

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MORAN). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2018

AMENDMENTS NOS. 1065, AS MODIFIED, AND 1086, AS MODIFIED

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, as in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding the passage of H.R. 2810, the instructions to the clerk in amendments Nos. 1065 and 1086 be modified with the changes that are at the desk.

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

The amendments, as modified, are as follows:

AMENDMENT NO. 1065, AS MODIFIED

At the end of Division F add the following:

In the funding table in section 4301, in the item relating to Environmental Restoration, Air Force, increase the amount in the Senate Authorized column by \$20,000,000.

In the funding table in section 4301, in the item relating to Subtotal Environmental Restoration, Air Force, increase the amount in the Senate Authorized column by \$20,000,000.

In the funding table in section 4301, in the item relating to Total Miscellaneous Appropriations, increase the amount in the Senate Authorized column by \$20,000,000.

In the funding table in section 4301, in the item relating to Undistributed, Line number 999, reduce the amount in the Senate Authorized column by \$20,000,000.

In the funding table in section 4301, in the item relating to Fuel Savings, increase the amount of the reduction indicated in the Senate Authorized column by \$20,000,000.

In the funding table in section 4301, in the item relating to Subtotal Undistributed, reduce the amount in the Senate Authorized column by \$20,000,000.

In the funding table in section 4301, in the item relating to Total Undistributed, reduce the amount in the Senate Authorized column by \$20,000,000.

AMENDMENT 1086, AS MODIFIED

At the end of Division F add the following:

In the funding table in section 4101, in the item relating to Littoral Combat Ship, increase the amount in the Senate Authorized column by \$600,000,000.

In line 999 of the funding table in Section 4301, in the item relating to fuel savings, increase the reduction by \$600 million.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wisconsin.

HEALTHCARE

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I rise today to talk about the disasters of ObamaCare and a possible solution. It is a powerful first step—not perfect but a step that would take us off the path toward a single-payer system and put us on a path toward federalism, with greater State control but, in many re-

spects, greater freedom for the American public.

During the last healthcare discussion and debate, I spoke with a couple, Sherry and Vern Colby from River Falls, WI. They had a real problem: They had preexisting conditions. They were quite pleased when ObamaCare passed because their preexisting conditions, they believed, would be covered. So they signed up for ObamaCare in 2014, paid the premiums, sent in their paycheck stubs to make sure their income levels qualified for the subsidies. Then a funny thing happened when they got their tax returns in March of 2015: They had to pay back more than \$15,000 in subsidies because they made \$59,000. They had to cash in pretty much all of their 401(k). They had to sell their house so they wouldn't lose it in foreclosure.

I spoke with Sherry Colby today because, as we have debated the possibility of passage of Graham-Cassidy-Heller-Johnson, we have heard a lot of demagoguery. We have heard a lot of false charges. I would like to refute a couple of those.

One of the claims of ObamaCare is it guaranteed that if you have a preexisting condition, you are free from worry, you will be covered. Well, in Sherry and Vern Colby's case, that is simply not true.

I spoke with Sherry just this afternoon. Again, they had to sell their house, and they had to cash in their 401(k). Their nightmare didn't end at that point in time because President Obama, as he left office, took short-term, limited-duration plans—that duration from 264 days down to 90 days. Now Sherry and Vern Colby are forced to buy these short-term, limited-duration plans that only last for 90 days. When I say "forced," the problem they have is that they work. Vern drives milk trucks 60 hours a week. Sherry works in a florist's shop 30 hours a week. They make too much to be subsidized under ObamaCare. They don't make enough to be able to afford the premium of \$14,000 per year with a \$12,500 deductible. So right now they are paying \$5,500 a year, and they have a \$5,000 deductible per quarter and a 70/30 copay for a short-term, limited-duration plan that can and did exclude their preexisting conditions.

Shortly after they signed up with IHC, Vern had a condition that required a hospital stay. The problem is, his preexisting condition wasn't covered under their insurance. The bill for that hospital stay was \$45,000. To add insult to injury, because their short-term, limited-duration plan is not ObamaCare compliant, they are also paying the penalty. They are purchasing insurance, paying \$5,500 per year, \$20,000 in deductibles, a \$45,000 hospital bill, and they are still penalized by the American Government under ObamaCare.

