

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

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Heller amendment be agreed to; the bill, as amended, be 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 amendment (No. 2760) was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: To authorize per diem payments under comprehensive service programs for homeless veterans to furnish care to dependents of homeless veterans)

On page 4, between lines 15 and 16, insert the following:

SEC. 6. AUTHORIZATION OF PER DIEM PAYMENTS FOR FURNISHING CARE TO DEPENDENTS OF CERTAIN HOMELESS VETERANS.

Section 2012(a) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(4) Services for which a recipient of a grant under section 2011 of this title (or an entity described in paragraph (1)) may receive per diem payments under this subsection may include furnishing care for a dependent of a homeless veteran who is under the care of such homeless veteran while such homeless veteran receives services from the grant recipient (or entity).”.

The bill (S. 1731), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 1731

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Homeless Veterans Services Protection Act of 2015”.

SEC. 2. WAIVER OF MINIMUM PERIOD OF CONTINUOUS ACTIVE DUTY IN ARMED FORCES FOR CERTAIN BENEFITS FOR HOMELESS VETERANS.

Section 5303A(b)(3) of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating subparagraphs (F) and (G) as subparagraphs (G) and (H), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after subparagraph (E) the following new subparagraph (F):

“(F) to benefits under section 2011, 2012, 2013, 2044, or 2061 of this title;”.

SEC. 3. AUTHORIZATION TO FURNISH CERTAIN BENEFITS TO HOMELESS VETERANS WITH DISCHARGES OR RELEASES UNDER OTHER THAN HONORABLE CONDITIONS.

Section 5303(d) of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking “not apply to any war-risk insurance” and inserting the following: “not apply to the following:

“(1) Any war-risk insurance”; and

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

“(2) Benefits under section 2011, 2012, 2013, 2044, or 2061 of this title (except for benefits for individuals discharged or dismissed from the Armed Forces by reason of the sentence of a general court-martial).”.

SEC. 4. MODIFICATION OF DEFINITION OF VETERAN FOR PURPOSES OF PROVIDING CERTAIN BENEFITS TO HOMELESS VETERANS.

Section 2002 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking “In this chapter” and inserting “(a) IN GENERAL.—In this chapter”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(b) **VETERAN DEFINED.**—(1) Notwithstanding section 101(2) of this title and except as provided in paragraph (2), for purposes of sections 2011, 2012, 2013, 2044, and 2061 of this title, the term ‘veteran’ means a person who served in the active military, naval, or air service, regardless of length of service, and who was discharged or released therefrom.

“(2) For purposes of paragraph (1), the term ‘veteran’ excludes a person who—

“(A) received a dishonorable discharge from the Armed Forces; or

“(B) was discharged or dismissed from the Armed Forces by reason of the sentence of a general court-martial.”.

SEC. 5. TRAINING OF PERSONNEL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND GRANT RECIPIENTS.

The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall conduct a program of training and education to ensure that the following persons are aware of and implement this Act and the amendments made by this Act:

(1) Personnel of the Department of Veterans Affairs who are supporting or administering a program under chapter 20 of title 38, United States Code.

(2) Recipients of grants or other amounts for purposes of carrying out such a program.

SEC. 6. AUTHORIZATION OF PER DIEM PAYMENTS FOR FURNISHING CARE TO DEPENDENTS OF CERTAIN HOMELESS VETERANS.

Section 2012(a) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(4) Services for which a recipient of a grant under section 2011 of this title (or an entity described in paragraph (1)) may receive per diem payments under this subsection may include furnishing care for a dependent of a homeless veteran who is under the care of such homeless veteran while such homeless veteran receives services from the grant recipient (or entity).”.

SEC. 7. REGULATIONS.

Not later than 270 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall prescribe regulations, including such modifications to section 3.12 of title 38, Code of Federal Regulations (or any successor regulation), as the Secretary considers appropriate, to ensure that the Department of Veterans Affairs is in full compliance with this Act and the amendments made by this Act.

SEC. 8. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This Act and the amendments made by this Act shall apply to individuals seeking benefits under chapter 20 of title 38, United States Code, before, on, and after the date of the enactment of this Act.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I want to thank Senator HELLER, Senator ISAKSON, and the other Members who worked so hard for this. I would like to yield some time to the Senator from Nevada.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, I want to thank Senator MURRAY for her efforts here today and for her willingness to work with me on including a provision that we worked on together for several years now as members of the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs. Senator MURRAY's legislation ensures that homeless veterans continue to be eligible for the VA's Grant and Per Diem Program.

