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Senate

The Senate met at 3 p.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 our fathers and mothers, Your glory, majesty, and power sustain us. Lord, we ponder the graciousness of Your providence that lifts our hearts and gives us hope.

Keep our lawmakers true to You, obeying You faithfully and trusting Your wisdom. Lord, provide them with wisdom to cultivate such reverence for You that they will stand for right though the heavens fall. When darkness overtakes them, be for them a shining light. May they face their foes triumphantly, knowing that with You nothing is impossible. May they labor with such integrity that generations to come will celebrate their faithfulness.

We pray in Your mighty 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.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BLUNT). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

BANKRUPTCY JUDGESHIP ACT OF 2017

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the House message to accompany H.R. 2266, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

House message to accompany H.R. 2266, a bill to amend title 28 of the United States Code to authorize the appointment of additional bankruptcy judges; and for other purposes.

Pending:

McConnell motion to concur in the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill.

McConnell motion to concur in the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill, with McConnell amendment No. 1568, to change the enactment date.

McConnell amendment No. 1569 (to amendment No. 1568), of a perfecting nature.

McConnell motion to refer the message of the House on the bill to the Committee on Appropriations, with instructions, McConnell amendment No. 1570, to change the enactment date.

McConnell amendment No. 1571 (to the instructions) amendment No. 1570), of a perfecting nature.

McConnell amendment No. 1572 (to amendment No. 1571), of a perfecting nature.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 5:30 p.m. will be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees.

The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, let me just speak for a few minutes on the emergency supplemental appropriations for disasters.

No one in this Chamber is immune from disaster. Six years ago, I remember, in Vermont, Marcelle and I watched as communities around Vermont felt the devastating impact of Tropical Storm Irene. That storm washed away entire communities in our State, tearing down homes, local landmarks, and bridges alike. I watched the devastation from a helicopter with the Governor and the head of our National Guard the day after the

storm hit. I saw bridges washed away. The only way we could get into the towns was by helicopter because all of the roads were gone that led into them. I saw homes that had been on the north side of a river that were now upside down and destroyed on the south side of the river.

Do you know the one thing that occurred to me as I traveled around the State of Vermont? It is that I had heard from my fellow Senators, both Republicans and Democrats, saying that they would help us rebuild. I had heard the same thing from the President of the United States. They stood by Vermont's side to help us rebuild—again, Republicans and Democrats alike—because that is who we are as Americans. We lift each other up in times of disaster. We are one country.

Today, in California and across the West, families are returning to the charred ruins of their homes—those who were able to get out alive. In Florida and Texas, communities are trying to put their lives back together after Hurricanes Harvey and Irma—again, those who were able to get out alive. In Puerto Rico, hundreds of thousands are still without potable water, electricity, cell service, or adequate medical supplies following Hurricane Maria. The Virgin Islands are also facing devastation that I can never remember. Millions of Americans all over the country, as well as the Americans in Puerto Rico and the Americans in the Virgin Islands, need us to work together to help lift them up, just as we have seen in past disasters. This is not a Republican or a Democratic issue; this is an American issue. This is who we are as a country. We hold together.

I have been privileged to serve here since the time of President Ford. In times of disaster, I have seen every single President, Republican and Democrat, work to help Americans and do it out of concern for Americans, not for themselves. That is why it is so disappointing that President Trump

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



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seems more concerned with claiming credit for a job well done than the actual situation on the ground deserves, particularly in Puerto Rico. President Trump has given himself a 10 out of 10 as though this were a game show for the administration's response to the devastating hurricane, but let's look at some numbers that really matter for the people who have lost everything.

It has been 48 days since Hurricane Irma made landfall in Puerto Rico and 34 days since Hurricane Maria tore through the island. These storms wreaked havoc on those who live there. They destroyed houses and killed at least 49 people. Yet, 48 days later, nearly 80 percent of the island is still without power, and 30 percent of the population is without clean drinking water—some having to resort to drinking contaminated water. Roads are impassable. Bridges are down. The few hospitals that are operating are operating on generators.

Frankly, the administration was slow to respond to the disaster. So to claim that it gets a 10 out of 10 for its response is to ignore the facts, especially the facts that the people who have been hit know so well. As I said before, this is not a reality TV show. It is not where the participant with the highest score advances to the next round. This is not fiction. These are people's lives—real people. They are people's homes. This is the hard part of governing. This is where we roll up our sleeves and dig in for the long haul. We stop patting ourselves on the back. Instead, we use that hand to give a hand to the people who are hurting.

Today we are going to advance a disaster package that contains \$36.5 billion in additional emergency relief. It includes \$18.7 billion for the Federal Emergency Management Agency, or FEMA, Disaster Relief Fund, \$16 billion for the National Flood Insurance Program debt forgiveness, \$1.2 billion for nutrition assistance, and \$576.5 million to address these devastating wildfires in the western part of the United States.

As vice chairman of the Appropriations Committee, I support this bill, and I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to do the same. If we do not act, the Disaster Relief Fund and the Flood Insurance Program will run out of resources in a matter of days. This money, if we pass it, will help FEMA, the Department of Defense, the Army Corps of Engineers, and other agencies to continue their work in all of the devastated communities and to start catching up with the work that needs to be done and to help families begin to rebuild their homes and their lives—those who did not die in the disaster. This is just the next step. This is a multistep process. This is the next step on the road to recovery.

Last week, I met with Governor Ricardo Rossello, of Puerto Rico, and his staff. I have been to Puerto Rico many times, in happier times, but here he detailed the unique challenges that face

Puerto Rico. He was telling us what is happening to our fellow Americans. The electric grid was almost completely destroyed. Its infrastructure, itself, was demolished. Houses were flattened. At the same time, Puerto Rico faces a fiscal situation that will make it nearly impossible for it to provide the Federal match that is required for most disaster assistance programs. It faces a Medicaid funding crisis that may leave nearly 1 million people without healthcare in just a matter of months, assuming that we restore their healthcare.

This tells us that our response cannot be business as usual. We need to tailor disaster assistance to meet Puerto Rico's unique challenges. We may need to consider legislation to address its unique needs. Most importantly, we need to think long term. To simply replace and repair what was destroyed would be shortsighted. We have to help our fellow Americans who are in Puerto Rico to recover, to rebuild, and to be more resilient and better prepared. We should invest in the 3.4 million U.S. citizens in Puerto Rico and invest in their infrastructure so that the next disaster is not a humanitarian issue and crisis.

Some like to say that the situation is unique in Puerto Rico. It is not. We have to acknowledge that historicized storms are now annual occurrences, and we have to respond accordingly. Even with the help from our own citizens and from the U.S. Government, we are just now fully rebuilding in Vermont, and we were not hit as badly as these other places were. Across the country—from wildfires in California to the flood damage in Florida, Texas, the U.S. Virgin Islands, as well as what I said about Puerto Rico—we can invest in technology, and we can invest in conservation and infrastructure. That would mitigate further damage.

Do you know what? It would also make these communities more resilient because we cannot speak about "once in 100 years" storms. Sometimes, as we have seen this year, they have been "once in 2 months" or "once in 3 weeks" storms. This requires a commitment from the U.S. Government. It is not measured by days or weeks or months but in years—a commitment that does not waver, a commitment that does not depend on whether you live in Texas or Florida or Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

Today, I urge all Senators to support this emergency supplemental bill that will provide much needed assistance for disaster relief across the country, but it is still just the next step on the path to recovery. The Trump administration is committed to putting forward a third, more comprehensive disaster package in the coming weeks. As vice chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I intend to hold the administration to that commitment.

In conclusion, even in the years since Irene, this Vermonter still takes comfort in the number of Republican and

Democratic Senators who called me during that storm and pledged support and, along with the pledge, came through with the support.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

THE BUDGET AND TAX REFORM

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, last week, the Senate took an important step for the fiscal and economic future of our country with passage of the budget for fiscal year 2018.

The comprehensive, responsible budget we passed marks out a clear vision for the future. It will put the Federal Government on a path to balance, and it sets out a new course after the long years of the Obama economy, when paychecks stagnated, steady work became harder to find, and retirement for many slipped further away. The budget we passed isn't just about getting our fiscal house in order—though it is certainly about that—it is also about getting our economy going again and growing again.

Perhaps the most important way it does so is by authorizing legislative tools to advance tax reform, and passing tax reform is the most important thing we can do today to get our economy reaching for its true potential.

Tax reform is all about helping the middle class succeed. It is about making it easier to create jobs in America and keep them right here. To summarize the effort in one phrase, it is this: Tax reform is about taking more money out of Washington's pocket and putting more in yours—more for workers, more for small businesses, and more for the middle class. After all, as the President wrote over the weekend, "we are not talking about the government's money—we are talking about your money, your hard work."

If you look back a few months, many doubted our ability to get a budget done or to advance tax reform. They didn't see the path forward. Those skeptics underestimated our resolve. The Senate has delivered on the budget, and we will soon have the tools to deliver on tax reform.

We now look forward to our House colleagues' continued consideration and passage of the budget. Once they do so, we can move forward with tax reform for American families.

For Americans who have suffered through years of uncertainty—everything from a recession to outsourcing to unemployment—we are ready to deliver for you. For those who watched opportunity recede while the personal wealth of coastal elites grew beyond comprehension, help is on the way. We want to put more money in your pocket, we want to make retirement a reality for you, we want to get this economy moving the way it should, and tax reform is the key to helping us get there.

I would like once again to thank Chairman ENZI and the members of the Budget Committee for their important work to get this budget resolution passed.

I also would like to thank the cloakroom staff, the Parliamentarians, the clerks, the pages, and the officers of the U.S. Capitol Police who worked into the evening to make sure, as they always do, that the Senate runs smoothly.

Thanks also to Chairman HATCH and the members of the Finance Committee. We now look forward to their continued good work on development of the kind of tax relief that will get our economy truly moving again.

