

TAA has been vitally important in helping Maine workers, and those across the Nation, who have been harmed by trade get the skills and training they need to prepare for jobs in other industries. Reauthorization of trade adjustment assistance programs must be a part of the national trade policy debate, and I am pleased that the Senate recognized the importance of TAA by approving the bipartisan amendment that I authored to the Budget Resolution related to reauthorizing TAA. I urge my colleagues to support the bipartisan Trade Adjustment Assistance Enhancement Act of 2015 to continue crucial investments in the American worker and protect them from unfair trade practices and increased imports.

VOLUNTEER INCOME TAX ASSISTANCE ACT

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I support the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Act. Each year, tax payers across the country utilize accountants, tax software, and lawyers as they prepare their returns. For millions of low-income families, high-cost, high-tech tax assistance is not an option. As a result, the families most in need of tax preparation assistance—low- and moderate-income families, including elderly and disabled taxpayers—will fail to file their taxes or miss out on valuable tax credits.

The IRS created the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance, VITA program in 1969 to assist individuals and families in submitting their Federal tax returns. For decades, this program operated predominantly with the resources and facilities of community partners. In 2007, Congress created a demonstration program awarding matching grants to VITA sites to serve additional low-income individuals and families. Since 2008, the VITA grant program has grown to over 200 grant recipients but is still only able to fund about two-thirds of grant applicants.

During the 2014 Federal income tax filing season, VITA programs filed approximately 1.7 million tax returns. Of those 1.7 million returns, more than 551,000 claimed the Earned Income Tax Credit as part of nearly \$2.5 billion in tax refunds that went to VITA tax filers. In addition, VITA programs improve accuracy in the return process and reduce IRS costs by e-filing. In 2014, VITA program tax returns were e-filed 96 percent of the time, compared to 86 percent for the rest of the population.

Funding for the VITA program remains insufficient to meet demand and has not been made permanent. The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Act would ensure that volunteers and non-profits across the country can continue to provide essential tax preparation services each spring by creating a permanent matching grant program for VITA sites. The act would also build on the success of the VITA program by

creating a National Center to Promote Quality, Excellence, and Evaluation in Volunteer Income Tax Assistance. Through the center, VITA's many sites would have a mechanism to share best practices and create a more efficient and sustainable program to serve a large number of low- and middle-income families.

I ask that my colleagues join me in supporting working families by cosponsoring the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Act.

RECOGNIZING SANOFI'S PENNSYLVANIA EMPLOYEES

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, I wish to recognize the contributions to global public health by the Pennsylvania employees of Sanofi. Yesterday, at the White House, they were presented with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office's Patent for Humanity award, in recognition of the development of a patented chemical and industrial process for producing semi-synthetic artemisinin, which is used in the creation of combination therapies, ACTs, treating malaria.

Malaria is one of the most deadly infectious diseases in the world, with 200 million cases in almost 100 countries. In 2013, an estimated 584,000 people died from malaria. This parasitic infection most significantly burdens countries with the highest rates of poverty. In Africa, where 90 percent of all malaria cases occur, one child dies every minute from the condition.

Artemisinin is an important anti-malarial drug derived from the sweet wormwood plant in Asia and Africa, but weather and other factors can yield an uncertain supply of natural artemisinin, threatening patients' access. Thus, developing semi-synthetic artemisinin will enable a stable supply of high-quality medication at affordable prices on a no-profit, no-loss model, lead to a stronger supply chain, and place more ACTs in the hands of the most vulnerable patients. Sanofi hopes to produce annually an average of 50 to 60 tons of artemisinin, which will produce 80 to 150 million ACT treatments.

This project to produce semi-synthetic artemisinin began in 2007, and involves a partnership with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the University of California Berkeley, the global health charity PATH, Sanofi, and Amiry's. I would like to commend in particular Alain Werner, Robert Sebbag, and Philippe Charreau of Sanofi who led the organization's work on this important project. Sanofi's achievement is only one example of a rich history of dedicating its resources to combat the world's most deadly diseases. Their work on malaria dates back to the 1930s. More recently, Sanofi, which has 112,000 employees and retains core strengths in human vaccines, animal health, consumer healthcare, diabetes, and rare diseases, created its Access to Medicines pro-

gram to improve access to healthcare in the poorest countries.

As the Senate continues to work on legislation to speed the development of therapies, I ask my colleagues keep in mind the important incentives and intellectual property protections that encourage scientists, such as those responsible for this breakthrough, to create lifesaving medicines for patients worldwide.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

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

PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE

PROPOSED AGREEMENT FOR CO-OPERATION BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA CONCERNING PEACEFUL USES OF NUCLEAR ENERGY—PM 14

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with accompanying papers; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

To the Congress of the United States:

I am pleased to transmit to the Congress, pursuant to subsections 123 b. and 123 d. of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended (42 U.S.C. 2153(b), (d)) (the "Act"), the text of a proposed Agreement for Cooperation Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the People's Republic of China Concerning Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy (the "Agreement"). I am also pleased to transmit my written approval, authorization, and determination concerning the Agreement, and an unclassified Nuclear Proliferation Assessment Statement (NPAS) concerning the Agreement. (In accordance with section 123 of the Act, as amended by Title XII of the Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act of 1998 (Public Law 105-277), two classified annexes to the NPAS, prepared by the Secretary of State, in consultation with the Director of National Intelligence, summarizing relevant classified information, will be submitted to the Congress separately.) The joint memorandum submitted to me by the Secretaries of State and Energy and a letter from the Chairman of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission stating the views of the Commission are also enclosed. An addendum to the NPAS containing a comprehensive analysis of China's export control system with respect to nuclear-related matters, including interactions with other countries of proliferation concern and the actual or suspected nuclear, dual-use, or missile-