

government's most powerful positions. Cabinet Secretaries are fired over Twitter. Hundreds of important positions are unfilled or are covered by someone in an acting capacity, including for the Chief of Staff, the Attorney General, the Defense Secretary, the Interior Secretary, the OMB Director, and the EPA Director.

Hardly a week goes by without news of a high-profile firing or resignation from the White House. President Trump publicly belittles the people who are working for him. That is no way to incent people to work hard. An NPR study found that the Trump administration has had the most Cabinet turnovers of any administration in more than a century. Three Cabinet Secretaries have been fired or have resigned in scandal—Price, Zinke, and Pruitt. One has resigned in protest—probably the best Cabinet member we had—General Mattis, who couldn't take Trump's zigzags on policy and his lack of sharing information. Another had his nomination pulled before it could be considered—Puzder—which is not altogether rare for this President.

Since the start of the administration, more than 40 of President Trump's nominees have been withdrawn. They don't know how to vet. The President makes these off-the-cuff decisions based on how someone looks, and we all pay the price. Oh, yes, the state of the Trump administration and how he runs the government—chaos. The continuity and effectiveness of American Government has been deeply compromised by the turmoil and turnover at the White House.

Finally, the state of the Trump foreign policy is woefully backward. From Brussels to Beijing, President Trump has alienated our allies and emboldened our adversaries. Russia, China, North Korea—three of the worst and least democratic countries on Earth, the countries that pose the greatest threats to America—are treated with kid gloves, while our allies, like those in NATO, get harsh words from this President. It is inside out. It is topsy-turvy. It is what his instincts and gut show, and they are totally wrong—without fact, without knowledge, and without understanding history. Too often, the President has, regrettably, failed to champion free speech, freedom of the press, humanitarian rights, and democratic values. Dictators and strongmen are ascendant in the President's circle while allies are pushed to the fringe. Yes, the state of the Trump foreign policy is woefully backward.

Concerning the speech tomorrow night, the President will not talk like this, of course. What I expect the President to do is to ignore reality and spin his own fiction. A looming question is just how many falsehoods, distortions, and made-up facts will appear in the President's speech. How many times will he say something is fake news because it is true, and he doesn't like to hear the truth?

Yet the Democrats are not focused on the President's rhetoric—his usual boasts or bluster or blame—that is so characteristic of this administration. We are going to continue fighting for American workers in this unequal economy, fighting for American families who are struggling to afford quality healthcare, fighting to bring accountability and stability to this government so in chaos, and fighting for rational foreign policy that promotes both our interests and our values.

The state of the Union is sad. Let me just say that the No. 1 reason the state of the Union has such woes is the President. I hope he changes in the next 2 years.

STOCK BUYBACKS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, one other issue—I mentioned earlier that one of the major consequences of the Trump tax bill was the explosion of stock buybacks. In 2018 alone—just 2018—U.S. companies announced plans to repurchase more than \$1 trillion of their own stock. It is a staggering figure and the highest amount ever recorded in a single year.

When companies buy back their own stock, it boosts the earnings of wealthy shareholders and executives but does little for average workers. The vast majority of Americans don't own stocks. In fact, the top 10 percent of Americans own 85 percent of stocks, total.

When corporations direct so much of their resources to buy back shares, they restrain their capacity to reinvest profits in R&D, equipment, higher wages, medical leave, pensions, worker retraining, and more.

I would like to see a study of how many companies bought back their stocks while leaving pensions underfunded. What is happening is that corporations are promising their workers that they will have a good life in retirement, and, instead, the corporate executives and their top shareholders are enriching themselves.

Think about this. Between 2008 and 2017—the last 10 years—466 of the S&P 500 companies did stock buybacks. Do you know how much? It was \$4 trillion. That is equal to 53 percent of their profits. More than \$1 out of every \$2 in profit just went to stock buybacks—not improving our economy, not helping workers, and not helping communities. Then another 30 percent went to dividends. It is the same thing. When more than 80 percent of corporate profits are going to stock buybacks and dividends, something is really wrong in the state of corporate America and the state of our economy.