Mr. President, on another matter, the Senate remains committed to doing its part to support the ongoing hurricane relief efforts, and, to that end, today we will take a vote to advance the administration's most recent supplemental funding request. These resources will ensure that FEMA and the rest of the administration have the ability to continue their crucial support to help those impacted by devastating storms.

Like many colleagues, I have been engaged on this issue from the very start. Through several meetings with leaders from Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, I have had the opportunity to hear firsthand how the government can support their relief efforts. I met with Puerto Rico's Governor last week to get another update on the funding request and to hear about the continuing recovery.

In addition, I have continued working with the administration as it responds to these storms. For instance, after the devastation of Hurricane Harvey, I met with the Department of Homeland Security's Acting Secretary to learn more about what would be needed. I also met with President Trump's eminently qualified nominee to lead that Department.

The House of Representatives overwhelmingly passed a supplemental funding request with strong bipartisan support, and now it is our turn to act. As we all know, the administration will continue to actively review hurricane relief and recovery needs. As it does, we can expect the transmittal of additional supplemental requests for our consideration in the near future.

The victims of these hurricanes continue to count on our support, and I look forward to the Senate continuing to do its part to help.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

NOMINATIONS

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I just want to address very briefly one other issue that surfaced last week.

Press reports indicate there are multiple nominees of President Trump awaiting Senate confirmation, but even though they haven't been confirmed—there has not been a vote maybe even in committee, I understand; certainly they have not been confirmed by the Senate. Yet they are engaged in the very duties of the positions for which they have been nominated. That includes nominees showing up to work, even though they are not

yet confirmed. It means they attend White House meetings, even though they are not yet confirmed. They show up for photo ops, even though they are not confirmed. This includes officials with at least three different agencies.

If accurate, this is nothing but an end run around our constitutional system. It directly flouts the Senate's constitutional role to check and balance the enormous power wielded by the executive branch. It is our obligation to advise and ultimately consent, vote up or down, the appointment of high-level agency officials. Their decisions impact millions of Americans. I hope that all of us—both Democrats and Republicans—will speak up and defend the prerogatives of the Senate if the Trump administration continues to insist it is above the law.

I have been here a half dozen times when Democrats were in the majority and a half dozen times when Republicans were in the majority. We have always insisted that these kinds of nominees await a vote first. Back in my time during the Ford administration, the Carter administration, the Reagan administration, the Bush administration—the first Bush administration—the Clinton administration, the next Bush administration, the Obama administration, we actually followed the law and the Constitution. It was something that both Republican leaders and Democrat leaders insisted on, and I agreed with it. Although I may have hated to wait sometimes, we insisted on it. So I raise that point.

It raises a real question. I am told that it may be a violation of the law. It certainly raises a question if they make decisions based on their responsibilities in a position that requires confirmation and they haven't been confirmed. We may be facing lawsuits—taxpayers paying to defend lawsuits—when all they have to do is wait a few days.

Republicans are in charge of the Senate. They can bring up these nominees. Bring them up and vote on them, but don't just pretend the Senate is not here. Let's not pretend the advice and consent part of the Constitution doesn't exist.

Let's actually obey the law and the Constitution. It can be refreshing to do things the way the law and the Constitution requires. In the long run, the country will be better off.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Democratic leader is recognized.

Mr. SCHUMER. Thank you, Mr. President.

HEALTHCARE

Mr. President, first, on the issue of healthcare, since I last addressed this Chamber, the bipartisan agreement reached by Senators ALEXANDER and MURRAY has amassed enough cosponsors to guarantee its passage. It now has 12 Republican cosponsors and 12 Democratic cosponsors. That is as bipartisan as it gets. I believe all 48 Members of my caucus will support the agreement, which means it has the necessary 60 votes. Even Leader MCCONNELL has made it clear that he will put the Alexander-Murray bill on the floor as soon as President Trump supports it.

Let me make a direct appeal to the President.

Mr. President, come out and support the Alexander-Murray bill. You called it "a very good solution" already. Announce that you will support it, and it will pass through the Senate soon after.

The President's only stated concern was that the Alexander-Murray bill "bails out insurance companies." I can assure the President that Senators ALEXANDER and MURRAY took great pains to make sure the insurance companies would not get one extra penny from this deal. I have read the language. I have worked with them. It is good. It is strong. They have included provisions in the bill to prevent insurance companies from double dipping on the cost-sharing program and ensure that the money goes precisely where it is intended: to keep premiums and other out-of-pocket costs down for low-income Americans.

If the President wants even greater assurances, we can work to move back the start of enrollment 1 month. He may be able to do that administratively, but if not, that is something both Senator ALEXANDER and Senator MURRAY wanted to do, which would ensure that there would be new applications, and the rates would be looked at as if cost sharing were happening, but the White House blocked it. If the White House and the President want to make it even stronger—I think it is strong enough already—then we can do that. From what I understand, the President might be able to do that administratively.

This idea that the President isn't supporting this because he doesn't want the insurance companies to make money on this—well, it is wrong. There is some other reason he doesn't want it done. Maybe he doesn't want a bipartisan bill. Maybe it is because he wasn't involved. Maybe it is because on issue after issue the hard-right Freedom Caucus people say don't do it, and he is afraid, because he is not showing much leadership when they stand up to him.

The only reason the President shouldn't support this bill is that he wants to continue intentionally hurting Americans. He has talked about that. He almost seems gleeful: ObamaCare will fail—even though he is trying to make it fail.

The President should know that premiums have shot up 30 percent in Pennsylvania because of the President's decision to end cost sharing. Premiums for silver plans will rise 20 to 25 percent if cost sharing is not restored. It is time for the President to stop the sabotage. He created the problem by for the first time not renewing cost-sharing payments. Now we have a solution that will renew them, but Democrats will have to give. Copper plans have never been our favorite. He should go along with the good compromise.

The President has told me repeatedly that he wants to work in a bipartisan way. He told me that he wants to work in a bipartisan way on healthcare. Well, on this one, I am from Missouri. Shows us. Show me.

It is time, Mr. President, to turn the page on healthcare and pass the Alexander-Murray bill. We have other pressing healthcare issues to grapple with. For the first time in history, again due to lack of leadership from that White House, the authorization for the Children's Health Insurance Program has expired. That must be reauthorized, too, and soon. Kids across America are depending on it.

President Trump, please stop the games. Stop the zigging and zagging. You are for it one day and against it the next. Stop coming up with fake excuses. Declare your support for this bill so we can move forward in a bipartisan way to improve our Nation's healthcare.

THE BUDGET AND TAX REFORM

Now, Mr. President, on taxes, last week the Republican majority jammed through one of the worst budgets in history. That is not hyperbole; this is one of the worst budgets in history. They should hang their heads in shame. It increases the deficit by \$1.5 trillion, slashes Medicare and Medicaid by \$1.5 trillion, and sets up the same partisan process the Republicans used for healthcare.

Now it goes to the House for their approval, where many conservative House Republicans will have to rationalize voting for a bill that dramatically increases deficits. For many in the conservative wing of the House Republican caucus, the debt and deficit have been their No. 1 focus in Congress, their *raison d'être*. Many campaigned on the singular promise—made with almost religious fervor—to lower our Nation's debt and deficit. They rhapsodize fiscal responsibility. They hold themselves up as the guardian of preventing the debt from being passed on to our grandchildren. They evangelize constitutional amendments requiring a balanced budget. They were willing to risk default on our Nation's credit for a spurious talking point.

The budget resolution will be a true test of the principles the Freedom Caucus and the hard right in the House have espoused about the evils of deficits for the better part of the last decade, because those same Members of

the Freedom Caucus must now vote to approve a budget that increases the deficit by \$1.5 trillion. The House bill didn't do that. The Senate bill clearly does. Yet, so far, we haven't heard a peep from the Freedom Caucus. The most scolding deficit hawks have morphed into deficit doves, eschewing principle for political expediency.

With respect to the deficit, any economist will tell you that a dollar less in revenue due to a tax cut is the same as a dollar less in spending. Yet the Freedom Caucus and deficit hawks only harp on the deficit when it is about spending cuts: Get rid of Medicare. Get rid of Medicaid. Slash them—programs every bit as popular and as important as any.

As Representative WALKER, a conservative of the House, lamented, "[The deficit] is a great talking point when you have an administration that's Democratic-led. It's a little different now that Republicans have both houses and the administration." Really? So you are a deficit hawk only when it is politically expedient, Representative WALKER?

Well, the Freedom Caucus still has a chance to change the course of their budget when we vote this week. When the Freedom Caucus came out against the Republican healthcare bill, the Republican majority was forced to make concessions to them. If they were real deficit hawks, honest deficit hawks, consistent deficit hawks, nonpolitical deficit hawks, they would do the same thing here.

Let's see how Representative WALKER and his fellow Members of the House Freedom Caucus vote on a GOP budget to increase the deficit by \$1.5 trillion.

Another point on the GOP tax plan. The Republicans are so wedded to their desire to give a massive tax break to big corporations and the superrich—which will blow up the deficit even in their fake math models—that they are searching for new ways to sock it to the middle class to make up the difference.

First, Republicans debated eliminating the mortgage deduction, then they included the provision to eliminate State and local deductibility, and recently there have been reports that some Republicans want to cap Americans' pretax contributions to their 401(k)s. That is one of the few provisions we have to encourage middle-class families to start saving for an early retirement. President Trump tweeted this morning that we are not going down that road. The fact that Republicans were even considering raiding American's retirement savings to pay for giant tax cuts for corporations shows just how backward their plan is.

The Tax Policy Center estimated that while the wealthiest 1 percent of America would reap 80 percent of the benefits under the GOP plan, it would also raise taxes on nearly a third of middle-class workers. That statistic reveals the rotten core at the center of

this tax plan: The Republicans are so eager to give tax cuts to the rich, they are willing to explore many different ways of raising taxes on the middle class to pay for them. Each time, they bring up different methods—mortgage interest deductions, State and local deductibility, capping pretax 401(k)s—and then back off when they see the political and popular cost to each proposal. That shows you the dilemma they are in.