Graham-Cassidy-Heller-Johnson maintains the provision of the guaranteed issue, covering people with pre-

existing conditions. There are all kinds of charges that somehow ObamaCare has guaranteed coverage for those individuals and Graham-Cassidy-Heller-Johnson would not.

Personally, I believe Governors, State legislators, and the people in the State of Wisconsin will be far more concerned about Sherry and Vern Colby and will have innovative solutions, such as Wisconsin's high-risk pool or Maine's invisible high-risk pool, to actually bring down premiums so the Colbys can actually afford insurance without having to quit their jobs.

But that is not the main reason I came to the floor today. While sitting in that chair or watching TV over the weekend, listening to people's speeches, I have heard repeatedly from our colleagues on the other side of the aisle talking about Graham-Cassidy-Heller-Johnson that it is going to destroy Medicaid as we know it, that it will be slashing spending in Medicaid—massive, deep cuts.

Let me go to a couple of charts.

This first chart really has nothing to do with healthcare—except it has everything to do with healthcare. What this chart shows is the CBO projection of deficits over the next 30 years by decade. CBO made the projections as a percentage of the GDP. Nobody understands percentages—we don't buy hamburgers with percentages—so we converted those percentages of GDP into dollars. According to our best calculations, CBO projects almost a \$10 trillion deficit over the next 10 years; the second decade, \$37 trillion; the third decade, \$82 trillion, for a whopping total of a \$129 trillion deficit over the next 30 years. That would be added to our \$20 trillion worth of debt.

There are a number of ways of describing this deficit. I am putting up two right now. What is it composed of? Well, if you take a look at revenue versus outlays, the deficit is composed of about an \$18 trillion deficit in Social Security alone. In other words, Social Security over the next 30 years will pay out \$18 trillion more in benefits than it brings to the payroll tax; Medicare, \$39 trillion. Interest on the debt over that same 30 years will be \$65 trillion for a whopping total of \$122 trillion of deficits over the next 30 years. That explains 95 percent of the deficit.

Another way of looking at that deficit is this: Over the next 30 years, our revenue will equal almost \$200 trillion—\$199 trillion. Outlays for Social Security will be \$69 trillion; Medicare, \$55 trillion; Medicaid and ObamaCare \$32 trillion, for a subtotal of \$156 trillion. If you add \$65 trillion interest on the debt, we are already exceeding our revenue.

You will notice that there is no money at all for any agencies, for national defense, for any other welfare programs. All the money is consumed by Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, ObamaCare, and interest on the debt. This is clearly unsustainable.

Let's talk about cuts. What would a cut really look like? Well, this is the

truth in terms of what we are projected to spend on Medicare, Medicaid, ObamaCare, and what we would spend under Graham-Cassidy-Heller-Johnson. If you go back to the year 2009, we were spending slightly more than \$200 billion for Medicaid alone. This last year, we were spending about \$438 billion. We have basically doubled spending in just the last 9 years. According to projections, by the end of this time period, we will be spending over \$700 billion per year on ObamaCare and Medicaid combined. Graham-Cassidy would spend a little less than that—not much less.

Let me take a look at what a real cut would be. There are no cuts; you will notice spending never declines year over year—not once. It continues to grow year over year, not that far from the projections.

This is what a real cut looks like. Many of my colleagues have talked about and campaigned on something they call the penny plan—a way to rein in out-of-control Federal spending by doing something that seems pretty reasonable, which is to take any government program and just reduce a dollar's worth of spending by just a penny. It would be a 1-percent cut per year. If we were to do that to ObamaCare and Medicaid, you would see what a real cut looks like—a pretty minor cut, the type of cut many people have suggested under the penny plan, but that is what a real cut looks like. What Graham-Cassidy-Heller-Johnson does is not a cut; it is just a slight reduction in the rate of growth and spending.