With my provision that Senator MURRAY agreed to include, this legisla-

tion will also extend this eligibility to the dependents of homeless veterans. Given the work that I have done with Senator MURRAY on eligibility for homeless veterans' dependents, I believe it was important we addressed both the needs of the veteran as well as their dependents.

In cities such as Las Vegas, where veteran homelessness remains a serious problem, the support of housing and service centers that receive VA funding is absolutely critical in getting these veterans back on their feet. Not only do the programs provide housing but they also offer services, such as case management, education, crisis intervention, and other services to special populations and important populations such as homeless women veterans.

This Congress has a responsibility to ensure that existing veterans under this program remain eligible, but also that dependents of veterans, especially their children, are taken care of when their veteran parents have fallen on hard times.

That is why I introduced the CARE for Veterans' Dependents Act with Senator MURRAY, to make dependents eligible for care at VA-funded facilities. These children and their parents deserve the certainty that they will be able to access supportive housing during their serious time of need. I am proud that we were able to move forward on this measure, which was just accepted a few moments ago by unanimous consent.

Senator MURRAY and I have a proud history of working together to advocate on behalf of our Nation's veterans, and today's passage of this legislation is another testament to our strong partnership on behalf of veterans. I am also grateful to the chairman of the committee, Senator ISAKSON, and to Ranking Member BLUMENTHAL of the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs, for working so diligently with us to make this happen.

Mr. President, I yield back to the Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I yield back.

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

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

TRADE ACT OF 2015—Continued

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. RES. 222

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, as the proud parent of a wonderful daughter and the proud grandparent of three wonderful granddaughters, like so many others, I was proud of the U.S. Women's National Team and their historic World Cup victory. I was even more proud on Tuesday when I saw

them at the White House with President Obama.

I know all Americans are so proud, as well as honored. The reason why so many Americans are proud of it is that earlier this year, with more than 25 million Americans watching, this electrifying group of athletes led the United States to a record third World Cup title. We all cheered, but then along with a lot of other Americans, I was surprised to learn that the U.S. Women's National Team—even though there were enormous receipts from the TV coverage of this—received \$2 million for winning the Women's World Cup. The 2014 Men's World Cup winners were awarded \$35 million. When the women won, it was \$2 million. When the men won, it was \$35 million. To make it even worse, the men's teams that lost in the first round of the 2014 Men's World Cup were awarded \$8 million. In other words, if you lose and are a man, you get \$8 million. If you are a woman and you win, you get \$2 million.

That is really not acceptable. I cannot imagine anybody finding it acceptable. I wanted to raise some awareness of this. I introduced a Senate resolution calling on soccer's international governing body, FIFA, to eliminate its discriminatory prize awards structure.

It highlights the gross pay disparity in their award structure and calls for immediate change. All Democrats support this call. I have heard some opponents of an equal prize awards structure in sports who say: Oh, no, we must pay men more than women. They point to revenue as the reason behind this disparity. Revenue cannot be accepted as a means for discrimination. Awards should not be determined by gender. That is why major sporting events, including the U.S. Open Tennis Championships and Wimbledon changed their prize award structure to assure that both female and male athletes are treated with the same dignity and respect they deserve.

This proud father and grandfather feels that my sons and my daughter should be treated the same and my grandsons and granddaughters should be treated the same. In fact, it is why the U.S. Women's National Team was rightly honored with a Ticker-Tape parade and magazine covers for each player and their head coach by Sports Illustrated.

These athletes, recognized at the White House on Tuesday, are global icons. Not just here in America but around the world they are recognized. They are role models to young athletes and fans everywhere.

This includes fans such as 13-year-old Ayla Ludlow. She wrote to President Obama and the First Lady after the Women's World Cup. She said: "It makes me mad that people do not treat girls equally." I agree. It is time to recognize all athletes for their contributions—not make women second-class citizens. By taking an overdue but important step toward pay equity, we send a resounding message not just

to women and girls but also to men and boys around the world. Equal pay for equal work should not be an ideal we talk about, but a reality.

The men's teams that lost in the 2014 Men's World Cup were awarded \$8 million. The women's team, which was watched worldwide as they won, was awarded \$2 million. The men's team that did win was awarded \$35 million. I cannot imagine anybody who could stand up for that kind of disparity and treat men so much differently and so much better than women. These are athletes who worked hard from the time they were young to be the best of the best. They made America proud. But I think we make America a little ashamed if we do not stand up and say: We want women treated the same as men.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the HELP Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 222, and that the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration—this is the resolution calling on FIFA to pay the same; and that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I listened carefully to the distinguished Senator's comments. Gender discrimination is wrong, and we all know that. We have enacted laws in the United States for sports and for the workplace to make sure that we reflect those values.