The fact is, there is no way the Republicans can avoid raising taxes on a good number of middle-class families if they are going to cling to such massive tax cuts for the rich and powerful and still make the numbers work, even with fake math.

Instead of capping middle-class deductions or pilfering retirement savings, how about Republicans drop their proposal to repeal the estate tax? Repealing the estate tax would cost the government hundreds of billions. Why are Republicans looking at middle-class deductions instead of merely scrapping the estate tax repeal, which goes only to estates of over \$5 million—only to estates over \$5 million. The number who benefit is tiny. It is in the thousands. Their estates get huge, huge benefits. Get rid of that instead of hurting the middle class. The logic is confounding, and our Republican colleagues will not even talk about it.

This plan is so rotten at its core that it has our Republican colleagues turning themselves into pretzels and jumping through hoops, and they can't really say what they believe—trickle down works. The only rationale for this entire plan is that if you give tax breaks to the wealthy and the big corporations, there will be a lot of job growth. It didn't happen when George Bush's tax cuts occurred. It didn't happen when Kansas dramatically cut its taxes. The Koch brothers' center, Kansas—they did just what the Koch brothers wanted. It was a disaster. Growth was much less than the national average even though the taxes were slashed. Although they don't state it, it is contrary to what our Republican colleagues believe.

I respect the Republican Member who comes up and says: Trickle down works; that is why we are doing it. Tax cuts for the very wealthy is what would fuel the economy.

No one else believes it anymore. History disproves it. It is fake. It is a fig leaf so that they don't have to admit what they want to do—give huge tax cuts to the wealthiest of their contributors, the people who have sort of set up the sinew of this Republican Party with their think tanks and op-eds and so many other things, the Koch brothers network.

The American people should know that the money to pay for that giant tax cut for the rich is coming from somewhere, and it is likely to be coming from their pocketbooks.

STEEL AND ALUMINUM IMPORTS
INVESTIGATIONS

Finally, one final topic: steel and aluminum. Recently and shockingly, Commerce Secretary Ross has said he is waiting for the Republican tax plan before completing critical investigations into how steel and aluminum imports are impacting the capacity of steel and aluminum U.S. producers to supply our defense needs. I am not sure why the Republican tax plan has anything to do with this national security investigation, which could finally lead to some relief from the predatory trade practices from China and other countries. The two are entirely unrelated.

Secretary Ross's comments smell like an excuse for further delays—and a bad one at that. I would like to see him explain his decision to the thousands of steelworkers whose jobs are on the line because their companies aren't competing on a level playing field because China repeatedly subsidizes, doesn't play by the rules, and cheats.

It is another classic example of the Trump administration promising one thing and doing another. President Trump has promised many times to crack down on China, and still, 10 months into his administration, his Commerce Secretary is once again needlessly delaying a preliminary step in that effort.

I have known him for 30 years. He is a New Yorker like I am. Every time I see Secretary Ross, I say to him: When are we going to do something on China?

Oh, we are going to do something tough.

Each time, there is a different excuse. This should have happened in the first 2 months of the administration. It hasn't.

Because of the Republican inaction, because of the President's unfulfilled and rapidly becoming broken promise on being tough with China, Senate Democrats will be sending a letter to President Trump and Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross demanding that the administration keep its promise to crack down on China's unfair and predatory trade practices. We are asking that they continue these investigations and expeditiously complete them. These trade investigations have nothing to do with tax reform, and there is no need to delay them.

One more thing on China. Today I read that Tesla—our great car manufacturing company—will be relocating to China.

When you want to sell cars and many other advanced products in China, you have to do one of two things: set up a joint ownership company which lets them steal our intellectual property or face huge tariffs. That is based on the fact that the WTO was poorly negotiated and China was regarded as a developing country. That was the fault of President Bush and President Obama; neither did enough to stop China.

Based on his campaign rhetoric, one would think President Trump would be

tougher as China steals our family jewels. It is no longer clothing and furniture; it is our best industries. They steal our intellectual property by these joint ventures. Sometimes they do it by cyber theft—a lot of times they do it by cyber theft—and it is hurting the good-paying jobs that might be available to our children and grandchildren. Based on campaign rhetoric, one would think President Trump would be tougher on China, but so far it has been a lot of talk and not very much action, and the delay in these investigations is another example.

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

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 117, Scott Palk.

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

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Scott L. Palk, of Oklahoma, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Oklahoma.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Scott L. Palk, of Oklahoma, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Oklahoma.

Mitch McConnell, Orrin G. Hatch, John Cornyn, Chuck Grassley, Thom Tillis, Pat Roberts, John Barrasso, Johnny Isakson, Roger F. Wicker, John Thune, Marco Rubio, James Lankford, Richard Burr, Steve Daines, Mike Crapo, John Boozman, James M. Inhofe.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

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

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 179, Trevor McFadden.

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

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Trevor N. McFadden, of Virginia, to be United States District Judge for the District of Columbia.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Trevor N. McFadden, of Virginia, to be United States District Judge for the District of Columbia.

Lamar Alexander, Susan M. Collins, John Boozman, Chuck Grassley, Orrin G. Hatch, Steve Daines, Dean Heller, Bill Cassidy, Cory Gardner, Michael B. Enzi, Thom Tillis, John Thune, John Kennedy, John Cornyn, David Perdue, Joni Ernst, Mitch McConnell.

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum calls for the cloture motions be waived.

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate resume legislative session.

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

BANKRUPTCY JUDGESHIP ACT OF
2017—Continued

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call with respect to the cloture motion on the House message to accompany H.R. 2266 be waived.

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

The Senator from Florida.

Mr. NELSON. Madam President, to accommodate the majority leader, I ask unanimous consent—I understand that he will object, and I will explain it afterward, but it involves what you see here in the aftermath of the hurricane, all of this citrus fruit on the ground—

that it be in order to call up my amendment No. 1575—approximately \$3 billion for all of the agriculture for Florida and Texas, which Senator CORNYN, Senator RUBIO, and I have all been working on—to the motion to concur with an amendment to the House message on H.R. 2266 and that the amendment be agreed to with no intervening action or debate.

In order to accommodate the majority leader, I will explain it after he has returned to his meeting.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The majority leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, reserving the right to object, I would say to my good friend from Florida that I hope he knows that the Senate remains committed to doing its part to support the ongoing hurricane relief efforts. We all see this as a multistaged process in providing needed relief. There will be additional rounds, and we are all fully committed to meeting the needs that have arisen as a result of these devastating hurricanes.

For the moment, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Florida.

Mr. NELSON. Madam President, in my explanation, I will go into it in detail.

It is my hope that the White House promise that this will be taken up in November, which is the next tranche of the hurricane money, the disaster assistance. It has been well past a month since Hurricane Irma hit Puerto Rico and 2 months since it hit Florida, and Floridians all across our State are working as hard as ever to recover.

One group of individuals who were hit especially hard by this storm is Florida's citrus growers. I will refer again to this photograph. You can see the citrus grove. You can see the branches on the citrus trees. Some of the trees have blown over, but in the meantime, you can see all of the fruit that is on the ground.

Toward southwest Florida, at least 75 percent of the crops are on the ground. In more central Florida, it is upward of 50 and 60 percent. Of all the times, this was going to be a bumper crop. Lord knows, with the greening disease—its nickname is "greening," but it is a bacteria—it will kill the tree in 5 years, and it has been declining the citrus production over the course of the last 10 years. We had suffered enough through all of that, and then here had come this hurricane. When it looked as if there was going to be a good crop to turn around the lessened production that had occurred over each of the last 10 years, this is what happened.

If that were not enough—all of the fruit on the ground—take a look at this. This is what has happened to citrus groves. Whole trees have been blown over. Whether you are talking about a grove that is totally demolished or a grove that has lost almost all of its crop, that is why the Florida

citrus growers are in such a very difficult economic situation. Some of Florida's farmers lost nearly everything when Irma tore through the State. In fact, the statewide agricultural industry has lost more than \$2.5 billion. Included in that is \$760 million that Florida's citrus industry alone, just by itself, has lost, as you see in these photographs.

Earlier this month, the U.S. Department of Agriculture released its first crop estimates for the 2017–2018 citrus season. They estimated that Florida's citrus growers would harvest 54 million boxes of oranges this year, but that number doesn't yet fully account for all the damage caused by Hurricane Irma.

According to the folks on the ground, they believe the actual estimate is going to be only 31 million boxes this season. Now compare 31 million boxes to a decade ago when Florida harvested over 203 million boxes. Ten years before that, Florida growers harvested 244 million boxes. Now they are estimating, after the storm, a yield of only 31 million boxes.

So the Florida citrus growers are really taking a hit. They have to have disaster assistance. The citrus industry is a vital part of Florida's economy, and that is why Senator RUBIO is here with us. We have been pushing so hard to get our citrus growers some help.

Just a couple of days after the storm, Senator RUBIO and I met with a group of growers in a citrus grove in Polk County in Central Florida, where the loss is about 50 or 60 percent, unlike South Florida, where the loss is 75 to 90 percent.

Unfortunately, the White House has been saying: No, we can't do it in this disaster assistance bill. As we have been working on a bipartisan amendment that would provide the growers with the help they need, the same amendment that the majority leader had to object to, President Trump has reportedly been making calls urging others in the Chamber to move forward with the overall package as is and to nix the money we need to help Florida's farmers.

Florida's citrus industry may have been one of the industry's hardest hit by the storm, but it certainly wasn't the only industry that was affected in Florida. Florida's fruit and vegetable farms lost more than \$180 million when their fields were flooded and their bushes were ripped straight out of the ground. Row crops, such as peanuts, cotton, sweet corn, potatoes, and sugarcane together experienced nearly \$450 million in losses from the hurricane-force winds and heavy rains.