Again, oftentimes colleagues on the other side of the aisle are talking about drastic cuts. Well, let me detail what I would consider to be a possibly drastic cut. Let's say, rather than just 1 percent a year, we reduce spending by 5 percent a year or 10 percent a year. You know, I would agree with folks on the other side; if we were proposing those types of cuts, I would say that is slashing spending. I would say that would be a massive or draconian cut. But, again, that is not what we are doing. We are just slightly reducing spending over the next 10 years.

Let's look at this a little bit differently. Let's take a look at cumulative spending. If you just take cumulative spending year over year and add it up—our current projection on ObamaCare and Medicaid—we would spend \$5,688 billion; that is, \$5.67 trillion. The Graham-Cassidy-Heller-Johnson proposed spending is the green line, \$5.44 trillion or a reduction of \$226 billion over 10 years, a 3.99 percent decrease—not draconian, not massive, not slashing. It is a small, slight reduction in the growth of spending.

Let's take a look at what would happen if we just adhered to the penny plan in terms of cumulative spending. Again, this would be a real cut—1 percent per year. We would take the current law at \$5.67 trillion. The penny plan would actually reduce that to \$4.2 trillion, and you would save \$1.5 trillion for about 26 percent in savings.

That would be a real cut that would constrain the growth of entitlements so we can further reduce the mortgage of our children by just a little bit.

Why is this important? Again, to put things in perspective, over the next 10 years—this is blown up from our first chart—the projected deficit, according to CBO is close to \$10 trillion—\$9.6 trillion. What we are proposing under Graham-Cassidy-Heller-Johnson is a \$226 billion reduction in the rate of growth of spending on Medicare or on Medicaid and ObamaCare—a 2.4-percent reduction in relationship to the \$9.6 trillion projected deficit. Is that massive? Is that draconian? I don't believe so.

The types of controls we need to start enacting, if we are ever going to stop mortgaging our children's future, would be more like the penny plan, but even there, you can see how inadequate that is, based on the problem. The penny plan would reduce spending by \$1.48 trillion—about a 15.4-percent reduction to our \$9.6 trillion deficit.

Let me conclude by talking about the fact that here in Washington, DC, here in Congress, we are not very good at solving problems, partly because not very many Members or their staffs have ever served in the private sector. They don't really understand people like Vern or Sherry Colby, who, as President Bill Clinton said, “are out there busting it,” working 60 to 70 hours a week. Their premiums have doubled and, in many cases, tripled. Their coverage is cut in half. They can't afford ObamaCare. They don't understand how businesses are struggling to pay the premiums when they provide healthcare. They don't understand it, and what they certainly don't understand is the problem-solving process: admitting you have a problem, defining that problem, gathering the information, doing the root cause analysis, and then, based on that careful analysis, based on the information, setting achievable goals and designing legislation, then designing the solution.

We haven't been honest with ourselves in this body. We haven't come to grips with why premiums have doubled and, in many cases, tripled. It was because of the faulty design of ObamaCare—the fact that we are asking 5 to 6 percent of the American population to shoulder the full burden of covering people with preexisting, high-cost conditions. There is a way of addressing this, but we have to be honest. We have to set aside the rhetoric. We have to set aside the demagoguery.

We have to take that first step of loosening the ties of this one-size-fits-all model here in Washington, DC, letting the States innovate—like Wisconsin, like Maine's invisible high-risk pool—to actually bring down premiums. In Maine, when they enacted invisible high-risk pools, premiums for young people were cut to one-third of what they had been under guaranteed issue. For older folks, they were cut in half. It is possible to do this if we are honest and if we are courageous.

With that, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, today we are voting on the nomination of William Emanuel to serve on the National Labor Relations Board. The NLRB may be one of the most important independent Federal agencies that you have never heard of. They are responsible for protecting the lawful rights of workers to come together and bargain with their bosses for higher wages and better working conditions.

Starting a union is not an easy task. Often, it is a large corporation against its own employees. The money and the ability to threaten retaliation are heavily weighted on the corporate side.

For more than a century, many corporations fought unions tooth and nail, hiring strikebreakers and union-busting thugs and, later on, union-busting lawyers. So back in the 1930s, Congress established the NLRB to act as a referee and to keep the playing field level so that workers would have a chance to form a union if they wanted to.