It wasn't always this way. From the mid-20th century up until the seventies and even into the eighties, American corporations shared a belief that they had a duty not just to their shareholders but to their workers, to their communities, and to their country, which helped them grow and prosper,

along with our schools, our roads, and everything else. That created an extremely prosperous America for corporate America but also for American workers in the broad middle of this country.

But over the past several decades, workers' rights have been diminished, and corporate boardrooms have been obsessed, slavishly, to shareholder earnings. The only people they seem to want to help are their shareholders.

I hear it. I talk to CEOs, and they say: Well, maybe it is the wrong thing to do this or that, but I just have to go for the shareholder. And the shareholder often has only short-term interest. The explosion of stock buybacks is, perhaps, the most pernicious way that this new corporate ethos manifests itself.

My friend and colleague Senator SANDERS and I have written a joint op-ed in today's New York Times, outlining how we propose to curb the over-reliance on stock buybacks and, instead, encourage corporate America to make more productive investments that help workers and communities therein.

We are planning to introduce legislation that will prohibit a corporation from buying back its own stock unless it invests in workers and communities first, including doing things—there will be a list—like paying people \$15 an hour, providing 7 days of sick leave, offering decent pensions, more reliable healthcare, putting money into training workers, and providing equipment. These are the kinds of things we always thought American corporations would do and now they do scantily when compared to how much they do in terms of buybacks.

I know many of my Democratic colleagues have focused on these issues, including Senators BALDWIN, BOOKER, CASEY, WARREN, SCHATZ, and GILLIBRAND. We all believe that this Congress, this Senate, should vote on legislation that demands that corporations commit to addressing the needs of their workers and communities before the interests of wealthy shareholders.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

STRENGTHENING AMERICA'S SECURITY IN THE MIDDLE EAST ACT OF 2019—Resumed

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 1, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1) to make improvements to certain defense and security assistance provisions and to authorize the appropriation of funds to Israel, to reauthorize the United States-Jordan Defense Cooperation Act of 2015, and to halt the wholesale slaughter of the Syrian people, and for other purposes.

Pending:

McConnell amendment No. 65, to express the sense of the Senate that the United States faces continuing threats from terrorist groups operating in Syria and Afghanistan and that the precipitous withdrawal of United States forces from either country could put at risk hard-won gains and United States national security.

Menendez amendment No. 96 (to McConnell amendment No. 65), to clarify that the amendment shall not be construed as a declaration of war or an authorization of the use of military force.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, notwithstanding the previous order, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business in order to introduce two bills.

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

(The remarks of Ms. COLLINS and Ms. HASSAN pertaining to the introduction of S. 321 and S. 322 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Ms. COLLINS. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

INF TREATY

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I rise to speak about the Trump administration's decision to suspend compliance with the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces—or, the INF—Treaty and begin the process of withdrawing from this accord.

Signed in 1987, the INF Treaty banned all ground-launched cruise and ballistic missile systems with intermediate ranges between 300 and 3,400 miles. This landmark agreement led to the destruction of approximately 800 U.S. and 1,800 Soviet ground-launched missiles, along with their supporting equipment.

This is an issue I have been following closely since I joined the U.S. Senate in 2013. While concerns about Russia's compliance with the INF Treaty began long before then, 2013 was the first year U.S. officials formally raised the issue with their Russian counterparts. The following year, the Obama administration declared Russia to be in violation of the treaty and accused Russia of possessing an intermediate-range, ground-launched cruise missile.

