

The people of France have suffered tremendously, and I want them to know that Americans mourn with them. They stood by our sides after the attacks on September 11, 2001, and we stand with them now in the face of these horrific attacks.

NATIONAL ADOPTION DAY

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I wish to bring attention today to the 108,000 foster children in our country who right now are waiting to be adopted. Of these, more than 14,000 are in California.

These are children who cannot safely be reunited with their biological families and are without a permanent place to call home through absolutely no fault of their own. These are children who are waiting for a family, wanting to belong, and needing our help. Of these children, more than 20,000 age out of the foster care system every year. They are sent on their way and expected to make it on their own. This is unacceptable.

What do we know about their outcomes? It isn't good. Around half of foster youth graduate high school, and less than three percent earn a college degree. Around a quarter will become homeless after aging out of the foster system. Many will find their way into the justice system.

Now, imagine a different outcome. Children are meant to be in a family. All children deserve love, safety, and permanency. No child is unadoptable.

November marks National Adoption Month, and November 21st is National Adoption Day. This highlights not only the need to find loving homes for children who are waiting, but celebrates those who have opened their hearts and chosen to build their families through adoption. Children in foster care are not just in need, they are waiting for a family to give their love and to share their joy.

In 2014, more than 50,000 children were adopted from foster care. What adoption means to youth who have been through foster care is best said in their own words.

From Athena, a young lady in Pasadena, CA, who was adopted from foster care: "Adoption is very dear and important to me. As an older youth in the system, you expect to have no support, let alone adoption as an option. But being a part of a family was all I ever wanted and deep down it is what most foster youth want because it means love, stability and a place for one to grow and excel in."

And from Cassidy, an adopted teenager in California: "If you take a chance on a foster child by adopting them, you give them a chance to be who they were born to be. Let's make 'aging-out' a term no longer needed in the English language."

Darnell, an older teen adopted in California, explains what finding a permanent family means to him: "Adoption means I have a second chance at

life, I know I am loved and have a safe place to call home. When strangers take you into their home and love you just for who you are; you can relax and live a regular life."

All children in foster care deserve this second chance at having their forever family and a safe and loving home. I encourage those who are interested in learning more about adoption from foster care to visit www.adoptuskids.org.

This is also a time to celebrate the many volunteers and mentors who provide a positive, stable relationship for a child going through a time of vast uncertainty. There may not be a simple solution, but we do know what gets us closer.

Programs that provide comprehensive resources—tutoring, mentoring, mental health services, and adults that build meaningful relationships with youth leads to improved outcomes, including higher rates of permanency.

Focused family finding efforts that reach out to extended family members and others who have played a role in the life of the child gets results. That means fewer youth who age out of the system.

We can and must do better because 20,000 of our Nation's foster children aging out of the system each year is simply unacceptable. These are our most vulnerable, the ones recovering from trauma, abuse, and neglect. The ones who are at high risk of being sold into child sex trafficking and a number of other terrible outcomes.

I look forward to working with my colleagues to ensure a better future for foster youth in our country and, as Cassidy, a teenager who was adopted from foster care in California says, make the term "aging out" one that we no longer need to use. Thank you.

TRIBUTE TO JAY S. FISHMAN

Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize a distinguished and outstanding business leader, Mr. Jay S. Fishman, as he steps down as chief executive officer of The Travelers Companies on December 1, 2015.

I met Jay during my first term as chairman of the Senate Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee. Jay reached out to the committee in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. After handling claims and helping people rebuild their homes and businesses, Jay was interested in shaping public policy for how this country handles natural catastrophes. He proposed many innovative and thoughtful ideas on how to protect policyholders and taxpayers from what he called "the next big one." I then watched as Jay deftly managed his company during the financial crisis, not merely weathering the storm, but thriving while many of his competitors were seeking help from the government in the form of taxpayer bailouts. Jay never asked what the government could do to help Travelers; he always asked how Travelers could help us to develop better public

policy based on the expertise that he and his colleagues could provide.

Jay will continue to serve Travelers as executive chairman as he contends with the challenges that come with the diagnosis of ALS. He has handled the diagnosis with great dignity and a steadfast resolve to engage, which will surprise no one who knows him. I know he will work relentlessly to promote research that will extend and eventually save lives of people who are stricken with this terrible disease.

I ask my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to this exceptional man, a man who passionately engaged in business and public policy, who has led a truly remarkable career and left an indelible impact on those people who were lucky enough to work for him and with him during his long career.