Senator RUBIO went to Hastings to see the potato farms. He saw how they had been ripped to shreds. Florida's nurseries lost nearly \$625 million when their greenhouses were damaged by the winds. Florida's timber industry lost \$261 million. Florida's cattlemen, whose ranches, barns, fences, and equipment were severely damaged, lost

a total of \$237 million in losses. Dairy farmers had to dump more than \$2 million worth of milk because they couldn't store it properly after they lost power.

Farmers are the lifeblood of this country and an important part of Florida's economy. Right now, they desperately need our help. In urging the Senate to move forward with this disaster package as it is, not amended, President Trump has told some of our colleagues that he would support adding this additional agriculture money in a later supplemental next month. To my colleagues who have farmers and ranchers in their own States, you know as well as we do that these families and businesses can't wait any longer. They need our help, and they need it now. I ask you to consider how you would react if those farmers and ranchers suffered \$2.5 billion in losses from a single natural disaster, as our agriculture industry in Florida has.

So, to accommodate the majority leader, I already made the unanimous consent request, which the majority leader objected to. I want to further state that to fulfill the White House promise of including the disaster aid farmers desperately need, I have placed a hold on the President's nominee for Deputy Director of the Office of Management and Budget. Getting the additional money next month could be the difference between whether Florida's farmers can replant their crops next year or not.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. RUBIO. Thank you, Madam President.

I thank the senior Senator from Florida on this issue. I want to elaborate on it a little further. Any time we ask the taxpayers of this country to step in and help a private industry, it is important and incumbent on us to justify why. The amendment he just made that we have been working to get included in what is before the Senate obviously deals with agriculture at large, and he described some of the different industries in Florida that have been hurt in agriculture and some of the crops in Florida that were impacted by the storm.

The reason I want to focus my attention on citrus is not because we don't care about the other industries that were damaged, but citrus is in a unique and precarious place. I want to describe it to people who may not be as familiar with this as those who live in Florida and see it all the time.

First, I would say that one of the signature issues in the campaign and in politics today is the desire to make more and produce more in the United States; the idea that somehow, because of these changes in the global economy, we have lost significant industries to other countries, and we talk about that primarily in manufacturing, but we also talk about it in technology and things of this nature. I don't think

we should leave agriculture out of that conversation. If we want there to be agriculture in the United States, then we have to deal with each of those crops and the unique challenges they face. We most certainly want to have agriculture in the United States.

A lot of people don't identify Florida as an agricultural State. It is better known for its tourism and being one of the largest places where people move to be in warm weather and not have State income tax, but Florida is a large agricultural State. I encourage people to look at the numbers. If you have spent any significant time in Florida, it is not just something we put on our license plates and not something we call ourselves in our heritage, it is real now. Tens of thousands and hundreds of thousands of jobs across the supply chain and entire communities are sustained by the presence of agriculture. In the case of citrus, the overwhelming majority of growers are actually families who have had these operations for sometimes two or three generations and are trying to stay afloat.

You look at this and ask: What is this industry doing wrong to be under these circumstances? Yes, they had a storm, but why can't they rebuild like everybody else? Two things. First, citrus in Florida was already facing an extraordinary challenge. It wasn't a better orange or better grapefruit that some other countries are doing than we are. It is a disease called citrus greening that didn't just blemish the fruit the way the canker did, but it killed the trees. You have a significant number of growers who are on the borderline of being out of business because unlike—and I am not diminishing other people's losses here, on the contrary—but unlike a manufacturing plant that gets wiped out by a storm, where you put the new machine in and in 6 months you are up and running, that is not the way it works with citrus.

The time between when you plant the new tree and produce fruit is 4 to 5 years, and you have to stay afloat in between. They are already facing that. So that already has them on the brink of catastrophe, and they have been working very hard to get around and design scientific solutions. They have made some advances, thanks to the work at the University of Florida, but they are not there yet. In the process, they have been hurting already.

You heard about the production figures and how low they have gotten, and here comes the storm. The first thing it does is knock all the fruit off the trees. When we flew over these groves, all we saw on the ground was fruit all over the place. As those familiar with agriculture know, once that fruit gets in the floodwater, it can't be sold, and you can't do much with it. The fruit continued to fall over the days to come.

On top of everything else they were facing, they lost this year's crops. A lot of these fields were flooded, so they were sitting in feet of water. That kills

the trees, and they will continue to lose trees in the weeks to come.

Put yourself in the position of the grower who has to say: I have already lost everything for this year. I lost a bunch of trees that I will not have next year or the year after that. I was facing citrus greening. Do I really want to replant or has the time come to sell my land for some other use, development, or has the time come for me to go into another crop or has the time come to declare bankruptcy? This is the life challenge of American agriculture families in the State of Florida.

Look, I hope very much that in November we are going to be here next month and we are going to pass a new bill and it will have this money in there and it will be fantastic, but we know how this place works, and I don't know why we wouldn't do it now. Do we truly want to keep American businesses in America? This is a great example of an opportunity to do it.

It is not an industry that benefits from anything extraordinary from the government. They are literally on the verge of going away unless we help them sooner rather than later. We have the entire Florida delegation in the House in favor of it, and they couldn't get it in the House bill. You have both Senators here for it. It can't be a part of this because if we change it, it goes back, and we lose time.

No one can tell you why it is not in there, no one can tell you why they are against it being in there, but it is not in there. Sometimes you start to wonder, and you guess why people look at this process and shake their heads.

Unfortunately, it looks like this has been foreclosed. Obviously, Senator NELSON moved forward and made that motion and it was objected to so it will not be a part of this package, but I hope we think about these men and women and families who own the groves. How do you explain it to them and what happens if it goes away? What happens if we lose this industry? It will not just hurt Florida, I think it hurts the country. I think it sets a precedent for other crops that might be threatened by floods in the future.

I hope this can be reversed, and I am hopeful we will deal with it in November, but if we don't, I just want everyone to understand what this means. This is not hyperbole. This industry is in a lot of trouble. I am not telling you that the amount of money we are asking for alone will save them, but without it, sooner rather than later, I feel we will lose not just Florida citrus, but I feel we will lose something as a key part of the State's heritage and a key crop for the country, and we will depend more than ever on foreign imports to feed our people with this problem.

With that, I yield the floor.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to concur in the House amendment to the Senate amendment to H.R. 2266.

Mitch McConnell, Pat Roberts, Roy Blunt, Shelley Moore Capito, Mike Rounds, John Thune, Orrin G. Hatch, Deb Fischer, Cory Gardner, John Barrasso, Johnny Isakson, John Boozman, Thom Tillis, Richard Burr, James M. Inhofe, Roger F. Wicker, Lindsey Graham.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the motion to concur in the House amendment to the Senate amendment to H.R. 2266, an act to amend title 28 of the United States Code to authorize the appointment of additional bankruptcy judges; and for other purposes, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN), and the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SUL-LIVAN).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) and the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 79, nays 16, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 246 Leg.]

YEAS—79

Alexander	Feinstein	Murphy
Baldwin	Fischer	Murray
Bennet	Franken	Nelson
Blumenthal	Gardner	Peters
Blunt	Gillibrand	Portman
Booker	Grassley	Reed
Boozman	Harris	Roberts
Brown	Hassan	Rounds
Burr	Hatch	Rubio
Cantwell	Heinrich	Sanders
Capito	Heitkamp	Schatz
Cardin	Heller	Schumer
Carper	Hirono	Scott
Casey	Hoeven	Shaheen
Cassidy	Isakson	Tester
Cochran	Kaine	Thune
Collins	Kennedy	Tillis
Coons	King	Udall
Corker	Klobuchar	Van Hollen
Cornyn	Leahy	Warner
Cortez Masto	Manchin	Warren
Cruz	Markey	Whitehouse
Daines	McCain	Wicker
Donnelly	McCaskill	Wyden
Duckworth	McConnell	Young
Durbin	Merkley	
Ernst	Murkowski	

NAYS—16

Barrasso	Johnson	Sasse
Cotton	Lankford	Shelby
Crapo	Lee	Strange
Enzi	Paul	Toomey
Flake	Perdue	
Inhofe	Risch	

NOT VOTING—5

Graham Moran Sullivan
Menendez Stabenow

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 79, the nays 16.

Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

Cloture having been invoked, the motion to refer falls.

The Senator from Utah.

Mr. LEE. Madam President, as we speak, our fellow citizens in Puerto Rico, Texas, and Florida are recovering from a series of devastating hurricanes. Over 100 people have lost their lives because of these terrible storms, and many more are struggling to get by day to day.

The crisis is perhaps most acute in Puerto Rico, where 35 percent of the population still does not have access to safe drinking water and four out of five Puerto Ricans do not have power.

The people of Florida, Puerto Rico, and Texas have responded with great tenacity and admirable creativity to this disaster. I wish the same could be said of the politicians here in Washington, DC.

Once again, this body is poised to fail the American people. Instead of helping the victims of these disasters through responsible aid paired with lasting reform, Congress has rushed to its favorite so-called solution—billions of dollars in new spending with little accountability or meaningful oversight.

If this \$36.5 billion aid package passes, it will mean even more money and more power for government programs that in some cases left us vulnerable to these disasters in the first place. If it passes, the politicians and lobbyists will pat themselves on the back for doing a good deed and then move on to the next multibillion dollar spending opportunity. Meanwhile, the people of Florida, Puerto Rico, and Texas will be left to pick up the pieces and to deal with the disastrous consequences of this approach.

Puerto Rico, in particular, has to contend with the effects of a devastating storm and decades of malfeasance that has left Puerto Rico with \$74 billion of debt.

