishes to her as she begins her service to our Nation.

TO HONOR THE LIFE OF FDNY FIREFIGHTER WILLIAM TOLLEY

HON. GRACE MENG

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 2, 2017

Ms. MENG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today along with the support of my colleague, Congressman SUOZZI, to honor the life, service, and bravery of New York City firefighter William Tolley, who was killed in the line of duty on April 20, 2017.

Congressman SUOZZI and I are saddened that New York has lost such a beloved hero. William Tolley was a courageous firefighter with Ladder Company 135 in Glendale, Queens and a respected community member on Long Island. Thousands attended his funeral at St. Martin of Tours Church in Bethpage, Long Island, and many Long Island residents decorated their streets with red ribbons in remembrance. William's memory was also honored in Queens as the flag at the firehouse of Engine Company 286/Ladder Company 135 was flown at half-mast on the evening of his death. In addition, many Queens residents paid their respects with a makeshift memorial outside the firehouse on Myrtle Avenue. We believe that William's dedication to protecting Queens citizens from harm and his service to the Queens community will never be forgotten.

As a heroic New York City Fire Department (FDNY) veteran for fourteen years, William not only risked his life in the line of duty for his profession, but he also volunteered at the Bethpage Fire Department on Long Island. Congressman SUOZZI and I commend William's unwavering selflessness that led him to dedicate both his career and free time to protecting fellow community members.

William was not only a hero in the FDNY, but he was a beloved father, husband, brother, friend, and neighbor. Outside of the uniform, William enjoyed being the drummer in a heavy metal band and being an active presence in his daughter's school. William is survived by his wife, Marie, and his 8-year old daughter, Isabella.

Congressman SUOZZI and I offer our deepest condolences to William's family, friends, and the FDNY during this difficult time.

INTRODUCTION OF HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF CONGRESS THAT THE PARTHENON MARBLES SHOULD BE RETURNED TO GREECE

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 2, 2017

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce a Concurrent Resolution expressing the sense of Congress that the Parthenon Marbles, currently held in the British Museum, should be returned to Greece. Approximately 200 years ago, while Greece was under Ottoman rule, the British nobleman Thomas Bruce, seventh Earl of Elgin, removed over 100 pieces of sculptures known as the Parthenon Marbles and transported them to the United Kingdom. The Marbles were part of a frieze that adorned the Temple of Athena. In 1816, the British Parliament voted to purchase the Marbles from Lord Elgin and they now reside in the British Museum. The other half of the Marbles that comprise the frieze are in the New Acropolis Museum in Athens alongside plaster replicas of the Marbles that were taken. Despite years of good faith efforts by the Greek Government to retain the Marbles, it has been unable to negotiate an agreement with its British counterparts to return the Marbles to Greece.

I am pleased that several Members of the British Parliament have recently expressed support for transferring ownership of the Marbles back to Greece and return these cherished artifacts to their rightful home. The Parthenon marbles are some of Greece's greatest examples of artistic expression and beauty, and should be on display in their country of origin. They are vital pieces of Greek history that belong to the Greek people. This resolution calls upon the two countries to come to an agreement to finally return these treasures to their rightful home.

I want to thank Rep. GUS BILIRAKIS, with whom I co-chair the Congressional Caucus on Hellenic Issues, and Rep. DONALD PAYNE, Jr. for joining me as co-sponsors on this important resolution. Rep. PAYNE's father and our former colleague, the late Rep. Donald Payne Sr., was a great champion in this effort to return the Parthenon Marbles to Greece. I am proud to continue to call for an agreement that will put an end to this centuries-old dispute, and I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

WELCOME ALEXANDER FANCOURT MORRIS, JR.

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 2, 2017

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to congratulate Alex Morris, the Deputy District Director of the Second Congressional District of South Carolina, and his wife, Rebekah, on the birth of their son. Alexander Fancourt "Court" Morris, Jr. was born at 3:19 a.m. on Wednesday, April 12, 2017, at Palmetto Health Baptist in Columbia, South Carolina. Court weighed eight pounds and fifteen ounces and measured 21 and ¼ inches long. He is the first child for the happy couple and I look forward to watching him grow as he is raised by talented parents who will be dedicated to his well-being and bright future.

I would also like to congratulate Court's grandparents, Debra Morris of Elgin, South Carolina, and Major General Robert and Barbara Livingston of West Columbia, South Carolina. Congratulations to the entire Morris and Livingston families as they welcome their newest addition of pure pride and joy.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LOUISE McINTOSH SLAUGHTER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 2, 2017

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained and missed Roll Call vote numbers 237, 238 and 239. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on votes 237, 238 and 239.

IN RECOGNITION OF OLGA BUDKE ON HER OFFER OF APPOINTMENT TO ATTEND THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE ACADEMY

HON. ROBERT E. LATTA

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 2, 2017

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Speaker, it is my great pleasure to pay special tribute to an outstanding student from Ohio's Fifth Congressional District. I am pleased to announce that Olga Budke of Findlay, Ohio has been offered an appointment to the United States Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

Olga's offer of appointment permits her to attend the United States Air Force Academy

this fall with the incoming Class of 2021. Attending one of our nation's military academies not only offers the opportunity to serve our country, but also guarantees a world-class education while undertaking one of the most challenging and rewarding experiences of their lives.

Olga brings an enormous amount of leadership, service, and dedication to the incoming Class of 2021. While attending Saint Wendelin Catholic School in Fostoria, Ohio, Olga was a member of the National Honor Society and was ranked first in her class.

Throughout high school, Olga was a USA gymnastics competitor and participated in karate, archery and cross country. She also obtained her private pilot's license. I am confident that Olga will carry the lessons of her student and athletic leadership to the Air Force Academy.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Olga Budke on the offer of her appointment to the United States Air Force Academy. Our service academies offer the finest military training and education available. I am positive that Olga will excel during her career at the Air Force Academy, and I ask my colleagues to join me in extending their best wishes to her as she begins her service to our Nation.

JOHNNY SPIRES NAMED PEARLAND POLICE CHIEF

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 2, 2017

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Johnny Spires of Pearland, TX, for being named Police Chief of the Pearland Police Department.