President Trump picked William Emanuel to fill a vacancy on the NLRB. Mr. Emanuel has over 40 years of experience practicing labor and employment law. He has represented manufacturing companies, trade associations, logistics companies, hospitals, and dozens of other giant companies involved in labor disputes. He has represented big companies like Nissan, FedEx, Rite Aid, Safeway and Uber. That is an impressive resume. There is just one problem with it: In his more than four decades of practice, he has never been on the side of the workers—not once.

Every party to a dispute is entitled to legal representation, and Mr. Emanuel has every right to spend his career representing corporations, but a guy who has never even once represented workers should not serve on the NLRB, period.

The NLRB is not the Department of Commerce. It is not the Chamber of Commerce. It is not there to help pump up big corporations. No. When Congress created the NLRB, it gave it a simple mission: encourage collective bargaining. An individual who has spent his career working for some of the country's most ruthless union-busting firms, fighting off union efforts at every turn, has absolutely no business at the helm of an agency whose job is to encourage collective bargaining. The deck is already stacked against hard-working Americans.

For the last few decades, productivity has increased, corporations and shareholders have gotten richer, but workers haven't shared in that growth.

Hourly wages have been virtually flat for almost 35 years, and one reason for this is the decline of unions. The impact is everywhere.

Inequality has risen in America. Why? According to the Economic Policy Institute, the decline in unions accounts for about 20 percent to 30 percent of the growth in income inequality over the past several decades. When unions decline, all workers are hurt. For the more than 40 million non-union men working in the private sector, the loss of unions over the past 30 years has been equivalent to an annual wage loss of about \$109 billion. It is no wonder that American families are feeling the squeeze.

The decline of unions isn't an accident. It didn't happen on its own or as the unexpected byproduct of some other event. No. Large corporations have called on their Republican buddies in local, State, and Federal governments, and they have launched a quiet but deadly attack on unions. Twenty-eight States have passed laws banning the collection of union dues from workers that the unions represent. The only purpose of these laws is to starve the unions of resources and make it harder for workers to join together and to stand up for themselves.

The Supreme Court hasn't been kind to unions either, effectively decimating the ability of home healthcare workers to join together in 2014. Now with a Republican-appointed majority on the Court, they are poised to deal the knockout blow to public sector unions later this term. And with the nomination of Mr. Emanuel, workers won't be able to count on the NLRB, either.

As a candidate, President Trump promised American workers that under a Trump Presidency, "the American worker will finally have a president who will protect them and fight for them." He also promised to "drain the swamp" in Washington and fill his administration with those who would work for working Americans—not for donors and not for special interests.

When President Trump nominated Mr. Emanuel to serve at the highest labor court in the land, he delivered another gut punch to working people. In fact, Mr. Emanuel is the dream nominee for the donors and special interests. Trade associations for the companies that make their profits on the backs of low-wage workers immediately came out in support of his candidacy. The National Restaurant Association, the International Franchise Association, the National Retail Federation, the Retail Industry Leaders Association, the National Right to Work Committee, and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce applauded President Trump's pick with almost giddy enthusiasm and urged the Republican Senate to quickly confirm him to the Board. Today, unless a few of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle decide to stand up for workers, they will get their wish.

We all know that Washington works great for the trade associations and their armies of lobbyists and lawyers, but it delivers one punch after another to the hard-working Americans who sent us to Washington to work for them. If Congress isn't going to stand up for workers, the very least we can do is give these workers a fighting chance to join together and stand up for themselves.

It is the NLRB's job to make sure that employees can join unions if they want to. That is the law. A man who has spent 40 years beating back workers' efforts to form unions has no business on the Board. I urge my colleagues to join me in opposing his nomination.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, today the Senate will vote on the confirmation of William Emanuel to be a Member of the National Labor Relations Board, NLRB. I am glad that we are moving this nomination because, once Mr. Emanuel is confirmed, we will have a full five-member National Labor Relations Board, which has not been the case in nearly 2 years.

The NLRB was created in 1935 by the National Labor Relations Act, NLRA, which was significantly amended in 1947 by the Taft-Hartley Act. It has the statutory mission to promote "free flow of commerce" by allowing employees to organize and bargain collectively.