NOMINATION OF DR. ROBERT CALIFF

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a copy of my remarks to the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

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

NOMINATION OF DR. ROBERT CALIFF

Today we are reviewing the nomination of Dr. Robert Califf to serve as Commissioner of Food and Drugs. Dr. Califf, congratulations on your nomination. Welcome to you and to your family members who are here. I enjoyed having the opportunity to visit with you in my office.

If confirmed to lead the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) as its Commissioner, you will be in charge of steering the agency responsible for assuring the safety and effectiveness of our nation's medical products and protecting our country's food supply. That is a huge job. The FDA affects nearly every single American and regulates about a quarter of all consumer spending in the United States—over \$4 trillion annually. It is responsible for product areas as diverse as prescription drugs for humans and animals, medical devices, biologics, cosmetics, over-the-counter medications, food, and tobacco. That is a vital mission, and we all want to make sure that the right person is leading it.

The president has nominated you to do that job, and like every full-time nominee, you've been through an exhaustive process to make sure that you do not have any conflicts of interest or other problems in your background.

Before the president even announced your nomination, there was an extensive vetting process by the White House and the FBI. You also submitted paperwork to the Office of Government Ethics, which carefully reviewed your financial information and found that, with several recusals which you have committed to do, there would not be any remaining conflicts of interest that would prevent you from doing your job. The form you submitted is public and includes every source of income over \$200 and every asset worth more than \$1,000, and every potential conflict that the Office of Government Ethics determined would require a recusal.

You answered 37 pages of questions from our committee, including some confidential questions on financial information, and responded to written follow-up questions. Your responses included over 3,000 pages of articles and lectures my staff reviewed and that any member of the committee could review.

You were nominated on September 17. My staff has spent two months carefully reviewing everything you submitted and has not found anything that would call into doubt your ability to lead the FDA fairly and impartially.

You come here today with impressive qualifications. You are one of the nation's leading cardiologists and have been a professor at one of the nation's top medical schools for over 30 years. You are an expert on clinical research and have been recognized by the Institute for Scientific Information as one of the top 10 most cited medical authors, with more than 1,200 peer-reviewed publications. You have experience managing large organizations, including in your current position supervising all of the FDA's work on medical products and tobacco, and in your past work as the founding director of the Duke Clinical Research Institute.

Moreover, you have conducted scores of important clinical trials, and you have advised and worked on research with some of the nation's leading pharmaceutical and biopharmaceutical companies. So you understand how research gets done in the real world, where there are opportunities for the FDA to help address challenges, and where the FDA needs to get out of the way.

I'm eager to hear about your priorities, and how you intend to manage an organization as large and diverse as the FDA. I also think everyone on this committee will have some questions for you. Here are a few of mine.

First, I would like to hear what you will do to help ensure that affordable drugs are available to American patients. The FDA's job, of course, is not to set drug prices. It is to make sure that drugs are safe and effective. And I hope you'll agree with me on that. But FDA can help the market lower drug prices by approving generic drugs and other products as quickly as it possibly can, so there is more choice and competition in the market.

There are thousands of applications for generic drugs sitting at the FDA, awaiting approval. Addressing this backlog will allow lower-cost drugs to be available for patients. Approval times have gotten worse instead of better. In 2011, the FDA published the median approval time on its website, and it was 30 months. Since then, the FDA has stopped publishing the statistics online, but the Generic Pharmaceutical Association surveyed its members and estimates that the median approval time is now about 48 months. This is despite generic drugmakers agreeing in 2012 to give the FDA approximately \$1.6 billion in user fees over 5 years, nearly \$1 billion of which the FDA has already collected. I'm eager to hear what you think the FDA can do to improve.

Second, there has never been a more exciting time to lead the agency. We know more about biology and medicine than ever before, and that's not likely to stop anytime soon given advancement of regenerative cell therapies, 3D printing, and the president's Precision Medicine Initiative—which is aimed at developing our knowledge so that medical treatments and devices can be tailored to individual patients. For example, Smith & Nephew, a device company I toured in Memphis a few weeks ago, uses 3D printing to make tools that doctors use in approximately 25% of knee replacements.

Your job, if confirmed, will be to make sure that FDA regulation is appropriate. Too much regulation could reduce investment in these areas in its track, and not enough regulation could lead to patients getting therapies that are not safe or effective.