Johnny has over 27 years of law enforcement experience, having worked as a police officer, Sergeant, Lieutenant and Assistant Chief of Police. As Chief, he'll oversee the budget, 17 divisions and over 200 Pearland City employees, while further strengthening community ties and ensuring its safety. His years of distinguished service in the Police Department will serve him well in his new role.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Johnny Spires, the new Police Chief of the Pearland Police Department. All of Pearland will benefit from him and his commitment to safety.

RECOGNIZING THE SALVATION ARMY OF MONROE COUNTY

HON. TIM WALBERG

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 2, 2017

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Salvation Army of Monroe County for 100 years of service in the community.

The Salvation Army of Monroe County actively ministers to both the physical and spiritual needs of those in our area.

Under the leadership of Maj. Louise Blessing and Lt. Karl Blessing, the organization currently provides a wide range of programs, including a food pantry, homeless shelter, youth programs, emergency assistance, casework services, worship services, and much more.

Through all these initiatives, they offer a helping hand to the most vulnerable and spread God's love in their sphere of influence.

Mr. Speaker, organizations like the Salvation Army of Monroe County are woven into the very fabric of our community. They play a critical role in rebuilding lives, restoring hope, and serving those in need.

I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating the Salvation Army of Monroe County's 100 year anniversary, and I pray for many more years of fruitful contributions to the community.

H. RES. 187, RELATING TO EFFORTS TO RESPOND TO THE FAMINE IN SOUTH SUDAN

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 2, 2017

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank Congresswoman BASS, for bringing forth this critical resolution. I am proud to join my colleagues today in support of H. Res. 187, Relating to efforts to respond to the famine in South Sudan.

Mr. Speaker, as many of us know, the famine in South Sudan is one of the worst humanitarian crises since World War II. Fighting and violence has forced over 3 million people from their homes, driven the South Sudanese people into famine, and threatens the country's independence. As we approach South Sudan's winter season, communities facing famine will become inaccessible to humanitarian groups as roads become flooded, proving a dire need for our support and relief.

Our responsibilities as elected officials extend much farther than the boundaries of our districts. It is our congressional responsibility to support U.S. Agency for International Development in its efforts to provide aid for those facing this devastating crisis and collaborate with relief organizations to ensure that families are receiving essential resources.

If we do not act now, we jeopardize the millions of lives, put the long term security of South Sudan on the line, and threaten our goal for global peace.

While a resolution and aid alone cannot solve this problem, it can save lives. We must continue our bipartisan efforts, and move forward to allocate $1 billion in aid to ensure that all people have access to fundamental needs.

RECOGNIZING LIEUTENANT COLONEL TRENTON J. CONNER FOR HIS SERVICE TO THE NATION

HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 2, 2017

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to salute the service of Lieutenant Colonel Trenton J. Conner, who has served his nation and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania admirably as Commander of the Letterkenny Munitions Center (LEMC) in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania.

Lieutenant Colonel Conner was installed as commander of LEMC in 2015, and has since led a dynamic effort to modernize both the facilities and logistical technology that allow Letterkenny to operate as one of our nation's most efficient and effectual munitions centers. His leadership has helped turn LEMC into the Army's premier munitions center, orchestrating the distribution, maintenance, and demilitarization of munitions from around the globe.

On behalf of Pennsylvania's 9th District, I want to thank Lieutenant Colonel Conner for his selfless service, and moreover highlight the sense of purpose with which he has handled every project managed in his time at Letterkenny Munitions Center. His leadership and the progressive changes he has made will live on, and it is with the utmost appreciation with which I wish him the best as he continues to serve his nation in new capacities.

As he passes the guidon, I take great pleasure in congratulating Lieutenant Colonel Conner on his prodigious accomplishments. I thank him for his tireless devotion to duty and continued service to the state and to the nation.

IN RECOGNITION OF ALLENA ROSE ON HER OFFER OF APPOINTMENT TO ATTEND THE UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY

HON. ROBERT E. LATTA

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 2, 2017

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Speaker, it is my great pleasure to pay special tribute to an outstanding student from Ohio's Fifth Congressional District. I am pleased to announce that Allena Rose of Toledo, Ohio has been offered an appointment to the United States Military Academy in West Point, New York.

Allena's offer of appointment permits her to attend the United States Military Academy this fall with the incoming Class of 2021. Attending one of our nation's military academies not only offers the opportunity to serve our country, but also guarantees a world-class education while undertaking one of the most challenging and rewarding experiences of their lives.

Allena brings an enormous amount of leadership, service, and dedication to the incoming Class of 2021. While attending Whitmer High School in Toledo, Ohio, Allena was a member of the National Honor Society, student council and was ranked in the top five percent of her class.

Throughout high school, Allena participated in varsity and club volleyball, including serving as a floor captain. Allena also participated in the Spirit Club and Mu Alpha Theta honors society. I am confident that Allena will carry the lessons of her student and athletic leadership to the Military Academy.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Allena Rose on her offer of appointment to the United States Military Academy. Our service academies offer the finest military training and education available. I am positive that Allena will excel during her career at West Point, and I ask my colleagues to join me in extending their best wishes to her as she begins her service to our Nation.

JOHN COBEAGA

HON. DINA TITUS

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 2, 2017

Ms. TITUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to say goodbye and Godspeed to a longtime friend, John Mitchell Cobeaga. Mitch, his wife Sylvia, and their children have lived next door to us for some thirty years. We often hid the ''presents from Santa'' in our garage until Christmas morning when the children could be surprised by shiny new bikes. His law office was also next to my congressional office in downtown Las Vegas and I often visited with him there.

Mitch was well respected for his advocacy work for fellow veterans. Mitch graduated from the U.S. Airforce Academy and was a proud member of the 20th Cadet Squadron, ''Tough Twenty Trolls.'' He became a Wild Weasel fighter pilot and flew over 100 combat missions in Vietnam. After his military service, he founded the Veterans Ask-a-Lawyer program, a free legal program to help vets in need.

Mitch also had a reputation as a hero for the little guy in the courtroom where he had a commanding presence. He contributed to many of Nevada's largest cases, including the one involving the 1988 perchlorate explosion at the Pacific Engineering and Production Company which killed two people and caused billions of dollars in damage throughout the Henderson area. His colleague Robert Murdock noted that ''he had a hand in mentoring most of the lawyers in Southern Nevada at one point or another'' and should be honored by having a courtroom named for him.