After affirming Russia's violation of its INF obligations, the Obama administration continued to raise Russia's noncompliance at numerous bilateral and multilateral diplomatic engagements. In 2016, the Obama administration also resurrected the Special Verification Commission, a mechanism set up under the treaty to resolve compliance issues, which had not held a meeting since the year 2000. The Trump ad-

ministration continued to exert diplomatic pressure on Russia, raising this issue at all levels of the Russian Government. Additionally, this administration began treaty-compliant research and development work on conventional, ground-launched missile systems to demonstrate to Russia that the United States would pursue additional military capabilities if Russia persisted in producing these illegal systems.

To further impose costs on Russia for its behavior, the administration sanctioned Russian companies involved in the development of the illegal missile system in December of 2017. Diplomatic engagement continued in 2018, and, despite multiple ultimatums, Russia continues to deny its violation of the treaty.

The United States has led a sustained, deliberate effort to methodically increase pressure on Russia, which has had every opportunity to return to compliance, but instead it continues to produce and deploy illegal systems in greater and greater numbers. Just last week, reports surfaced, alleging Russia has deployed another battalion equipped with the banned missile system. Instead of moving to correct its violation, Russia is going in the opposite direction. The evidence is clear, Russia has no intention of returning to compliance, and the United States cannot remain party to an agreement that amounts to a unilateral limitation on our Nation. It would certainly have been easier to ignore this issue and let another year pass with U.S. diplomats renewing their appeals while Russia builds more illegal weapons. However, this administration understood that maintaining U.S. compliance in order to prop up the illusion of an effective arms control agreement does not make our Nation safer. I applaud the Trump administration for making the tough but correct decision to withdraw.

The administration also deserves credit for its coordination with our NATO allies on this topic. A statement released by NATO last Friday expressed solidarity with the U.S. position, and NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg stated:

All allies agree with the United States, because Russia has violated the treaty for several years. They are deploying more and more of the new nuclear capable missiles in Europe.

Let me repeat this point. As NATO has expressed solidarity with the U.S. position to withdraw from the INF treaty, our allies support us. Our NATO allies understand the Russian threat increase due to their treaty violation because they are at the most risk.

Some want to use this issue as an opportunity to debate the temperament of this administration and paint its decision to withdraw as a symptom of its contempt for arms control treaties. Others say the decision is motivated by China, as though Russia's violation and the deployment of a new nuclear-capable

weapons system designed to hold our allies and our forces in Europe at risk is not relevant or is a secondary consideration, at best. Others have even gone so far as to argue that the decision to withdraw benefits Russia by liberating them from the limitations of the treaty. This is a deeply misguided view that overlooks the fact that Russia is already ignoring the treaty's limitations.

Let's be absolutely clear about what Russia wants. Russia wants the United States to stay in the treaty and maintain the status quo because it benefits them. They are building banned weapons systems while we are not. Their diplomats have sustained a campaign of denial and deception in order to put pressure on the United States to remain in this treaty. The notion that leaving the treaty is a windfall for Russia is a mistaken one.

Those who oppose the administration's decision must answer one basic question: How does remaining part of an agreement that Russia has already walked away from enhance U.S. security?

The answer is simple. It doesn't. The administration is right to leave the agreement, and responsibility for the failure of the INF Treaty lies squarely with Russia. The United States must now take additional steps to ensure that Russia derives no military advantage from its blatant violation of this accord.

Last year, the administration proposed developing a sea-launched cruise missile to ensure that our Nation has credible options to deter Russia's expanding arsenal of nonstrategic nuclear weapons. This effort must go forward, but it is years away from delivering such capability. Existing research and development efforts into ground-launched systems should be accelerated as part of a near-term response to Russia's actions.

Some will surely criticize these steps as an arms race and ridicule them as a symptom of outmoded "Cold War" thinking. Indeed, there are people who would prefer that we do nothing. I think that is dangerous. We must impose costs on Russia for its violation and create incentives for Russia to halt its destabilizing behavior. Again, they are building banned weapons systems. We are not. For years, we have used diplomatic appeals and sanctions to encourage Russia to stop production of these systems and to return to compliance. Yet they continue to blatantly violate the accord. Clearly, a firmer approach is needed.