This crisis calls for emergency aid, yes. More than that, it calls for true lasting reform, the type of reform that is noticeably absent from this measure. That is why I am voting no on this shortsighted bill, because it is easy to caricature a vote against emergency aid as calloused or cruel, but it is hard to do the real work that is necessarily required by real, lasting, meaningful reform.

It is harder still to defend these packages when their contents are exposed fully to the light of day. If you were evaluating an emergency aid package, you might reasonably expect it to direct all of its spending to programs that actually help the people of Florida, of Puerto Rico, of Texas, but this proposal does not even come close

to directing all of its money to broad-based recovery efforts.

Just under half of the \$36.5 billion in new spending would bail out the National Flood Insurance Program, or NFIP. In the Houston area, just 17 percent of homeowners were enrolled in the NFIP. In Puerto Rico, the numbers are even more sparse. Just 5,600 Puerto Ricans are enrolled in NFIP, less than 1 percent of homeowners. That means 99 percent of Puerto Ricans will not get anything at all from the \$16 billion to NFIP. But then again, it is not clear that NFIP recipients get much from NFIP to begin with.

The National Flood Insurance Program represents the triumph of good intentions over sound public policy. Its generous subsidies were supposed to reduce the need for Federal aid after massive storms. Instead, NFIP encourages thousands of Americans to live in some of the most dangerous real estate in the country.

NFIP sells flood insurance at rates well below that of any reasonable private insurer. As a result, its policies do not accurately reflect the risk of living in manifestly flood-threatened, flood-endangered areas. These government policies encourage Americans to live in precisely those areas where their livelihoods—and, in fact, even their lives—can be swept away in an instant.

Economists refer to this perverse incentive as moral hazard, and, in more senses than one, that is just what the National Flood Insurance Program is—a hazard to Americans. It is distinctly immoral for the government to subsidize housing in the Nation's flood plains—deep within the flood plains—or on the edges of its coast. Instead of building your house on a rock, the government wants you to build it on the sand.

NFIP pays out claims for properties that have been swept away not once, not twice, but many, many times before. Homes that have been flooded multiple times make up just 1 percent of NFIP policyholders, but they account for more than one-third of its claims. This has cost taxpayers more than \$12.1 billion in payouts according to the Congressional Research Service.

When Hurricane Harvey swept through Houston last month, it submerged a house that had been flooded 22 times since 1979. The house is valued at about \$600,000. The government has spent \$1.8 million to rehabilitate it.

No private insurance company would ever offer insurance on the terms that NFIP offers. Such a company would endanger its policyholders, and it would run out of money.

That is precisely what has happened under NFIP. The program is \$25 billion in debt and routinely blows through its statutory debt limits.

The emergency aid package Congress is considering today would cancel \$16 billion of NFIP's debt—no questions asked. Congress isn't making NFIP bring its actuarial practices in line with reality or into conformity with

free-market forces. No, it isn't even appropriating new funds for another failed program. That, at least, would be business as usual in Washington. Instead, Congress is effectively giving a debt amnesty to the National Flood Insurance Program. It is absolving NFIP of its sins and making American taxpayers do the penance.

So that is an example of what is in the bill. Let's consider a little bit of what is not in the bill.

If we want to be responsible leaders in a moment of crisis like this one, we need to provide long-term reforms in addition to any short-term assistance. We need to provide a full meal to those affected by these storms and not just a temporary, passing sugar rush.

But this bill does not include any reforms that would help Puerto Rico attain long-term stability or climb out from underneath its \$74 billion debt. It doesn't even attempt to reform the dysfunctional electrical utility program which, through a combination of neglect and profiteering, has left millions of Puerto Ricans in darkness. Without electricity, Puerto Rico can't power hospitals, clinics, food banks, or even sewage systems. And it doesn't repeal the Jones Act, the protectionist regulation that kept foreign-flagged relief ships out of Puerto Rican harbors for precious days after Hurricane Maria and for a long time has forced Puerto Rican consumers to pay significantly higher prices on just about everything they buy.

Simple reform measures such as reforming PREPA, the electric utility company I mentioned a moment ago, or repealing the Jones Act would provide very meaningful, lasting benefits to Puerto Ricans long after the public's attention has drifted and the relief money has dried up. But Congress, true to form, would rather double down on broken laws and broken programs rather than fix them, and Congress would rather take on more debt than spend according to what we have and prioritize in order to get there.

None of this \$36.5 billion in emergency spending is offset by spending reductions on other programs—none of it—not a single dollar. That is the sad irony of this bill. If the trend of deficit-fueled spending continues, one day soon we will wake up to the cries of our fellow Americans and we will have nothing to give them in support.

Again, this bill doesn't take care of those programs, and it is not as if there aren't solutions out there. One of my colleagues, Senator PAUL, has effectively been blocked from introducing an amendment that would call for offsets to this spending. Another one of my colleagues, Senator FLAKE, has tried to introduce an amendment, of which I am a cosponsor, that would bring about some of these other reforms I have described—reforms to the State-owned utility company, to the Jones Act, and reforms to the way that we spend money through the Federal Government in Puerto Rico.

I hope my colleagues will work with me on a more responsible, sustainable, meaningful way to help our brothers and sisters in areas affected by the recent hurricanes. Congress has the authority to lead, especially over Puerto Rico, where we have plenary power that exceeds the authority we have in other parts of the country within States. In this hour of crisis, especially with regard to Puerto Rico, we are the only ones who indisputably have this power, and we are the ones who must act if we are going to achieve meaningful reform.

If we can only offer money and a pat on the head, it will be our fault when the American people continue to suffer as a result of failed programs that haven't worked and call out to us through their failures for reform.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

Mr. COCHRAN. Madam President, I urge the Senate to approve the disaster relief supplemental appropriations bill.

This bill will provide additional funding for response and recovery operations in areas devastated by recent hurricanes.

The storms this year have been severe in both strength and number. Communities in Texas, Florida, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands are struggling to recover.

Both the Disaster Relief Fund and the National Flood Insurance Program are depleted. They will soon run out of money for disaster response and to pay flood insurance claims.

The supplemental funding in this bill will ensure that first responders and Federal agencies have the necessary resources to continue their important work.

This bill also includes funding in response to the deadly wildfires that have ravaged western States. While these emergency funds are needed now, I will continue working with my colleagues to find a better way to fund wildfire suppression in the future.

This will not be the end of our efforts to respond to this year's disasters. The Appropriations Committee will continue to work with the administration and with the affected delegations to determine and provide for additional recovery needs. I am committed to doing what is necessary to get the job done.

Mr. LEE. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. DAINES. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

BANGLADESH

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, in correspondence with officials of the Government of Bangladesh over a period of several years and in conversations with officials of our own State Department, I, like many others, have raised concerns about enforced disappearances, arbitrary arrests, unfair trials, extrajudicial executions, and other flagrant violations of the rule of law by the government of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina Wajed and particularly by the Rapid Action Battalion, RAB.

Like the inquiries and appeals of others, my concerns have been responded to by Bangladeshi officials with blanket denials, obfuscation, and even falsehoods.

Despite such attempts to deflect responsibility, it is beyond a doubt that the rule of law is often violated by Bangladeshi law enforcement agencies. This conduct has become so ingrained that it is not an overstatement to describe Prime Minister Wajed's government as one that condones state-sponsored criminality.

Of course, the government would vociferously reject such a characterization, insisting that individuals who have disappeared were kidnapped by militants or joined extremist groups or simply claiming that their whereabouts are unknown to the government. The problem is that there is often credible eyewitness testimony to the contrary or those responsible for the abductions have identified themselves as members of one of the security forces, the RAB being the most notorious.

The State Department's latest Country Reports on Human Rights describes the situation in Bangladesh as follows: "Human rights groups and media reported that multiple disappearances and kidnappings continued, some committed by security services. The government made limited efforts to prevent or investigate such acts. The United Nations Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances contacted the government on March 9 concerning the 'reportedly alarming rise of the number of cases of enforced disappearances in the country' and had 34 outstanding cases under review as of May 18, but the working group did not receive a response. Following alleged disappearances, security forces released some individuals without charge, arrested some, some were found dead, and others were never found."

The State Department also cited the practice of torture of detainees in Bangladesh: "Although the constitution and law prohibit torture and other cruel, inhumane, or degrading treatment or punishment, local and international human rights organizations and the media reported security forces, including RAB, intelligence services,

and police, employed torture and physical and psychological abuse during arrests and interrogations. Security forces reportedly used torture to gather information from alleged militants although members of political opposition parties claimed that security forces also targeted activists within their parties. Security forces reportedly used threats, beatings, kneecappings, and electric shock, and law enforcement officers sometimes committed rapes and other sexual abuses. Two prominent human rights organizations stated that security forces tortured eight persons to death in the first nine months of the year."

The situation has not improved since the State Department published that report earlier this year. Just last week, seven senior representatives of an opposition political party were arrested in Dhaka. Their whereabouts, conditions of confinement, and the evidence against them remain a mystery.

This egregious situation has been cited by the European Parliament, the United Nations, Human Rights Watch, and other reputable human rights monitors; yet the government of Prime Minister Wajed rejects such admonishments out of hand as fabrications or an infringement of sovereignty. Not only do these practices violate the rule of law, they threaten democracy itself. Bangladesh does face a serious problem of violent extremism, which must be effectively addressed, but if peaceful expression and association that challenges government policies or that condemns corruption and police misconduct are equated with terrorism and responded to with threats, arbitrary arrests, and disappearances, extremism will increase, and democracy will suffer.

Other international organizations and governmental bodies have urged the Government of Bangladesh to respond to calls regarding dozens of cases of disappearances and to permanently dismantle the RAB and suspend other law enforcement agencies that have engaged in such crimes until credible investigations of such cases are conducted and those responsible are appropriately punished. I echo those calls and do not support further U.S. assistance for such agencies until the necessary steps are taken.

UGANDA

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, I want to speak briefly about the situation in Uganda, which should concern all Senators.