Sylvia said that Mitch will be remembered for his intelligence, sense of morality, and the importance he placed on family. And he never took himself seriously, she said. He always had time for everyone he passed in the courtroom, office, and around town. We will all miss his warm laughter, his kind words, and his sage counsel very much.

RECOGNITION OF FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH CENTRALIA

HON. A. DONALD McEACHIN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 2, 2017

Mr. McEACHIN. Mr. Speaker, this year marks the 150th Anniversary of First Baptist Church Centralia, founded in 1867 in Chesterfield County, Virginia Originally Salem African Baptist Church, the African American congregation held its first 30 years of services under an arbor made of brush on a modest one-acre plot. The first building was officially erected in 1897 under the leadership of the Reverend T. H. Johnson, incorporating Gothic Revival and Colonial Revival style elements.

Later this building was remodeled by Reverend William Thomas into the historic building we know today as Centralia, featuring its signature twin towers. Under the leadership of Reverend Samuel Carter and Dr. Wilson E. Brown Shannon the church grew as a congregation and as a spiritual beacon for its members. Dr. Shannon extended the reach of the church by expanding the Samuel Moss Carter Family Life Center to accommodate up to 150 preschool children, banquet amenities to accommodate 750 occupants, and other family life ministry facilities including an indoor Olympic sized swimming pool.

Shortly after the groundbreaking of this highly anticipated Family Life Center, the Historic First Baptist Church Centralia was destroyed by fire on April 16, 1996. Rebuilt to original specifications in 1997 following the arson attack, a rededication ceremony was held in celebration. On November 22, 2014, the Historic First Baptist Church Centralia was designated a Chesterfield County Historic Landmark. A Virginia Historical Highway Marker was also erected in recognition of its historical and architectural significance in November 2015.

As First Baptist Church Centralia celebrates its 150th year anniversary, may your efforts and continued courage to spread the gospel of God through oratory teachings, community involvement and leadership be commended.

HONORING LOUIS FARINELLA

HON. ROBERT A. BRADY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 2, 2017

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my sorrow at the loss of my friend Louis Farinella. Lou was one of the most dynamic men I know.

He worked his way up from the bottom of the Philadelphia Electric Company to the post of Administration Manager. That was a sign of his talent.

He was a Democratic Committeeman in the Ward 66 B for 45 years. He was also Chairman of the Parkwood Civic Association Zoning Committee. Those were signs of his commitment to his community.

He worked for me at the Philadelphia Democratic City Committee for 22 years. That was a sign of his loyalty.

But most of all, Lou was Florence's loving husband for 56 years. They had two children, Louis III and John and four grandchildren, John, Ryan, Tyler and Angela. He loved and was loved by his sister, Marie. Those were all signs of his heart.

Mr. Speaker, Lou probably never knew how important he was to me. But, I know it. I miss him and I ask all of my colleagues to join me in giving the condolences of the House of Representatives to his family.

KATY PRINCIPAL NAMED DISTINGUISHED PRINCIPAL FINALIST

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 2, 2017

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Kwabena Mensah of Katy, for being named as a Texas National Distinguished Principal finalist by the Texas Elementary Principals and Supervisors Association (TEPSA).

Out of 123 nominations, only eight were selected as finalists for this prestigious honor. The National Distinguished Principal is the highest honor a principal can achieve, with the winner receiving $10,000 and a trip to Washington, DC, in the fall. Kwabena is the principal at Polly Ann McRoberts Elementary School and was chosen as a finalist for being an engaging leader who's created a unique learning environment. This year, Kwabena was named Principal of the Year at Katy Independent School District and the Texas Alliance of Black School Educators. Way to go.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Kwabena Mensah for earning this distinction. Our children benefit from his commitment to education and we thank him for his hard work.

IN RECOGNITION OF ELIZABETH SHAFFER ON HER OFFER OF APPOINTMENT TO ATTEND THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE ACADEMY

HON. ROBERT E. LATTA

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 2, 2017

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Speaker, it is my great pleasure to pay special tribute to an outstanding student from Ohio's Fifth Congressional District. I am pleased to announce that Elizabeth Shaffer of Hicksville, Ohio has been offered an appointment to the United States Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

Elizabeth's offer of appointment permits her to attend the United States Air Force Academy this fall with the incoming Class of 2021. Attending one of our nation's military academies not only offers the opportunity to serve our country, but also guarantees a world-class education while undertaking one of the most challenging and rewarding experiences of their lives.

Elizabeth brings an enormous amount of leadership, service, and dedication to the incoming Class of 2021. While attending Hicksville High School in Hicksville, Ohio, Elizabeth was a member of the National Honor Society and class president.

Throughout high school, Elizabeth served as team captain on the basketball, track, and volleyball teams, and participated in the marching band. I am confident that Elizabeth will carry the lessons of her student and athletic leadership to the Air Force Academy.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Elizabeth Shaffer on the offer of her appointment to the United States Air Force Academy. Our service academies offer the finest military training and education available. I am positive that Elizabeth will excel during her career at the Air Force Academy, and I ask my colleagues to join me in extending their best wishes to her as she begins her service to our Nation.

GIRLS OF STEEL

HON. MICHAEL F. DOYLE

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 2, 2017

Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend the

Girls of Steel Robotics team on winning the Engineering Inspiration Award at the 2017 Greater Pittsburgh Regional FIRST Robotics Competition in California, PA. This award celebrates outstanding success in advancing respect and appreciation for engineering within a team's school and community, and it qualified them to attend Championships in St. Louis April 26–29, 2017 for the seventh year in a row. This was their best year at Championships, where they ranked 28 out of 68, with 6 wins, 3 losses, and 1 tie match.

I think that placing so high nationally and winning the Engineering Inspiration award at the regional competition speaks volumes about the dedication these young women have demonstrated in pursuing Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math careers, sustaining their team, and collectively spending thousands of hours doing outreach in the community. Girls of Steel are often referred to as the hometown favorite robotics group and continue to be featured in videos, print media, and blog posts. In October 2016, they were represented at The White House Frontiers Conference in Pittsburgh where President Obama recognized the Girls of Steel teams.