Developing additional military capabilities in response to Russia's actions demonstrates to Russia that its pursuit of illegal systems will only result in a more lethal and a more capable U.S. military. In this way, we clearly indicate to Russia that violating treaties and building illegal weapons will ultimately harm its own national security interests. If we fail to respond sufficiently, Russia is likely to conclude

that it can break treaties and favorably affect the balance of military power in the European theater at a modest cost. This will only encourage additional misbehavior, which could put the broader nonproliferation regime at risk.

The Trump administration's decision to withdraw is not the end of this process. The more important question is what comes next. Congress and the administration must ensure that the consequences of Russia's cheating outweigh any benefits it has obtained by violating this treaty.

Thank you, Madam President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. ERNST). The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, I would like to begin by expressing my appreciation to the Senator from Nebraska for her comments on the INF Treaty that President Trump has withdrawn the United States from. There wasn't much of a treaty left, really, after Russia repeatedly violated it, and China is not even bound by it. It is very important, when we are talking about these issues, that we understand the facts and the state of the world as it is.

I read a recent summary by the RAND Corporation of their analysis of Russia and China. They called Russia a rogue, not a peer, and China a peer, not a rogue. There is a lot behind that, but I think it really is true that the only way we are going to deter the Russians is by maintaining our strength. The way we do that is by doing what is necessary to protect the United States and our allies. In this case, that means taking a treaty that has already been violated by the Russians and no longer bounds China and building the appropriate missiles to deter anybody from taking advantage of any perceived weakness in the United States, insofar as it comes to protecting ourselves or our allies.

I would like to express my appreciation for those comments and support them.

HONORING DONNA DOSS

Madam President, it is with a heavy heart that I come to the Senate floor this morning to express my deepest condolences for the friends, family, and colleagues of U.S. Border Patrol agent Donna Doss, who was killed in the line of duty this last weekend.

On Saturday, February 2, Agent Doss responded to a call for assistance from a Texas Department Public Safety trooper on Interstate Highway 20, near Abilene, TX. While on the scene, she was struck by a passing vehicle and died shortly thereafter of her injuries.

During her more than 15 years of dedicated service, Agent Doss has made immeasurable contributions to public safety, both in Texas and beyond. Her career with the Border Patrol began at the Brackettville Station in the Del Rio Sector, where she worked to disrupt and dismantle several of our narcotic organizations as a Drug Enforcement Administration task force officer.

Her career then led her to Washington State, where she led the Criminal Alien Prosecutions Unit for the Spokane Sector.

Then, in 2011, Agent Doss made her way back to Texas to serve in the Laredo Sector, first, as supervisory Border Patrol agent and, later, as operations officer.

Since March of 2017, she served as resident agent in Abilene, where she was responsible for all of the enforcement operations across eight counties.

In addition to leading a distinguished career, Agent Doss was a loving wife, daughter, sister, and stepmother. Her loss is another solemn reminder of the courageous sacrifices law enforcement officers and their families make every day. We are grateful to all of those who put their lives on the line when they put on their uniform every morning, ready to face the unknown challenges that lie ahead. I am particularly grateful to the men and women in green who make up our Nation's Border Patrol, like Agent Doss.

I want to thank Agent Doss' family for her selfless service and sacrifice, and I send my heartfelt condolences to Agent Doss' family, friends, Acting Sector Chief Matthew Hudak, the agents of the Border Patrol Del Rio Sector, where she honorably served, and the entire Border Patrol family during this difficult time.

S. 1

Madam President, in a moment we will hold a cloture vote on the strengthening America's Security in the Middle East Act and soon have an opportunity to pass this legislation, which has been balled up for some time because of the intervening shutdown. Importantly, it reaffirms our longstanding commitment to the stability in the Middle East. This vote has been a long time in coming. The four bills that comprise this legislation enjoyed bipartisan support last year, but we ran out of time before we could get them passed.