The statute provides that "employees shall have the right to self-organization, to form, join, or assist labor organizations, to bargain collectively through representatives of their own choosing, and to engage in other concerted activities for the purpose of collective bargaining or other mutual aid or protection, and shall also have the right to refrain from any or all of such activities." The statute further provides that it is an unfair labor practice for unions to "restrain or coerce employees in the exercise of their rights."

After years of playing the role of advocate for organized labor, the new Board should return to the role of neutral umpire. Board partisanship did not start under President Obama, but it became worse under him. When the Board is too partisan, it creates instability in our Nation's workplaces and does not serve the intent of the law, which is stable labor relations and free flow of commerce. The Obama Board overturned numerous longstanding precedents that had been upheld for decades by both Republican and Democrat boards.

Under President Obama, the Board took three particularly harmful actions. First, the joint-employer decision, which was the biggest attack on the opportunity for small businessmen and women in this country to make their way into the middle class that anyone has seen in a long time—threatening to destroy the American Dream for owners of the nation's 780,000 franchise locations. Second, the ambush elections rule, which can force a union election before an employer

and many employees even have a chance to figure out what is going on. This rule also forces employers to provide union organizers with a list of employees' telephone numbers, email addresses, employee work locations, shifts, and job classifications—highly personal information that many employees may not wish to share. Third was the microunion decision, which gave factions of employees within single businesses a path to forming their own unions. This decision risks fracturing workplaces and creating the potential for conflict and uncertainty among employees.

The Senate has the opportunity today to help reverse this harmful trend and bring stability to our Nation's workplaces by voting for William Emanuel and filling out the Board—again, for the first time in nearly 2 years. Mr. Emanuel is eminently qualified to serve on the NLRB. He is currently a shareholder at Littler Mendelson in Los Angeles where he works on labor and employment matters. Mr. Emanuel has spent the entirety of his impressive career in the private sector, representing trade associations, hospitals and healthcare organizations, schools, as well as transportation, logistics, and manufacturing companies. Mr. Emanuel has previously represented his clients before the NLRB and has filed amicus briefs on behalf of trade associations.

Mr. Emanuel was nominated to be a member of the NLRB on June 29, 2017. The committee received Mr. Emanuel's HELP application on June 30. On July 6, the committee received Mr. Emanuel's Office of Government Ethics paperwork, including his public financial disclosure and ethics agreement. Based on these documents, OGE determined that Mr. Emanuel "is in compliance with applicable laws and regulations governing conflicts of interest."

We held Mr. Emanuel's hearing on July 13, and he completed all paperwork in accordance with the HELP Committee's rules, practices, and procedures.

Mr. Emanuel offered to meet with all HELP Committee members. Mr. Emanuel met with nine of them, including five Democratic members. Following the hearing, Mr. Emanuel responded to 62 questions for the record, QFRs, or 101 if you include subquestions, and those responses were provided to Senators prior to the markup. The HELP Committee favorably reported out Mr. Emanuel's nomination on July 19.

I look forward to voting for William Emanuel, who will serve on the National Labor Relations Board with distinction.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, one of the most pernicious threats to the right of employees and consumers to access our judicial system has been the rise of forced arbitration. This practice unfairly eliminates access to our courts for millions of Americans. When used by employers, forced arbitration serves to shield corporations from the

consequences of harmful behavior, such as discrimination or sexual harassment. Today, the Senate is considering a nominee for the National Labor Relations Board, or NLRB, who has advocated in favor of forced arbitration in the employment context. Mr. Emanuel's support for stripping American workers of their rights is an important reason why I am opposing his nomination.

The shadow justice system brought about by forced arbitration results in real harm to employees while serving only to protect powerful corporate employers. In a high-profile example from last year, former FOX News host Gretchen Carlson was barred from speaking publicly about her allegations of sexual harassment against the company's former chairman, Roger Ailes. Had she not spoken out and instead complied with the private arbitration clause in her contract, her case would have been hidden from public view, denying other victims of harassment the knowledge that they were not alone.