George Kantor, Senior Systems Scientist at Carnegie Mellon University's Field Robotics Center, won the prestigious Woodie Flowers Finalist Award at the Greater Pittsburgh Regional competition. This award is presented to mentors in the robotics competition who best lead, inspire, and empower their teams using excellent communication skills.

FIRST, which stands for "For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology," is an organization dedicated to engaging students in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) fields. The FIRST Robotics Competition allows students to apply creativity and critical thinking in the demanding and competitive field of robotics, all while instilling a strong sense of pride in the participants. Hundreds of thousands of students gain practical, team-based engineering experience through FIRST every year.

As a founder and co-chair of the Congressional Robotics Caucus, I believe competitions like these are important tools for helping young people to explore potential careers in STEM. I've witnessed firsthand the remarkable economic growth and job creation that these fields can bring in my home district, and I strongly believe that these fields are crucial to our nation's future prosperity. I want to commend organizations like FIRST for the important work they do in encouraging young people to pursue STEM careers.

Sixty-three young women from 8th through 12th grades associated with schools located in and around Pittsburgh represent this year's Girls of Steel program, and in recognition of their hard work, intelligence, and teamwork, I would like to mention each of these inspiring young ladies by name. They are Alexandria Adams, Abhi Ajay, Aeryn Anderson, Peyton Balkovec, Arushi Bandi, Emilia Bianchini, Emma Burnett, Rosy Chen, Maya Cranor, Maansi Dasari, Hope DiGioia, Riley Doyle, Sofia Heller, Kristina Hilko, Madelyn Human, Rozie Fero, Corinne Hartman, Anna Jablonowski, Caroline Kenney, Isabelle Kowenhoven, Mary Laird, Jisue Lee, Agathe Legault, Rosie Li, Alice Liu, Sally Liu, Gayathri Manchella, Eve Mango, Jordan Martinez, Maia McCabe, Svea McCann, Sree Mekala, Cheyenne Meyers, Abbey Murcek, Anna Nesbitt, Anne Kailin Northam, Jimin Oh, Helen Paulini, Lehka Pendyala, Ananya Rao, Priya Ray, Maïté Sadeh, Rachel Sadeh, Lauren Scheller-Wolf, Sarah Seay, Alexa Selwood, Swathi Senthil, Kriti Shah, Vivian Shao, Lauren Shovlin, Makayla Shreve, Amari Smith, Imani Smith, Kavya Soman, Ace Song, Adison Staskiewicz, JéanMarie Trichel, Mikayla Trost, Langley Turcsanyi, Anja Vogt, Janet Wang, Rebecca Wettergreen, and Ziya Xu.

Additionally, I want to convey my sincere appreciation to the faculty and staff of Carnegie Mellon University's Field Robotics Center, who have mentored the Girls of Steel since 2010. Because of their efforts, more young women experience real-world technological challenges and learn from some of the nation's best at solving such problems. These experiences will certainly benefit these young women in the future, no matter what careers they eventually choose to pursue.

I congratulate the Girls of Steel and wish them all continued success in their academic and professional endeavors.

HONORING KATHY KRUSE

HON. JOSEPH P. KENNEDY III

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 2, 2017

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Kathleen Kruse, a long-time member of Senator Ted Kennedy's staff and a tireless advocate for arts and cultural policy. Kathy is stepping down from her role as Vice President of Institutional Affairs and Assistant Secretary of the Board of Trustees of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, where she has served with distinction for the past seven years.

Kathy had a long and accomplished career in the Senate as the Cultural Policy Advisor and Senior Counselor for Senator Kennedy for 30 years. In this capacity and throughout her tenure, she was the staff liaison for Senator Kennedy to the Kennedy Center's Board of Trustees. During her time in the Senate, she was a fierce advocate for arts organizations nationally, authored key Kennedy Center legislation and served as a trusted liaison to and friend of the Kennedy family.

I would also like to acknowledge the generosity of Kathy's daughter, Sasha, who has supported her mother's work in public service, and shared her with us during her many late nights in the Senate and at the Kennedy Center.

Kathy is a fixture in the arts and cultural landscape in Washington, DC and across the country, and she will be dearly missed. We are certain that she will find tremendous success in her next professional ventures and that she will enjoy spending more time with her family. On behalf of the Kennedy Center's Board of Trustees, I offer my sincere gratitude to Kathy for her many contributions to the United States Congress, the Kennedy Center and our nation.

REMEMBERING FORMER BOULDER CITY MAYOR ROBERT STANLEY FERRARO

HON. JACKY ROSEN

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 2, 2017

Ms. ROSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember and commemorate the life of Robert Stanley Ferraro, a pillar in our community and one of the longest-serving public officials in Nevada history, who passed away last week at the age of 81.

Robert Ferraro served on the Boulder City Council for 31 years and was Boulder City's first elected mayor, and successfully stood for election nine times. He knocked on every voter's door, and provided leadership to one of the most unique communities in our state.

Bob led the effort to maintain Boulder City's character as a special community, and to be the "Clean, Green Boulder City" that many of my constituents call home, and thousands visit each year.

He was named Nevada Public Official of the Year in 1986, Community Leader of the Year in 2001, and led a life that was a true American success story, coming from humble beginnings to be one of the great civic leaders in our state. He will be greatly missed, and my thoughts and prayers are with his family and friends.

PIMA COUNCIL ON AGING—50TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. RAÚL M. GRIJALVA

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 2, 2017

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and congratulate Pima Council on Aging on its 50th anniversary of service to older adults and their families in Congressional District Three.

As one of the nation's oldest Area Agencies on Aging, Pima Council on Aging (PCOA) has advocated on behalf of older adults since the days when 30 percent of Americans aged 60 and older lived in poverty. That number has been reduced by nearly two-thirds over the past five decades, but there is much work still to be done. PCOA's efforts are tireless and they continue to be at the forefront of advocacy and services to older adults in Pima County.

The work done by PCOA and the aging services network is more critical now than ever before. Each day, up to 10,000 baby boomers are turning 65 and over the next twenty years, 75 million baby boomers will reach retirement age. In Pima County, older adults are the fastest growing portion of the population. Continuing to work towards solutions and support systems to combat pressing concerns like the fear of falling and understanding the Medicare system are paramount to PCOA's success and our communal success.