Uganda, located on the Equator in East Africa, has been a friend and partner of the United States for many years, particularly in the fight against HIV/AIDS. Twenty years ago, Uganda was the epicenter of AIDS in Africa. Thousands were dying, testing was nonexistent, condoms were outlawed, and the future was bleak. Since then, dramatic progress has been made in controlling the disease, although more remains to be done.

The United States has also joined in the fight against the Lord's Resistance Army, which ravaged northern Uganda for many years. I remember a time, not so long ago, when thousands of young children, called "night commuters" would walk each evening from their remote villages into towns where they were protected from being kidnapped by the LRA and forced into servitude as child soldiers.

Throughout that period and to this day, President Museveni has remained in power, for five consecutive terms, solidifying his control increasingly through repression, including the arrest, imprisonment, and even alleged assassination attempts of political opponents and social activists. In 2016, at his most recent inauguration after an election marred by fraud and intimidation, Sudan's President Bashir, indicted by the International Criminal Court, was an invited guest.

In 2012, President Museveni announced that he would "certainly not" seek to remain in office after age 75, consistent with article 102(b) of Uganda's Constitution; yet today, with the next Presidential election scheduled for 2021, an effort is underway in Uganda's Parliament, presumably with President Museveni's blessing, to amend the constitution to eliminate the age limit. If successful, Museveni could remain President for life, in the tradition of other African strongmen like Robert Mugabe.

There is no law against amending the constitution. Our own Constitution poses no such age limit on Presidents or Members of Congress, but doing so for the obvious purpose of perpetuating the increasingly autocratic rule of a serving President, who has used the security forces to silence his opposition and who has systematically undermined the possibility of a free election, is wrong.

Such an outcome would be a tragedy for democracy and the rule of law in Uganda, at a time when corruption, economic stagnation, and internal strife are propelling Uganda backwards. The United States and the international community have provided Uganda with billions of dollars in aid since 1986 when President Museveni first came to power. I supported that investment in Uganda's social, economic, and political stability, and President Museveni deserves credit for many positive developments in Uganda since the horrific years of his brutal predecessors, Idi Amin and Milton Obote; yet today much of that investment is at risk of being squandered.

Ultimately this is a decision for the representatives of the Ugandan people, but I hope the Ugandan Parliament recognizes what is at stake, not only for the people of Uganda and for the future of democracy and stability in that country, but for future support from the United States and the international community.

(At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

VOTE EXPLANATION

• Ms. STABENOW. Madam President, unfortunately, I was unable to attend the rollcall vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the motion to concur in the House amendment to the Senate amendment to H.R. 2266, emergency supplemental appropriations. Had I been able to attend, I would have voted in favor of cloture.●

(At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

VOTE EXPLANATION

• Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, I was unavailable for rollcall vote No. 246, on the motion to invoke cloture on the House message to accompany H.R. 2266, the emergency supplemental. Had I been present, I would have voted yea.●

HONORING NEVADA'S WORLD WAR II FILIPINO VETERANS

Mr. HELLER. Madam President, today I wish to honor several Nevada heroes who are being recognized with a Congressional Gold Medal for their service in the Philippines during World War II: Sergeant Regalado Baldonado, Private Aurelio Dela Cruz, Corporal Benito Anton, Private First Class Leonardo Palao, and the many other Filipino and Filipino American veterans across our Nation. My appreciation for their service and sacrifice is immeasurable.

During World War II, more than 260,000 Filipino soldiers from the U.S. commonwealth of the Philippines answered President Roosevelt's call to fight under the American flag. These individuals fought bravely, some making the ultimate sacrifice in defense of democracy and freedom. More than half a century later, our Nation made a commitment to honoring them for their service.

As a member of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, I believe it is our solemn responsibility to recognize those who put their lives on the line. That is why I was proud to work with my colleague Senator HIRONO to pass into law the Filipino Veterans of World War II Congressional Gold Medal Act, Public Law 114-265, to recognize the dedication and heroism of these individuals.

Now the time has come to award this Congressional Gold Medal to Filipino World War II veterans on October 25, 2017, and I could not be more proud and humbled that Nevada is home to Filipino veterans who served and are most deserving of this medal. Today I would like to again recognize and honor Filipino veterans who are living in Nevada: Sergeant Regalado Baldonado, Private Aurelio Dela Cruz, Corporal Benito Anton, and Private First Class Leonardo Palao. To these heroes, your place in history will not be forgotten. There are also many other Filipino vet-

erans from Nevada who have passed on, but our gratitude extends to their family members who will ensure their legacy lives on.

While the awarding of this Congressional Gold Medal is a proud moment for the Filipino community and America, many Filipino veterans have yet to receive recognition for their service. There is no doubt to me that Filipino soldiers served honorably in the Commonwealth Army of the Philippines, Recognized Guerilla Forces, and New Philippine Scouts alongside U.S. troops during World War II. However, some have still not been verified by the U.S. for their service because they don't have the documentation the U.S. requires. This is an injustice that I will continue fighting so that every Filipino veteran is afforded respect for and acknowledgement of their contributions to our country.

I am honored to acknowledge all Filipino and Filipino American veterans for their dedication to our country and am proud this Congressional Gold Medal will serve as a constant reminder of the importance of the Filipino and Filipino American community in our Nation's history.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

SERGEANT PHILIP J. IYOTTE

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, today I wish to honor and pay tribute to the late Army SGT Philip J. Iyotte, a hero from South Dakota who, after 66 years, has returned home.

At a young age, Philip Iyotte, a member of the Rosebud Sioux Tribe, was given his Lakota name of Soldier Who Stands Alone. In 1950, Philip enlisted in the U.S. Army and was assigned to the Army's 21st Infantry Regiment of the 24th Infantry Division. Shortly after, he was deployed to the Korean conflict. On September 2, 1950, Sergeant Iyotte was seriously injured from fragments from an enemy missile. Nineteen days later, he bravely returned to the battlefield.

On February 9, 1951, 21-year-old Sergeant Iyotte was declared Missing in Action after being captured by Chinese forces during Operation Thunderbolt. When the war ended, several returning prisoners of war reported that Sergeant Iyotte passed away around September 10, 1951, and was buried at the main prisoner of war camp in Korea. Sixty-six years after being captured and killed, his remains have finally been returned to his family in White River, SD.

For his bravery and service, Sergeant Iyotte was awarded the Purple Heart, the Combat Infantryman's Badge, the Prisoner of War Medal, the Korean Service Medal, the United Nations Service Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, and the Korean War Service Medal.

I consider it an honor to pay tribute to SGT Philip J. Iyotte. May his family and his Oyate find comfort in knowing that his remains have now been laid to

rest and the legacy of his service and sacrifice to our Nation lives on.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO COMMANDER CHRISTIAN LEE

• Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam President, today I wish to recognize CDR Christian A. Lee for his induction into the Coast Guard Academy Athletic Hall of Fame on October 19, 2017.

The Hall of Fame Award recognizes outstanding Coast Guard Academy athletes who distinguish themselves in military or civilian life and seeks to honor those who have substantially contributed to the excellence of Academy athletic programs.

As a three-sport athlete at the Coast Guard Academy, Christian excelled in football, baseball, and track. On the football field, he was a starting wide receiver for 4 years and set a single-season record with 938 receiving yards. He ended his 4-year career with 149 receptions, 23 touchdowns, and continues to hold the Coast Guard Academy record for alltime receiving yards. As captain, he led the team to its first ever NCAA playoff appearance in 1996 and was selected as a first team All-Conference wide receiver and kick returner. He was also named an Eastern Collegiate Athletic Conference and New England Football Writers first-team wide receiver.

In addition to his successful football career, Christian substantially contributed to the academy's baseball and track programs and was named the most outstanding senior athlete in 1997. That same year, he led the baseball team with 15 stolen bases, 24 runs scored, and had a batting average of .321, earning him second-team All-Conference honors. As a sprinter on the track team, he was part of a 4x100 record-setting relay team and went on to compete at the New England Championship and the Penn Relays.

Christian was a gifted athlete, and his induction into the Coast Guard Academy Athletic Hall of Fame is well-deserved. I congratulate him on this honor, and I am grateful for his dedication and service to our Nation.●

REMEMBER MOTHER LULA MAE LOLLAR BELTON

• Mr. SCOTT. Madam President, today I would like to take a moment to recognize and honor the life of a great South Carolinian, Mother Lula Mae Lollar Belton, "Mom-mo," who departed this life on September 20, 2017.

Mother Belton was a spiritual, humble, and loving woman who loved the Lord and her community. She worked for the Colleton County Food Service for 31 years, as well as many positions within Buckhead UMC Church, where she was a faithful member. She most notably served as Mother of the Church. Mother Belton always had an

open heart to her many children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, great-great-grandchildren, as well as many others in the community and church. She will be greatly missed by the family and community she leaves behind, and I would like to add her name to our October 23, 2017, CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.●

REMEMBER DR. OSCAR PERRY BUTLER, JR.