I support those laws, but we have a budget to pass, a debt crisis to fix, an education system that needs reform, and a humanitarian crisis in Europe that we ought to address. That is what the U.S. Senate ought to be spending its time on rather than offering opinions and resolutions about a private international entity and how they should distribute prizes and awards. So I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, last night we passed resolutions, and here we are talking about taking 30 seconds out of our busy, busy schedule. Of course, we were in a quorum call for a few hours today. We could take 30, 50, or 82 seconds out of the 100 hours or so we will spend during the month sitting here doing nothing and pass a resolution that calls for the equal treatment of male and female athletes.

If we cannot even do that, is it any wonder that the approval ratings of the Senate are in the tank? If we cannot even pass a nonbinding resolution, how can we ever achieve real pay equity for women? What is the real objection? We are simply urging for the equal treatment of female athletes. Treating people differently solely because of their gender is unacceptable. It sends a ter-

rible message to mothers, daughters, and granddaughters across the globe.

As I said, every single Democrat supports this resolution. I am very disappointed that the Republicans are blocking it.

I will leave after saying one more thing. The women's team won to international acclaim, and they were awarded \$2 million. The men's teams that lost in the first round were paid \$8 million. The men's team that won was awarded \$35 million.

Wimbledon knows better. The U.S. Open Tennis Championships said enough is enough. Women should be treated the same as men.

A 13-year-old girl wrote to the President and said: "It makes me mad that people do not treat girls equally." Well, I have a granddaughter who will be 13 in December. How do I speak to her? How do I tell her that the U.S. Senate—which is sort of waiting around here and has not done anything today—is unwilling to take 10 seconds, 30 seconds, 50 seconds to say: Let's treat women athletes the same as men.

I thank my Democratic colleagues for supporting this legislation. I hope my Republican colleagues will change their minds and say: Let's treat female athletes the same as male athletes, especially since the World Cup organization made a fortune on TV rights. They certainly made a heck of a lot more money on those TV rights while the women were winning than they were making when the men's team lost, but the men's teams that lost in the first round were still paid \$8 million. They made four times more than the women who won the championship were paid. It is sexist, and it is wrong.

In this day and age we need to stop treating women as second-class citizens. I do not want my daughter treated that way. I do not want my granddaughters treated that way. I do not want the women in Vermont treated that way. I do not want women anywhere in this country to be treated that way. I want to say to that 13-year-old girl who is angry because of the unfair treatment of girls: I am sorry the U.S. Senate would not stand up for you, but I, and others, stand up for you, and I always will. Let us hope someday the Senate stands up for you too.

We can see how busy we are at this time. There is not a single Senator on the floor, except for the distinguished Presiding Officer, of course, and so I will suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I rise today to address a frustrating situation that has brought us here today. For months I have been calling on Congress to come to the middle and negotiate a responsible budget deal that

works for the American people, but time and time again, whether it was in the Appropriations Committee or here on the Senate floor, Members of this body refused to have a conversation about how to do that. They dug their heels in and said: It is my way or the highway.

Now here we are, down to the wire, and they finally realize that sequestration is damaging. It is something that we have been saying from day one. Unfortunately, it cost the Speaker of the House his job, it wasted months of time, and it continued to erode what is left of the faith that the American people have in Congress.

Coming from Montana, I find this incredibly frustrating. Folks back home are reasonable. They talk to their neighbors even if they don't agree with them. They compromise, negotiate, give a little, and most of the time they get a lot. This body could learn a lot from my constituents.

The Senate was designed to be a deliberative body. It was supposed to be a place where conversations and compromise happen, where we reach across the aisle and partner with our colleagues with whom we might not always agree. That kind of bipartisanship requires more time, harder work, and tougher conversations. Sure, it is a lot easier to scream and yell at the other side so the super PACs and millionaires who fund too much of our politics these days know we didn't back down, but at the end of the day, that doesn't move the country forward, and unfortunately that happened again this year.

Had we started these budget negotiations back in July when 10 moderate Members of this body first rang the alarm, we wouldn't be in a last-minute scramble today. I am disappointed. I am disappointed in the Senate. The only time folks are talking to one another is when there is a crisis. The only time folks are working together is when we are faced with fiscal cliffs, economic meltdowns, and catastrophes. I hope we realize that Congress is the only place in this country that operates like this. Businesses and families plan, talk, and they certainly don't wait until the last minute to get their financial house in order.