Exactly 1 month ago today, as we were kicking off this new Congress, the majority leader announced his intent to package these four noncontroversial bills together and bring them to the floor. Here we are a month later, and this is how noncontroversial things get handled in these strange times we live in. For weeks, our Democratic colleagues have blocked us from voting on this legislation, not because they disagreed with the contents but because they claimed no work should be done during a governmental shutdown, even though 75 percent of the government was up and running and funded, including the legislative branch, of which Congress is a part.

They used this as an excuse to showboat and to not do their job. Of course, something changed when they saw an opportunity to take a vote on an entirely political matter involving Russia. All of a sudden, they decided it was OK to do other things during the shutdown as long as it had the potential to

embarrass our political adversaries, including President Trump. Nevertheless, I am glad that today we will finally be able to vote on this bill.

In the face of the ongoing troubles in the Middle East, it is important to reaffirm our commitment to our allies and condemn the brutalities of our enemies. While this legislation is far from the comprehensive solution to the challenges faced in the Middle East, it is important to take steps in the right direction where we can.

First, this bill strengthens our relationship with Israel, the lone democracy in the region. Israel faces near-constant attacks from Iran, Syria, Hezbollah, Hamas, and other terrorist groups. To ensure that Israel is poised not only to withstand but to counter threats from these shared adversaries, this bill authorizes needed military assistance, including things like missile defense and loan guarantees.

It also includes measures to enhance Israel's ability to address threats in its vicinity, like drones, which are increasingly used by Iran, which is bent on the destruction of the State of Israel. This is a major step to ensure that the nation of Israel is poised to tackle both the threats of today and tomorrow.

Secondly, this bill provides support to Jordan by reauthorizing legislation to deepen our defense cooperation. Jordan has borne the brunt of much of the upheaval in the Syrian civil war, with many refugees calling Jordan their home temporarily because they are displaced from their home country. Jordan continues to face grave challenges posed by the chaos in Syria, and our assistance is desperately needed.

As I said, Jordan has absorbed a disproportionate number of refugees who have been escaping the Syrian civil war. Some 740,000 refugees are currently in the relatively small country, making it the second highest refugee host per capita in the world. The impact of the Syria crisis is immense, and our assistance with humanitarian relief is critical.

Third, this legislation provides flexibility for State and local governments that disagree with the Boycott, Divest, and Sanctions, or BDS, movement. This movement is designed to isolate Israel, both economically and politically, by encouraging governments and businesses, including academic institutions, to cut ties with the Jewish state.

At least 34 States, including mine—the State of Texas—have already enacted legislation to combat BDS. This legislation doesn't require States to take any sort of particular stance. It simply clarifies the right to counter boycotts of Israel without fear that they are somehow in jeopardy of Federal law.

Finally, this bill takes steps to address the ongoing crisis in Syria at large. It holds accountable those responsible for the crisis in Syria by imposing new sanctions on anyone who supports Syria either financially or

militarily, specifically targeting military aviation, telecommunications, and energy industries. It also provides needed aid to impacted communities and condemns the heinous human rights violations of the Assad regime.

In addition to these four pillars of this legislation, I am glad we have the opportunity to vote this afternoon on an amendment to affirm that American leadership is needed in our ongoing fight in Syria and Afghanistan. We simply cannot afford to leave a vacuum in places where terrorists flood when they take advantage of the chaos and the upheaval in the Syrian civil war. These are places where they can lodge, grow, and train and then export their terrorist attacks, not only around the region but, as we saw 9/11, even around the world.

There is no doubt that we made great progress on our fight against ISIS and al-Qaida, but as the majority leader noted when he offered this amendment last week that “our response to this progress must not be to take our foot off the gas pedal, but rather to keep up those strategies that are working.”