Over the years, I've come to know the organization well. Since the beginning, Marian Lupu was the zealous driving force behind better care and programs for older adults in Pima County, the State of Arizona, nationally,

and even internationally. One such initiative for better care was creating one of the first case management service systems for older adults in the United States in the early 1970s. After her retirement, I've watched PCOA thrive in the Tucson community, being a staple in the community for my constituents and many others across the county. They have continued as the leading force behind services that support older adults in living with dignity and independence in Tucson and throughout Pima County.

Thank you for continuing to be a voice for change in our community. I look forward to working with PCOA in the future to advocate on behalf of older people in southern Arizona.

IN RECOGNITION OF SAMUEL KOVALESKI ON HIS OFFER OF APPOINTMENT TO ATTEND THE UNITED STATES MERCHANT MARINE ACADEMY

HON. ROBERT E. LATTA

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 2, 2017

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Speaker, it is my great pleasure to pay special tribute to an outstanding student from Ohio's Fifth Congressional District. I am pleased to announce that Samuel Kovaleski of Findlay, Ohio has been offered an appointment to the United States Merchant Marine Academy in Kings Point, New York.

Sam's offer of appointment permits him to attend the United States Merchant Marine Academy this fall with the incoming Class of 2021. Attending one of our nation's military academies not only offers the opportunity to serve our country, but also guarantees a world-class education while undertaking one of the most challenging and rewarding experiences of their lives.

Sam brings an enormous amount of leadership, service, and dedication to the incoming Class of 2021. While attending Findlay High School in Findlay, Ohio, Sam was a member of the Distinguished Honor Roll and student athletic leadership team.

Throughout high school, Sam participated in football, basketball, and track, serving as co-captain of the football team his senior year. I am confident that Sam will carry the lessons of his student and athletic leadership to the Merchant Marine Academy.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Samuel Kovaleski on the offer of his appointment to the United States Merchant Marine Academy. Our service academies offer the finest military training and education available. I am positive that Sam will excel during his career at the Merchant Marine Academy, and I ask my colleagues to join me in extending their best wishes to him as he begins his service to our Nation.

TRIBUTE TO YOUNG STAFF MEMBERS FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS ON BEHALF OF THE PEOPLE OF THE 18TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT OF TEXAS AND THE UNITED STATES

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 2, 2017

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, as Members of Congress we know well, perhaps better than most, how blessed our nation is to have in reserve such exceptional young men and women who will go on to become leaders in their local communities, states, and the nation in the areas of business, education, government, philanthropy, the arts and culture, and the military.

We know this because we see them and benefit from their contributions every day. Many of them work for us in our offices as junior staff members, congressional fellows, or interns and they do amazing work for and on behalf of the constituents we are privileged to represent.

Mr. Speaker, I believe there is no higher calling than the call to serve a cause larger than ourselves. That is why I ran for public office. I was inspired to serve by President Kennedy who said, ''Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country,'' and by the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. who said:

''Everybody can be great because anybody can serve. . . . You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love.''

By this measure, there are several other great young men and women who served as volunteers this year in my offices. They may toil in obscurity but their contributions to the constituents we serve are deeply appreciated. That is why today I rise to pay tribute to four extraordinary young persons for their service to my constituents in the 18th Congressional District of Texas and to the American people. They are: Marieme Foote from Ithaca College; Naomi Mulugeta from Texas Tech University; Mitch Kuhlman, from American University; and Alexandria Johnson from the Madeira School.

Mr. Speaker, the energy, intelligence, and idealism these wonderful young people brought to my office and those interning in the offices of my colleagues help keep our democracy vibrant. The insights, skills, and knowledge of the governmental process they gain from their experiences will last a lifetime and prove invaluable to them as they go about making their mark in this world.

Because of persons like them the future of our country is bright and its best days lie ahead. I wish them all well.

Mr. Speaker, I am grateful that such thoughtful committed young men and women can be found working in my office, those of my colleagues, and in every community in America. Their good works will keep America great, good, and forever young.

Daily Digest

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S2659–S2685

Measures Introduced: Twelve bills and one resolution were introduced, as follows: S. 1001–1012, and S. Res. 149. **Page S2680**

Measures Passed:

Space Weather Research and Forecasting Act: Senate passed S. 141, to improve understanding and forecasting of space weather events, after agreeing to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute. **Pages S2672–74**

Modernizing Government Travel Act: Senate passed H.R. 274, to provide for reimbursement for the use of modern travel services by Federal employees traveling on official Government business. **Page S2683**

DHS SAVE Act: Senate passed H.R. 366, to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to direct the Under Secretary for Management of the Department of Homeland Security to make certain improvements in managing the Department's vehicle fleet, after agreeing to the committee amendments. **Pages S2683–84**

National Safe Digging Month: Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation was discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 137, supporting the goals and ideals of National Safe Digging Month, and the resolution was then agreed to. **Pages S2684–85**

World Malaria Day: Senate agreed to S. Res. 149, supporting the goals and ideals of World Malaria Day. **Page S2685**

Nomination Confirmed: Senate confirmed the following nomination:

By 61 yeas to 37 nays (Vote No. EX. 118), Jay Clayton, of New York, to be a Member of the Securities and Exchange Commission for a term expiring June 5, 2021. **Page S2685**

Nominations Received: Senate received the following nominations:

Marshall Billingslea, of Virginia, to be Assistant Secretary for Terrorist Financing, Department of the Treasury.

Russell Vought, of Virginia, to be Deputy Director of the Office of Management and Budget. **Page S2685**

Messages from the House: **Page S2679**

Measures Referred: **Page S2679**

Enrolled Bills Presented: **Pages S2679–80**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages S2680–81**

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: **Pages S2681–83**

Additional Statements: **Pages S2678–79**

Authorities for Committees to Meet: **Page S2683**

Record Votes: One record vote was taken today. (Total—118) **Page S2677**

Adjournment: Senate convened at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 5:59 p.m., until 9:30 a.m. on Wednesday, May 3, 2017. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Majority Leader in today's Record on page S2685.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

U.S. EUROPEAN COMMAND

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies concluded open and closed hearings to examine United States European Command, focusing on theater assessment and European Reassurance Initiative (ERI) progress, after receiving testimony from General Curtis M. Scaparrotti, USA, Commander, United States European Command, Department of Defense.