Your job also will be to make sure the FDA keeps up with science and relies on the expertise outside the FDA when appropriate.

Doing that will require you to manage a large and complex organization—not just on the big policies that make headlines, but on the less flashy stuff like hiring and training scientists on the agency's core mission, and integrating information technology in the right ways.

There is work to be done. Medical products take more time and money to discover, develop, and reach American patients than ever before, and we hear stories about drugs and devices that are available to patients outside the U.S. before they become available here, often because it is difficult for manufacturers to navigate the FDA's often unclear approval requirements. It often takes over a decade to develop a drug that gains marketing approval in the U.S., and, according to one recent study, the costs have nearly tripled in the last ten years. In 2003, it cost an inflation-adjusted \$1 million in capital and out-of-pocket expenses; in 2014, it cost over \$2.5 billion.

In this Committee, we are working on legislation to help get safe cutting-edge drugs, medical devices and treatments into Americans' medicine cabinets and doctors' offices more quickly, and we hope to move on that by the end of the year. I want to hear what you think the FDA can do to build its capacity and fix the impact of its regulations so that the FDA is a partner in innovation, rather than a barrier.

Thank you, and I look forward to hearing your testimony on these important issues.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SANTA CRUZ

• Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the University of California, Santa Cruz on its 50th anniversary and recognizing the outstanding faculty and staff for their immense contributions.

For 50 years, UC Santa Cruz has educated, inspired, and helped shape the futures of generations of young people, fostering an environment to produce not only good scholars but also good citizens.

Modeled after historic institutions like Oxford, from its earliest days, students have been encouraged to ask questions—to learn how to think for themselves and debate the status quo inside and outside the classroom. Today the university counts among its alumni some of the world's most prolific and influential leaders on everything from organic farming to ocean health, from women's rights and medical research.

A half century after its founding, UC Santa Cruz is a world-renowned research facility at the center of many critical scientific breakthroughs, such as producing the first working draft of the human genome, helping global researchers develop a vaccine for the Ebola virus, and playing a leading role in cancer genome research. The university is also home to one of the world's top marine mammal research centers. Its internationally recognized faculty includes 14 members of the National Academy of Sciences, 26 fellows of the American Academy of Arts and

Sciences, and recipients of the Presidential National Medal of Science and the Benjamin Franklin Medal from the Franklin Institute, one of the oldest and most prestigious science awards in the world.

Anyone who is lucky enough to have visited the UC Santa Cruz campus is immediately struck by its beauty. Nestled between the Pacific Ocean and redwood forests, the campus offers students a spectacular backdrop to their education. Students hike trails to class, elephant seals can be heard in the background, and stunning sunsets can be seen from university grounds. These breathtaking surroundings have attracted a creative and passionate student body that has proudly embraced environmental, social, and political causes—and a sense of humor. In 1986, the students selected their now-famous official mascot—the Banana Slugs.

Since 1965, UC Santa Cruz has created an atmosphere of discovery and activism, shaping minds, pushing the frontiers of knowledge, and making our world a better place. I congratulate Chancellor George Blumenthal and the faculty, staff, alumni, and students of UC Santa Cruz on this 50th anniversary and wish this extraordinary institution continued success in the future.●

TRIBUTE TO MARY CRAWFORD

• Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, in honor of National Adoption Month, I want to recognize one member of Montana's community who has opened her home and heart to be an adoptive parent. Mrs. Mary Crawford is what I believe one of the best Montana has to offer.

As an original cosponsor of a resolution to designate November as National Adoption Month and November 21 as National Adoption Day that passed the Senate unanimously this week, I could find no better time than this to honor Mary. This month we honor selfless individuals like Mary who have dedicated themselves toward comforting, protecting, and improving the lives of children they have welcomed into their homes.

Like most foster parents who later become adoptive parents, the process isn't easy, but the resolve of both Mary and husband to continue to provide a loving home for nine children is nothing short of admirdable. Mary has provided a family which has made a huge difference in these children's lives—giving them a family for life, beyond just their childhood years. These children are safe today in the arms of loving, adopting parents because of Mary.

Montana has kids who are ready and waiting to be adopted. In fact, there are 415,000 children currently in the U.S. Foster Care System, and 108,000 of those are waiting to be adopted. Mary has taken tremendous steps in providing six children with a forever home to give them the stability and love that she and her husband could provide.