• Mr. SCOTT. Madam President, today I would like to take a moment to recognize and honor the life of a great South Carolinian, Dr. Oscar P. Butler, Jr., who departed this life on October 2, 2017. Dr. Butler was a graduate of South Carolina State University and later went on to earn a doctor of philosophy in administration and higher education from Michigan State University. He then spent over 27 years in student personnel development, including as a dean at SCSU. He also served as executive director of 1890 Research and Extension for over 10 years. He has been recognized for Outstanding Service by the N.A.A.C.P., Meritorious Service and Commendations by the U.S. Navy, and given the Distinguished Alumnus Award by SCSU. Dr. Butler was a faithful member of Williams Chapel A.M.E. Church for over 57 years, where he was the recipient of the Unsung Hero Award 2015. Dr. Butler will surely be missed and remembered as a great South Carolinian, and I would like to add his name to our October 23, 2017, CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.●

REMEMBERING BISHOP LEWIS NATHANIEL TAYLOR

• Mr. SCOTT. Madam President, today I would like to take a moment to recognize and honor the life of Bishop Lewis Nathaniel Taylor, a great South Carolinian, who departed this life on October 2, 2017. Bishop Lewis Taylor deeply loved his family, church, and community. He pastored in San Diego, California, Washington, DC, and New York. He eventually returned to his native Walterboro, SC, where he continued the legacy of his father and became pastor of Greater Saint James Church. He encouraged, inspired, and mentored many people in the community and abroad. Bishop Taylor served not only as a pastor, but as a carpenter and general contractor as well. In short, Bishop Taylor was a builder-visionary who helped design and construct churches across South Carolina. In 2008 and 2017, the mayor of Walterboro presented Bishop Taylor with the Key to the City. He was known to many as "the little man, with a big vision" and served his community tirelessly and earned the respect and admiration of all people he came in contact with. He will be greatly missed by the Walterboro community and the people of South Carolina.●

TRIBUTE TO DR. AKIL E. ROSS, SR.

• Mr. SCOTT. Madam President, I would like to recognize and congratulate Dr. Akil Ross, of Chapin High School, who has been chosen as the National Principal of the Year by the National Association of Secondary School Principals. His nomination is an honor for South Carolina. After graduating from School Without Walls Senior High School in Washington, DC, Akil E. Ross, Sr., studied political science and played football for Duke University. He graduated in 2002 with his B.A. in political science and minoring in history and education. In 2005, he obtained his M.Ed. in secondary educational administration from the University of South Carolina and joined Chapin High School as an assistant principal in July of 2005. After 5 years as an assistant principal, he was named principal in July of 2010. In July of 2012, he completed his doctorate degree in curriculum studies from the University of South Carolina.

Chapin High School has received many awards and recognitions under Dr. Ross, such as Palmetto's Finest, national rankings in academics, 12 State championships in athletics, and 3 State championships in marching band. In September, Dr. Ross was named the 2017 South Carolina Secondary Principal of the Year before being selected as the National Principal of the Year. Dr. Ross is an extraordinary leader who has truly succeeded in providing high-quality learning opportunities for his South Carolina students, whom are lucky to be under his care. Congratulations, Dr. Ross.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

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

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

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

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

PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGES

REPORT ON THE CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY ORIGINALLY DECLARED IN EXECUTIVE ORDER 13413 OF OCTOBER 27, 2006, WITH RESPECT TO THE SITUATION IN, OR IN RELATION TO, THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO—PM 17

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message

from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs:

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days of the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency with respect to the situation in, or in relation to, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, declared in Executive Order 13413 of October 27, 2006, is to continue in effect beyond October 27, 2017.

The situation in, or in relation to, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which has been marked by widespread violence and atrocities that continue to threaten regional stability, continues to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the foreign policy of the United States. For this reason, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13413 with respect to the situation in, or in relation to, the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

DONALD J. TRUMP.

THE WHITE HOUSE, October 23, 2017.

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 3:03 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker removes the gentleman from Oregon, Mr. WALDEN, as a conferee and appoints the gentleman from Illinois, Mr. SHIMKUS, to fill the vacancy thereon to the bill (H.R. 2810) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes, and that the appointment of conferees from the Committee on Natural Resources is modified by striking the first reference to section 2863.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

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

EC-3189. A communication from the Associate General Counsel, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, seven (7) reports relative to vacancies in the Department of Agriculture, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on Octo-

ber 16, 2017; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-3190. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition, Technology and Logistics), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to realistic survivability testing of the Fleet Replenishment Oiler (T-AO 205); to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-3191. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary of the Army (Manpower and Reserve Affairs), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on the mobilizations of selected reserve units, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 16, 2017; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-3192. A communication from the Assistant Director, Senior Executive Management Office, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, fifty-three (53) reports relative to vacancies in the Department of Defense, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 16, 2017; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-3193. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Iran that was declared in Executive Order 12170 on November 14, 1979; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-3194. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Somalia that was declared in Executive Order 13536 on April 12, 2010; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-3195. A communication from the Deputy General Counsel for Operations, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of President, Government National Mortgage Association, Department of Housing and Urban Development, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 16, 2017; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-3196. A communication from the Deputy General Counsel for Operations, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting, pursuant to law, five (5) reports relative to vacancies in the Department of Housing and Urban Development, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 18, 2017; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-3197. A communication from the Deputy General Counsel for Operations, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Assistant Secretary of Housing and Federal Housing Commissioner, Department of Housing and Urban Development, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 16, 2017; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-3198. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Nevada; Recission of Visibility Protection Federal Implementation Plan for the Mohave Generating Station" (FRL No. 9969-85-Region 9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 18, 2017; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3199. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Illinois; Redesignation of the Chicago and Granite City Areas to Attainment of the 2008 Lead Standard"

(FRL No. 9969-69-Region 5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 18, 2017; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3200. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; NC; Open Burning and Miscellaneous Revisions" (FRL No. 9969-77-Region 4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 18, 2017; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3201. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; North Carolina; Open Burning and Miscellaneous Revisions" (FRL No. 9969-78-Region 4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 18, 2017; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3202. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Wisconsin; Regional Haze Progress Report" (FRL No. 9969-87-Region 5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 18, 2017; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-3203. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Adjusted Applicable Dollar Amount for Fee Imposed by Sections 4375 and 4376" (Notice 2017-61) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 16, 2017; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-3204. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Treatment of Amounts Paid to Section 170(c) Organizations under Employer Leave-Based Donation Programs to Aid Victims of Hurricane and Tropical Storm Maria" (Notice 2017-62) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 16, 2017; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-3205. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "September 2017 Supplement to Rev. Proc. 2014-64, Implementation of Nonresident Alien Deposit Interest Regulations" (Rev. Proc. 2017-46) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 16, 2017; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-3206. A communication from the Executive Analyst (Political), Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Deputy Secretary of Health and Human Services, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 18, 2017; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-3207. A communication from the Assistant Legal Adviser for Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to the Case-Zablocki Act, 1 U.S.C. 112b, as amended, the report of the texts and background statements of international agreements, other than treaties (List 2017-0171-2017-0175); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-3208. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the status of the Government of Cuba's compliance with the

United States-Cuba September 1994 “Joint Communiqué,” and on the treatment of persons returned to Cuba in accordance with the United States-Cuba May 1995 “Joint Statement,” and the United States-Cuba January 2017 “Joint Statement”; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-3209. A communication from the Executive Secretary, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), transmitting, pursuant to law, four (4) reports relative to vacancies in the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 16, 2017; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-3210. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 22-141, “Unity Health Care, Inc. Certificate of Need Maximum Fee Establishment Temporary Amendment Act of 2017”; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-3211. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 22-142, “Fort Dupont Ice Arena Programming Temporary Amendment Act of 2017”; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-3212. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 22-143, “Voter Rolls Protection Temporary Act of 2017”; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-3213. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Procedures for Requesting Approval for a Change in Funding Method” (Rev. Proc. 2017-57) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 16, 2017; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-3214. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Automatic approval for certain funding method changes for single-employer defined benefit pension plans subject to the minimum funding requirements of section 430” (Rev. Proc. 2017-56) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 16, 2017; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-3215. A communication from the Executive Director, National Mining Hall of Fame and Museum, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Museum’s 2016 annual report and financial audit; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-3216. A communication from the Deputy General Counsel, Office of Hearings and Appeals, Small Business Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Record Disclosure and Privacy” (RIN3245-AG52) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 16, 2017; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

EC-3217. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Helicopters” ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2016-9143)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 18, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3218. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal

Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes” ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2017-0561)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 18, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3219. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes” ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2017-0623)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 18, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3220. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes” ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2017-0809)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 18, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3221. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes” ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2016-9301)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 18, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3222. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes” ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2016-9185)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 18, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3223. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc., Airplanes” ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2017-0511)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 18, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3224. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc., Airplanes” ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2017-0334)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 18, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3225. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; British Aerospace Regional Aircraft Airplanes” ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2017-0639)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 18, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3226. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; Dassault Aviation Airplanes” ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-

2017-0494)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 18, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3227. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Defense and Space S.A. (Formerly Known as Construcciones Aeronauticas, S.A.) Airplanes” ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2017-0555)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 18, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3228. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; General Electric Company Turbofan Engines” ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2017-0452)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 18, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3229. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; Rolls-Royce Deutschland Ltd and Co KG Turbofan Engines” ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2017-0140)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 18, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3230. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; Rolls-Royce plc Turbofan Engines” ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2017-0767)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 18, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3231. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; Siemens S.A.S. Smoke Detectors” ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2017-0099)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 18, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-3232. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; Technifly Motors GmbH Reciprocating Engines” ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2017-0241)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on October 18, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. THUNE, from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation:

Report to accompany S. 1536. A bill to designate a human trafficking prevention coordinator and to expand the scope of activities authorized under the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration’s outreach and education program to include human trafficking prevention activities, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 115-177).

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 283

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 283, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the treatment of veterans who participated in the cleanup of Enewetak Atoll as radiation exposed veterans for purposes of the presumption of service-connection of certain disabilities by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

S. 322

At the request of Mr. PETERS, the names of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) and the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) were added as cosponsors of S. 322, a bill to protect victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence from emotional and psychological trauma caused by acts of violence or threats of violence against their pets.

S. 372

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 372, a bill to amend the Tariff Act of 1930 to ensure that merchandise arriving through the mail shall be subject to review by U.S. Customs and Border Protection and to require the provision of advance electronic information on shipments of mail to U.S. Customs and Border Protection and for other purposes.

S. 591

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 591, a bill to expand eligibility for the program of comprehensive assistance for family caregivers of the Department of Veterans Affairs, to expand benefits available to participants under such program, to enhance special compensation for members of the uniformed services who require assistance in everyday life, and for other purposes.