U.S. TRANSPORTATION COMMAND

Committee on Armed Services: Committee concluded a hearing to examine United States Transportation Command, after receiving testimony from General Darren W. McDew, USAF, Commander, United

States Transportation Command, Department of Defense.

U.S.-EU COVERED AGREEMENT

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the United States-European Union covered agreement, after receiving testimony from Michael T. McRaith, former Director, Federal Insurance Office, Department of Treasury, Chicago, Illinois; Julie Mix McPeak, Tennessee Department of Commerce and Insurance Commissioner, Nashville, on behalf of the National Association of Insurance Commissioners; Michael C. Sapnar, Transatlantic Reinsurance Company, New York, New York; Stuart Henderson, Western National Mutual Insurance Company, Excelsior, Minnesota, on behalf of the National Association of Mutual Insurance Companies; and David Zaring, The Wharton School, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

SECURE RURAL SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITY SELF DETERMINATION ACT AND THE PAYMENT IN LIEU OF TAXES PROGRAM

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: Committee concluded a hearing to examine federal payments to local governments provided through the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self Determination Act and the Payment in Lieu of Taxes program and the need to provide greater fiscal certainty for resource-dependent communities with tax-exempt federal lands, after receiving testimony from Olivia Barton Ferriter, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Budget, Finance, Performance and Acquisition; Glenn Casamassa, Associate Deputy Chief, National Forest System, Forest Service, Department of Agriculture; Mayor David Landis, Ketchikan Gateway Borough, Alaska; Gordon Cruickshank, Valley County, McCall, Idaho, and Mark Whitney, Beaver County, Milford, Utah, both on behalf of the National Association of Counties; Mike Manus, Pend Oreille County, Newport, Washington; and Mark Haggerty, Headwaters Economics, Bozeman, Montana.

NOMINATION

Committee on Foreign Relations: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the nomination of Terry Branstad, of Iowa, to be Ambassador to the People's Republic of China, Department of State, after the nominee, who was introduced by Senators Grassley and Ernst, testified and answered questions in his own behalf.

RELIGIOUS HATE CRIMES

Committee on the Judiciary: Committee concluded a hearing to examine responses to the increase in religious hate crimes, including S. 662, to provide incentives for hate crime reporting, grants for State-run hate crime hotlines, a Federal private right of action for victims of hate crimes, and additional penalties for individuals convicted under the Matthew Shephard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act, after receiving testimony from Eric Treene, Special Counsel for Religious Discrimination, Civil Rights Division, Department of Justice; Jonathan A. Greenblatt, Anti-Defamation League, and Prabhjot Singh, Mount Sinai Health System, both of New York, New York; Vanita Gupta, The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, Washington, D.C.; and Will D. Johnson, International Association of Chiefs of Police, Arlington, Texas.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 22 public bills, H.R. 2281–2302 and 5 resolutions, H. Con. Res. 51–52; and H. Res. 303–304, 306 were introduced. **Pages H3066–68**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages H3068–69**

Reports Filed: Reports were filed today as follows:

H.R. 1679, to ensure that the Federal Emergency Management Agency's current efforts to modernize its grant management system includes applicant accessibility and transparency, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 115–107); and

H. Res. 305, providing for consideration of the Senate amendments to the bill (H.R. 244) to encourage effective, voluntary investments to recruit, employ, and retain men and women who have served in the United States military with annual Federal awards to employers recognizing such efforts, and for other purposes (H. Rept. 115–108). **Page H3066**

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Fleischmann to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. **Page H3005**

Recess: The House recessed at 10:31 a.m. and reconvened at 12 noon. **Page H3008**

Guest Chaplain: The prayer was offered by the Guest Chaplain, Rev. Ric Metzgar, Sr., The Church of God, Essex, MD. **Page H3009**

Journal: The House agreed to the Speaker's approval of the Journal by a recorded vote of 237 ayes to 176 noes with 3 answering ''present'', Roll No. 245. **Pages H3050–51**

Committee Resignation: Read a letter from Representative Russell wherein he resigned from the Committee on Education and the Workforce. **Pages H3012–13**

Committee Election: The House agreed to H. Res. 303, electing a Member to certain standing committees of the House of Representatives. **Page H3013**

Suspensions: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measure:

Federal Emergency Management Agency Accountability, Modernization and Transparency Act of 2017: H.R. 1679, to ensure that the Federal Emergency Management Agency's current efforts to modernize its grant management system includes applicant accessibility and transparency, by a 2/3 yea-and-nay vote of 419 yeas with none voting ''nay'', Roll No. 242. **Pages H3022, H3026–38**

Working Families Flexibility Act of 2017: The House passed H.R. 1180, to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to provide compensatory time for employees in the private sector, by a recorded vote of 229 ayes to 197 noes, Roll No. 244. **Pages H3013–19, H3024–26, H3038–50**

Rejected the Scott (VA) motion to recommit the bill to the Committee on Education and the Workforce with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with an amendment, by a yea-and-nay vote of 192 yeas to 234 nays, Roll No. 243. **Pages H3048–49**

Pursuant to the Rule, an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 115–15 shall be considered as adopted, in lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Education and the Workforce now printed in the bill. **Page H3038**

H. Res. 299, the rule providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1180) was agreed to by a recorded vote of 231 ayes to 193 noes, Roll No. 241, after the previous question was ordered by a yea-and-nay vote of 233 yeas to 190 nays, Roll No. 240. **Pages H3024–26**

Suspensions—Proceedings Postponed: The House debated the following measures under suspension of the rules. Further proceedings were postponed.

Disaster Declaration Improvement Act: H.R. 1665, amended, to ensure that Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency considers severe local impact in making a recommendation to the President for a major disaster declaration; **Pages H3019–22**

Amending the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act concerning the statute of limitations for actions to recover disaster or emergency assistance payments: H.R. 1678, amended, to amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act concerning the statute of limitations for actions to recover disaster or emergency assistance payments; and **Pages H3023–24**

Korean Interdiction and Modernization of Sanctions Act: H.R. 1644, amended, to enhance sanctions with respect to transactions relating to North Korea. **Pages H3026–38**

Senate Message: Message received from the Senate by the Clerk and subsequently presented to the House today appears on page H3019.