In another disturbing case reported earlier this year, hundreds of current and former employees of Sterling Jewelers, a company that earns \$6 billion in annual revenue, have for years alleged that the company is engaged in pervasive gender discrimination and has fostered a culture that condones sexual harassment. According to reports, this shocking behavior dates as far back as the early 1990s. Despite decades of allegations from women at the company, these claims were hidden behind closed doors because of private arbitration. The full details are still unknown today.

These are just two examples that highlight the serious harm forced arbitration can cause employees. During the Obama administration, the NLRB found that the use of forced arbitration by employers to limit employees' rights to enter into class or collective actions violated the National Labor Relations Act. Mr. Emanuel participated in key cases related to this decision. I am concerned that his history of advocacy on this issue could lead to his prejudging the outcomes of subsequent cases that come before the Board.

Unfortunately, Mr. Emanuel declined during his confirmation hearing to recuse himself from decisions related to forced arbitration should he become a member of the Board. His other answers on this issue did not sufficiently allay my concern that he would work to undermine the rights of employees to access our judicial system. As someone who has fought for years to protect Americans' access to the courts and has introduced legislation to limit the harms caused by forced arbitration, I must oppose his nomination.

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Emanuel nomination?

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), and the Senator from Alabama (Mr. STRANGE).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) would have voted "yea."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) is necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 49, nays 47, as follows:

(Rollcall Vote No. 203 Ex.)

YEAS—49

Alexander	Flake	Paul
Barrasso	Gardner	Perdue
Blunt	Graham	Portman
Boozman	Grassley	Risch
Burr	Hatch	Roberts
Capito	Heller	Rounds
Cassidy	Hoeven	Sasse
Collins	Inhofe	Scott
Corker	Isakson	Shelby
Cornyn	Johnson	Sullivan
Cotton	Kennedy	Thune
Crapo	Lankford	Tillis
Cruz	Lee	Toomey
Daines	McCain	Wicker
Enzi	McConnell	Young
Ernst	Moran	
Fischer	Murkowski	

NAYS—47

Baldwin	Gillibrand	Nelson
Bennet	Harris	Peters
Blumenthal	Hassan	Reed
Booker	Heinrich	Sanders
Brown	Heitkamp	Schatz
Cantwell	Hirono	Schumer
Cardin	Kaine	Shaheen
Carper	King	Stabenow
Casey	Klobuchar	Tester
Coons	Leahy	Udall
Cortez Masto	Manchin	Van Hollen
Donnelly	Markey	Warner
Duckworth	McCaskill	Warren
Durbin	Merkley	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Murphy	Wyden
Franken	Murray	

NOT VOTING—4

Cochran	Rubio
Menendez	Strange

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume legislative session.

The majority leader.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2018—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 165, S. 1519.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 165, S. 1519, a bill 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.

MORNING BUSINESS

A TALE OF SISTER CITIES AND SOME SOCCER JERSEYS

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, recently, I heard from Mayor John Hollar and City Manager Bill Fraser of Montpelier, VT, about a wonderful gesture by Philippe Saurel, the mayor of Montpellier, France, who is also the president of Montpellier Méditerranée Métropolis.

The story is this: the city of Montpelier, France, ordered soccer jerseys to support its soccer club. They were printed with the name Montpelier—the way we spell it in Vermont—rather than Montpellier, as it is in France. As a result, Mr. Saurel, with M. Laurent Nicollin, the president of the Soccer Club of Montpelier, offered to send these jerseys to the Montpelier, VT, high school soccer teams.

As the only U.S. Senator ever born in Montpelier, VT, I was thrilled and wrote to the mayor of Montpellier, France, with gratitude. The more I thought about it, the more I wanted to make sure the U.S. Senate heard about this generous act. I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the letter from Mayor Philippe Saurel to Mayor John Hollar. The tie between our two great nations and our two beautiful cities continues.

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

LETTER FROM MAYOR SAUREL TO MAYOR HOLLAR

DEAR MAYOR HOLLAR, I'm writing to you from Montpelier, south of France. The starting point of our story is that [both our] cities have almost the same name.

You have already heard about the story of the soccer shirts on social networks[.] [T]here was a mistake during the printing, and now Montpelier spelled as the name of your city is [written] on the shirts of the soccer team.

We would be very delighted with M. Laurent Nicollin, President of the Soccer