S. 654

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 654, a bill to revise section 48 of title 18, United States Code, and for other purposes.

S. 916

At the request of Mr. CASSIDY, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 916, a bill to amend the Controlled Substances Act with regard to the provision of emergency medical services.

S. 1016

At the request of Mr. SCHATZ, the names of the Senator from Alabama (Mr. STRANGE) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) were added as cosponsors of S. 1016, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to expand access to telehealth services, and for other purposes.

S. 1073

At the request of Mr. NELSON, his name was withdrawn as a cosponsor of S. 1073, a bill to authorize Escambia County, Florida, to convey certain property that was formerly part of Santa Rosa Island National Monument and that was conveyed to Escambia County subject to restrictions on use and reconveyance.

S. 1370

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1370, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to revise and extend projects relating to children and violence to provide access to school-based comprehensive mental health programs.

S. 1421

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1421, a bill to support educational entities in fully implementing title IX and reducing and preventing sex discrimination in all areas of education.

S. 1589

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1589, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and the Small Business Act to expand the availability of employee stock ownership plans in S corporations, and for other purposes.

S. 1693

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1693, a bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to clarify that section 230 of that Act does not prohibit the enforcement against providers and users of interactive computer services of Federal and State criminal and civil law relating to sex trafficking.

S. 1787

At the request of Ms. MURKOWSKI, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1787, a bill to reauthorize the National Geologic Mapping Act of 1992.

S. 1827

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1827, a bill to extend funding for the Children's Health Insurance Program, and for other purposes.

S. 1839

At the request of Mr. KING, the name of the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1839, a bill to amend the Agricultural Trade Act of 1978 to extend and expand the market access program and the foreign market development cooperator program.

S. 1893

At the request of Mrs. MCCASKILL, the name of the Senator from Florida

(Mr. NELSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1893, a bill to amend the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act to specify when bank holding companies may be subject to certain enhanced supervision, and for other purposes.

S. 1942

At the request of Ms. HEITKAMP, the names of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1942, a bill to direct the Attorney General to review, revise, and develop law enforcement and justice protocols appropriate to address missing and murdered Indians, and for other purposes.

S. 1970

At the request of Mr. BENNET, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1970, a bill to establish a public health plan.

S.J. RES. 47

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 47, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection relating to "Arbitration Agreements".

S. RES. 139

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the names of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ), the Senator from Virginia (Mr. Kaine), the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 139, a resolution condemning the Government of Iran's state-sponsored persecution of its Baha'i minority and its continued violation of the International Covenants on Human Rights.

S. RES. 250

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 250, a resolution condemning horrific acts of violence against Burma's Rohingya population and calling on Aung San Suu Kyi to play an active role in ending this humanitarian tragedy.

S. RES. 295

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 295, a resolution designating October 2017 as "National Employee Ownership Month".

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 1573. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2266, to amend title 28 of the United States Code to authorize the appointment of additional bankruptcy judges; and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1574. Mr. FLAKE (for himself and Mr. LEE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2266, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1575. Mr. NELSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2266, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 1576. Mr. SHELBY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2266, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 1573. Mr. PAUL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2266, to amend title 28 of the United States Code to authorize the appointment of additional bankruptcy judges; and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in division A, insert the following:

SEC. _____. (a) **OFFSET.**—Of the unobligated balances made available to each covered executive department for fiscal year 2018, \$36,517,000,000 are rescinded, on a pro rata basis, in accordance with subsection (b).

(b) **DISCRETION OF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT HEAD.**—The head of each covered executive department shall determine from which accounts of the covered executive department and in what amounts the funds required to be rescinded under subsection (a) will be rescinded.

(c) **COVERED EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT.**—In this section, the term “covered executive department” means—

(1) an Executive agency, as defined in section 105 of title 5, United States Code; and

(2) does not include the Department of Veterans Affairs.

SA 1574. Mr. FLAKE (for himself and Mr. LEE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2266, to amend title 28 of the United States Code to authorize the appointment of additional bankruptcy judges; and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 5, lines 5 through 10, strike “*Provided further,*” and all that follows through “Secretary of the Treasury.”.

At the end, add the following:

DIVISION C—PUERTO RICO ENERGY DELIVERY RELIABILITY AND REFORM

SEC. 2001. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON THE PRIVATIZATION OF THE PUERTO RICO ELECTRIC POWER AUTHORITY.

It is the sense of Congress that privatizing the Puerto Rico Electric Power Authority would lead to lower energy costs for electricity customers in the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

SEC. 2002. EXCEPTIONS TO APPLICATION OF COASTWISE LAWS FOR PUERTO RICO.

Section 55101(b) of title 46, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (1), (2), and (3) as paragraphs (2), (3), and (4), respectively; and

(2) by inserting before paragraph (2), as redesignated, the following:

“(1) the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico;”.

SEC. 2003. TERMS AND AVAILABILITY OF CERTAIN LOANS OR OTHER ASSISTANCE.

Nothing in this Act authorizes any loan or other assistance made available under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emer-

gency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.)—

(1) to include any terms that would impair any lien or collateral securing the claim of any creditor of—

(A) a territory or possession of the United States or a local government agency of a territory or possession of the United States; or

(B) an instrumentality of a territory or possession of the United States or a local government agency of a territory or possession of the United States; or

(2) to be made available for proceedings under title III of the Puerto Rico Oversight, Management, and Economic Security Act (48 U.S.C. 2161 et seq.).

SA 1575. Mr. NELSON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2266, to amend title 28 of the United States Code to authorize the appointment of additional bankruptcy judges; and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In title II of division A, under the heading “DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE”, add at the end the following:

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

For an additional amount for the Office of the Secretary, \$3,000,000,000, for necessary expenses related to crop losses and other consequences of Hurricanes Irma, Harvey, and Maria: *Provided*, That notwithstanding any other provision of law, payment and income limitations shall not apply with respect to payments made to producers pursuant to this paragraph: *Provided further*, That with respect to payments made to producers of citrus, fruits and vegetables, or nursery crops, the Secretary of Agriculture shall carry out this paragraph in a similar manner as under the Florida Hurricane Agriculture Disaster Assistance (Special Disaster Relief for Hurricanes Charley and Frances) program of the Farm Service Agency (as revised on September 30, 2004): *Provided further*, That such amount is designated by Congress as being for emergency requirements pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901(b)(2)(A)(i)).

SA 1576. Mr. SHELBY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 2266, to amend title 28 of the United States Code to authorize the appointment of additional bankruptcy judges; and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike section 308 and insert the following:

SEC. 308. Section 1309(a) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4016(a)) is amended by striking “\$30,425,000,000” and inserting “\$46,425,000,000”.

SAFER ACT OF 2017

Mr. DAINES. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 231, S. 1766.

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1766) to reauthorize the SAFER Act of 2013, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee

on the Judiciary, 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 “Sexual Assault Forensic Evidence Reporting Act of 2017” or the “SAFER Act of 2017”.

SEC. 2. PEDIATRIC SEXUAL ASSAULT NURSE EXAMINERS.

Section 304(c)(2) of the DNA Sexual Assault Justice Act of 2004 (34 U.S.C. 40723(c)(2)) is amended—

(1) by inserting “, both adult and pediatric,” after “role of forensic nurses”; and

(2) by striking “and elder abuse” and inserting “elder abuse, and, in particular, the need for pediatric sexual assault nurse examiners, including such nurse examiners working in the multidisciplinary setting, in responding to abuse of both children and adolescents”.

SEC. 3. REDUCING THE RAPE KIT BACKLOG.

(a) **REAUTHORIZATION.**—Section 2(c)(4) of the DNA Analysis Backlog Elimination Act of 2000 (34 U.S.C. 40701(c)(4)) is amended by striking “2017” and inserting “2022”.

(b) **SUNSET.**—Section 1006 of the SAFER Act of 2013 (34 U.S.C. 40701 note) is amended by striking “2018” and inserting “2023”.

Mr. DAINES. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported substitute amendment be 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 amendment in the nature of a substitute was agreed to.

The bill (S. 1766), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2017

Mr. DAINES. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Tuesday, October 24; further, that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate resume consideration of the House message to accompany H.R. 2266; further, that the Senate recess from 12:30 p.m. until 2:15 p.m. to allow for the weekly conference meetings; finally, that all time during morning business, recess, adjournment, and leader remarks count postcloture.

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

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

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

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:47 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, October 24, 2017, at 10 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

DELTA REGIONAL AUTHORITY

CHRISTOPHER CALDWELL, OF ARKANSAS, TO BE FEDERAL COCHAIRPERSON, DELTA REGIONAL AUTHORITY, VICE CHRISTOPHER A. MASINGILL.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

KENNETH J. BRAITHWAITE, OF PENNSYLVANIA, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE KINGDOM OF NORWAY.

IN THE COAST GUARD

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO SERVE AS THE DIRECTOR OF THE COAST GUARD RE-

SERVE IN THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 14, U.S.C., SECTION 53(B):

To be rear admiral (lower half)

REAR ADM. ANDREW S. MCKINLEY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD RESERVE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203(A):

To be rear admiral (lower half)

CAPT. JAMES M. KELLY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 14, U.S.C., SECTION 271(E):

To be rear admiral (lower half)

CAPT. THOMAS ALLAN
CAPT. LAURA M. DICKEY
CAPT. DOUGLAS M. FEARS

CAPT. JOHN W. MAUGER
CAPT. NATHAN A. MOORE
CAPT. BRIAN K. PENoyer
CAPT. MATTHEW W. SIBLEY

WITHDRAWAL

Executive Message transmitted by the President to the Senate on October 23, 2017 withdrawing from further Senate consideration the following nomination:

TOM MARINO, OF PENNSYLVANIA, TO BE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL POLICY, VICE MICHAEL A. BOTTICELLI, RESIGNED, WHICH WAS SENT TO THE SENATE ON SEPTEMBER 5, 2017.