Senate Referral: S. 371 was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs. **Page H3064**

Quorum Calls—Votes: Three yea-and-nay votes and three recorded votes developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H3024–25, H3025–26, H3026, H3049, H3049–50 and H3050–51. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

Committee Meetings

THREE DECADES LATER: A REVIEW AND ASSESSMENT OF OUR SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES 30–YEARS AFTER THE CREATION OF U.S. SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities held a hearing entitled ''Three Decades Later: A Review and Assessment of Our Special Operations Forces 30–Years After the Creation of U.S. Special Operations Command''. Testimony was heard from General Raymond A. Thomas, U.S. Army, Commander, Special Operations Command; and Theresa Whelan, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations/Low-Intensity Conflict.

OVERVIEW OF THE ANNUAL REPORT ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND VIOLENCE AT THE MILITARY SERVICE ACADEMIES

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Military Personnel held a hearing entitled ''Overview of the Annual Report on Sexual Harassment and Violence at the Military Service Academies''. Testimony was heard from Elizabeth P. Van Winkle, Performing the Duties of Assistant Secretary of Defense for Readiness, Office of the Secretary of Defense; Lieutenant General Robert L. Caslen Jr., Superintendent, U.S. Military Academy; Vice Admiral Walter E. Carter Jr., Superintendent, U.S. Naval Academy; Lieutenant General Michelle D. Johnson, Superintendent, U.S. Air Force Academy; and public witnesses.

EXAMINING IMPROVEMENTS TO THE REGULATION OF MEDICAL TECHNOLOGIES

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Health held a hearing entitled ''Examining Improvements to the Regulation of Medical Technologies''. Testimony was heard from Jeffrey Shuren, Director, Center for Devices and Radiological Health, Food and Drug Administration; and public witnesses.

COMBATING WASTE, FRAUD, AND ABUSE IN MEDICAID'S PERSONAL CARE SERVICES PROGRAM

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations held a hearing entitled ''Combating Waste, Fraud, and Abuse in Medicaid's Personal Care Services Program''. Testimony was heard from Christi Grimm, Chief of Staff, Office of Inspector General, Department of Health and Human Services; Timothy Hill, Deputy Director, Center for Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program Services, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services; and Katherine Iritani, Director, Health Care, Government Accountability Office.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURE

Committee on Financial Services: Full Committee began a markup on H.R. 10, the ''Financial CHOICE Act of 2017''.

WINNING THE FIGHT AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING: THE FREDERICK DOUGLASS REAUTHORIZATION ACT

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations held a hearing entitled ''Winning the Fight Against Human Trafficking: The Frederick Douglass Reauthorization Act''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

EXAMINING THE CONSEQUENCES OF EXECUTIVE BRANCH OVERREACH OF THE ANTIQUITIES ACT

Committee on Natural Resources: Subcommittee on Federal Lands held a hearing entitled ''Examining the Consequences of Executive Branch Overreach of the Antiquities Act''. Testimony was heard from Paul LePage, Governor, Maine; Kathleen Clarke, Director, Public Lands Coordinating Office, Salt Lake City, Utah; and public witnesses.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Full Committee held a markup on H.R. 2227, the ''Modernizing Government Technology Act of 2017''; H.R. 2196, to amend title 5, United States Code, to allow whistleblowers to disclose information to certain recipients; H.R. 2195, the ''OSC Access Act''; and H.R. 2229, the ''All Circuit Review Act''. H.R. 2227, H.R. 2196, and H.R. 2229 were ordered reported, without amendment. H.R. 2195 was ordered reported, as amended.

EXAMINING THE MANAGEMENT OF RED SNAPPER FISHING IN THE GULF OF MEXICO

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Subcommittee on the Interior, Energy and Environment held a hearing entitled ''Examining the Management of Red Snapper Fishing in the Gulf of Mexico''. Testimony was heard from Earl Comstock, Director, Office of Policy and Strategic Planning, Department of Commerce; Jamie M. Miller, Executive Director, Department of Marine Resources, Mississippi; and public witnesses.

SENATE AMENDMENTS TO HOUSE BILL: HIRE VETS ACT

Committee on Rules: Full Committee held a hearing on Senate Amendments to H.R. 244, the ''HIRE Vets Act''. The Committee granted, by voice vote, a rule that provides for the consideration of Senate amendments to H.R. 244. The rule makes in order a single motion offered by the chair of the Committee on Appropriations or his designee that the House concur in the Senate amendments numbered 2 and 3, and that the House concur in the Senate amendment numbered 1 with an amendment consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 115–16 modified by the amendment printed in the Rules Committee report. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the motion and provides that it shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question. The rule provides that the Senate amendments and the motion shall be considered as read. The rule provides one hour of debate on the motion equally

divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations. In section 2, the rule provides that the chair of the Committee on Appropriations may insert in the Congressional Record not later than May 3, 2017, such material as he may deem explanatory of the Senate amendments and the motion specified in section 1 of the rule. Finally, section 3 of the rule provides that the chair of the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence may insert in the Congressional Record not later than May 3, 2017, such material as he may deem explanatory of intelligence authorization measures for the fiscal year 2017. Testimony was heard from Chairman Frelinghuysen, Chairman Bishop of Utah, Representatives Lowey, Polis, Graves of Louisiana, and Richmond.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURE

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology: Full Committee held a markup on H.R. 2105, the ''NIST Small Business Cybersecurity Act of 2017''. H.R. 2105 was ordered reported, as amended.

OVERSIGHT OF U.S. AIRLINE CUSTOMER SERVICE

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Oversight of U.S. Airline Customer Service''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

LEGISLATIVE MEASURE

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: Full Committee held a hearing on the ''Veterans Appeals Improvement and Modernization Act of 2017''. Testimony was heard from Representative Titus, David C. Spickler, Executive in Charge, Acting Vice Chairman, Board of Veterans' Appeals, Department of Veterans Affairs, and public witnesses.

VA SPECIALIZED SERVICES: LOWER EXTREMITY CONDITIONS

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: Subcommittee on Health held a hearing entitled ''VA Specialized Services: Lower Extremity Conditions''. Testimony was heard from Jeffrey Robbins, Chief of Podiatry, Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, and public witnesses.