Why does it take an emergency for Congress to govern? Why does it take a looming deadline for folks to come to their senses and to do their jobs? It is because the voices in the middle are getting drowned out by the voices on the fringes. We have become afraid of compromise. In many circles it is a dirty word, one that should never be uttered.

So here we are today, just a few days before we default on our debt, and we have wasted so much time. Our inability to tackle these issues earlier this year caused the appropriations process to break down. It caused an unnecessary veto of the Defense authorization bill, something our troops are waiting for us to resolve while they stand on the frontlines.

I know this budget deal isn't perfect, but it is the product of compromise, however last minute it may be and however limited the ability of Senators to weigh in on it is. But by raising the debt ceiling, we will prevent interest rates from skyrocketing and the value of the dollar from plummeting. By ending the sequester, we will do away with severe budget cuts that are hurting our veterans, seniors, students, and working families.

We will shore up Social Security and allow ourselves to make responsible investments in our national security, education, health care, and public lands. It will reduce a massive premium hike that was scheduled to impact 46,000 Montana seniors who use Medicare for their health insurance. This legislation will keep those premiums more manageable.

Those accomplishments are critically important to our economy and worthy of this Senate's support, but as with anything that comes together at the last minute, there are provisions I don't like, things that could have been fixed if we had taken more time to negotiate. Take, for instance, the budget's impact on our rural hospitals. There are provisions in here that could severely limit access to rural health care. I am committed to addressing those concerns in the upcoming appropriations process because folks in Montana and other rural States shouldn't have to drive hundreds of miles to see a doctor.

As I said, this budget isn't perfect. The most disappointing thing is that it could have been so much better. But in the spirit of compromise that got us here today, we need to use that conversation to make sure we get things done.

I know there will always be those who refuse to get off the ideological soapbox and who like to watch others do the hard work of governing, but those folks usually don't last long with my constituents.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

CONGRATULATING SPEAKER PAUL RYAN

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, when responsibility calls, it is usually not at a time of our choosing. The decision to answer is rarely easy or straightforward. PAUL RYAN knows this. He spent his nights dreaming about tax policy, not the Speakership. But our country is fortunate that he stepped up to lead, and I know I am grateful that he did.

Speaker RYAN is thoughtful about the issues facing our Nation. He is sober-minded. He knows the job he is walking into is tough. He also understands the potential it holds in terms of conservative solutions for our country and in terms of more opportunity for the middle class.

When I called to congratulate Speaker RYAN, we discussed our many shared goals in Congress. We pledged a strong partnership. We aimed to continue ad-

vancing conservative reform. I look forward to working closely with him as we move forward.

Speaker RYAN knows what it means to work hard. He knows what it means to dream big dreams. He knows what it means to achieve them as well. Something we all admire about Speaker RYAN is his determination to ensure others are able to achieve big things in their lives too, to ensure others can lead fulfilling lives defined by meaning and punctuated with purpose.

There is no doubt he cares deeply. He cares about combating poverty effectively. He cares about lifting up the middle class successfully. And because he cares, he is willing to call out failed policies when they hurt those they are supposed to help, and he has suggested better ways forward as well.

In short, here is what we can say about Speaker RYAN: He has a big heart, he has an extraordinary intellect, and he knows how to lead with both. That quality is rare around here. So is having a reputation that so greatly precedes oneself in such a positive way. But that is Speaker RYAN.

Nothing is going to come easily in his new role, and he certainly knows that. Neither of us will be under any illusions about the positions we hold. We face a Democratic Party that continues to move left. We face a President who doesn't seem very interested in cooperation on the big things or the hard things, nor on making divided government work. These are the realities that face us, and we might as well acknowledge them, but it won't stop us from working together to advance conservative reform as well as to achieve solutions for the middle class whenever we can.

Today, though, let's celebrate Speaker RYAN's extraordinary achievement. He has already proven his stature as a leader in our party. From leading the Nation on responsible budgeting and pro-growth tax reform to serving as an extraordinary candidate for Vice President, he always rises to the challenge.

I would note for my House colleagues that their incoming leader campaigned vigorously to become President of the Senate, but he was drafted into the Speakership.

But, look, on a more serious note, PAUL RYAN may not have asked for this job, but the moment called for him to lead, and I am grateful that he will because we know he is a leader who has repeatedly demonstrated the talent, the vision, and the experience to succeed.

I look forward to building a strong partnership on behalf of our country.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of Calendar Nos. 345