BUSINESS MEETING

Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence: Full Committee held a business meeting on consideration of access request. The committee granted access to all Members of the House the Classified Annex and Schedule of Authorizations that is anticipated to accompany Division N of H.R. 244, the Consolidated Appropriations Act for 2017.

Joint Meetings

POST-REFERENDUM TURKEY

Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe: Commission received a briefing on post-referendum Turkey, focusing on institutions and human rights, from Henri Barkey, Wilson Center, Washington, D.C.; Beata Martin-Rozumilowicz, International Foundation for Electoral Systems, Arlington, Virginia; Nate Schenkkan, Freedom House, New York, New York, and Ebru Erdem-Akcay, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR WEDNESDAY, MAY 3, 2017

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Department of Defense, to hold hearings to examine defense innovation and research funding, 10:30 a.m., SD–192.

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities, to hold hearings to examine Department of Defense laboratories and their contributions to military operations and readiness, 10 a.m., SR–222.

Subcommittee on Personnel, to hold hearings to examine building a flexible personnel system (F.A.S.T. Force) for a modern military, 2:30 p.m., SR–222.

Committee on the Budget: to hold hearings to examine the economy and private sector growth, 10:30 a.m., SD–608.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: to hold hearings to examine investing in America's broadband infrastructure, focusing on exploring ways to reduce barriers to deployment, 10 a.m., SR–253.

Committee on Environment and Public Works: to hold hearings to examine infrastructure project streamlining and efficiency, focusing on achieving faster, better, and cheaper results, 10 a.m., SD–406.

Committee on Foreign Relations: Subcommittee on Multilateral International Development, Multilateral Institutions, and International Economic, Energy, and Environmental Policy, to hold hearings to examine global philanthropy and remittances and international development, 10 a.m., SD–419.

Committee on the Judiciary: to hold an oversight hearing to examine the Federal Bureau of Investigation, 10 a.m., SD–226.

House

Committee on Agriculture, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 1177, the ''Removing Outdated Restrictions to Allow for Job Growth Act'', and H.R. 2154, to rename the Red River Valley Agricultural Research Center in Fargo, North Dakota, as the Edward T. Schafer Agricultural Research Center, 10 a.m., 1300 Longworth.

Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies, oversight hearing on the 2020 Census, 10:30 a.m., H–309 Capitol.

Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, and Related Agencies, hearing for public witnesses, 10:30 a.m., 2362–B Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Legislative Branch, hearing for Members of Congress and outside witnesses, 10 a.m., HT–2, Capitol.

Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies, hearing on the 2018 Veterans Affairs budget, 10 a.m., 2359 Rayburn.

Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee on Seapower & Projection Forces, hearing entitled ''Littoral Combat Ships and the Transition to Frigate Class'', 3:30 p.m., 2212 Rayburn.

Committee on the Budget, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Failures of Fiscal Management: a View from the Comptroller General'', 10 a.m., 1334 Longworth.

Committee on Energy and Commerce, Subcommittee on Energy, hearing entitled ''Legislation Addressing Pipeline and Hydropower Infrastructure Modernization'', 10 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Committee on Financial Services, Full Committee, to continue markup on H.R. 10, the ''Financial CHOICE Act of 2017'', 9 a.m., 2128 Rayburn.

Committee on Foreign Affairs, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 1625, the ''Targeted Rewards for the Global Eradication of Human Trafficking Act''; H.R. 1677, the ''Caesar Syria Civilian Protection Act of 2017''; and H.R. 2200, the ''Frederick Douglass Trafficking Victims Prevention and Protection Reauthorization Act of 2017'', 10 a.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Committee on Homeland Security, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 625, the ''Reporting Efficiently to Proper Officials in Response to Terrorism Act of 2017''; H.R. 1351, the ''Strengthening Oversight of TSA Employee Misconduct Act''; H.R. 2131, the ''Fixing Internal Response to Misconduct Act''; H.R. 2132, the ''Traveler Redress Improvement Act of 2017''; H.R. 2169, the ''Improving Fusion Centers' Access to Information Act''; H.R. 2188, the ''Community Counterterrorism Preparedness Act''; H.R. 2190, the ''Streamlining DHS Overhead Act''; H.R. 2213, the ''Anti-Border Corruption Reauthorization Act of 2017''; the ''Department of Homeland Security Morale, Recognition, Learning and Engagement Act of 2017''; the ''Border Enforcement Security Task Force Reauthorization Act of 2017'', 10:30 a.m., HVC–210.

Task Force on Denying Terrorists Entry into the United States, hearing entitled ''Denying Terrorists Entry to the United States: Examining Visa Security'', 2 p.m., HVC–210.

Committee on the Judiciary, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 1892, the ''Honoring Hometown Heroes Act''; H.R. 1761, the ''Protecting Against Child Exploitation Act of 2017''; H.R. 1039, the ''Probation Officer Protection Act of 2017''; and H.R. 2266, the ''Bankruptcy Judgeship Act of 2017'', 10 a.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Committee on Natural Resources, Subcommittee on Water, Power and Oceans, hearing entitled ''The Challenges of Keeping Hydropower Affordable and Opportunities for New Development'', 2:30 p.m., 1324 Longworth.

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Reviewing the FAFSA Data Breach'', 9:30 a.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, Subcommittee on Energy, hearing entitled ''Oil and Gas Technology Innovation'', 10 a.m., 2318 Rayburn.

Committee on Small Business, Full Committee, hearing entitled ''Empowering Small Businesses: The Accelerator Model'', 11 a.m., 2360 Rayburn.

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation, hearing entitled ''Maritime Transportation Regulatory Issues'', 10 a.m., 2167 Rayburn.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

9:30 a.m., Wednesday, May 3

Senate Chamber

Program for Wednesday: Senate will be in a period of morning business.

Senate expects to vote on the motion to proceed to consideration of H.J. Res. 66, Rule Relating to States Savings Arrangements for Non-governmental Employees, between 10:30 a.m. and 11 a.m.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

10 a.m., Wednesday, May 3

House Chamber

Program for Wednesday: Consideration of the Senate Amendments to H.R. 244—Honoring Investments in Recruiting and Employing American Military Veterans Act of 2017 (Subject to a Rule).

Extensions of Remarks, as inserted in this issue

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