One of our colleagues, the Senator from Florida, Mr. RUBIO, said that terrorism is like a tumor. It is like a cancer. You can try to eliminate it, but if you are unsuccessful in eliminating it, even though you have shrunk it, it will come back as soon as you remove the pressure. Though we made incredible gains in the fight to eradicate these terrorist groups, the threat has not been entirely eliminated, and our job may never be finished. This is what some people have called the “long war.” Sadly, it is necessary in order to keep ourselves safe, as well as our allies.

Fully defeating these groups and the radical ideology will require our continued commitment. We simply can't unremember the lessons of 9/11, which are that things that happen overseas don't stay overseas and that when you have power vacuums or safe havens for terrorist organizations to exploit, that endangers not only people in the region but also us here at home. We cannot allow a resurgence of ISIS or al-Qaida and somehow let the gains we have fought so hard to make slip through our fingers.

During a time of ongoing instability in the Middle East, it is imperative that our allies remain confident in our commitment and our partnership and stand ready to continue to fight for our shared interests.

As I indicated, this bill will not solve all the problems in the Middle East. It will not provide justice for innocent civilians killed by the Assad regime or rebuild the communities destroyed at the hands of terrorist groups. But it is an important step to ensure our allies are prepared to fight alongside us and defend our shared national security interests.

This legislation will support and protect our allies, safeguard U.S. interests in the Middle East, and take a stand

against the despicable human rights violations committed by the Assad regime. I look forward to supporting the majority leader's amendment this afternoon and voting yes on this legislation when that opportunity arises.

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.

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

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

BORN-ALIVE ABORTION SURVIVORS PROTECTION ACT

Mr. LEE. Madam President, on the morning of April 5, 1977, a 17-year-old girl—scared, alone, and 7½ months pregnant—set foot inside of a Los Angeles abortion clinic. She had been advised to get a saline abortion—a procedure in which an injected saline solution burns a baby inside the womb, who is then delivered dead 24 hours later. So she signed those papers, received the injection, and then waited for the poison to run its course.

But the child, little Gianna Jessen, had other ideas. Triumphantly, defiantly, and against all odds, Gianna Jessen entered this world after her own abortion. She was delivered—alive—in that same abortion clinic on April 6. She should have been burned. She should have been blind. She should have been dead. Yet, at 2½ pounds, little Gianna Jessen was very much alive, albeit suffering the effects of the saline solution, which was intended to be lethal.

The nurse could have left her to die that day, but mercifully she instead decided to call an ambulance. Little Gianna was transferred to the hospital, and her life was saved. This was indeed an act of mercy. Even more importantly, it was just the beginning of Gianna's story, comprising only the first chapter of her amazing life. The saline solution that had been injected to take her life did not have its intended effect, but it starved her brain of oxygen, so she was born with cerebral palsy, which left her with physical and cognitive disabilities.

Doctors said that this child, who was not supposed to live in the first place, would also never be able to lift her head, let alone walk. Yet, here again, Gianna beat the odds. With the help of a loving adoptive mother, a walker, and some leg braces, she was walking by the time she was 3 years old. By the time she was just 14 years old, she was speaking to audiences about her extraordinary birth and the exceptional life it made possible.

Since then, Gianna has literally run marathons and trained to climb mountains. For years, she has traveled around the country and, in fact, around the world speaking and marching, limping one step at a time, for the unborn children who cannot.

Her accomplishments, especially in light of her disabilities, are breathtaking. Yet, because of those disabilities, she was exactly the kind of baby some would say should have been allowed to die after a botched abortion, exactly the kind of baby some might dismissively characterize as a “burden” on society.

Gianna Jessen's life shows that she is quite the opposite of a burden on all of those who have the good fortune to know her. As she puts it, she has been blessed with the “tremendous gift” of cerebral palsy. She adds, “I have more joy than I can ever articulate because of the obstacles I have overcome.” But perhaps that is her truest and greatest achievement, for Gianna lives with a deep, authentic, and contagious joy that she spreads wherever she goes. To listen to her, to talk to her, to know her is truly to know the joy of life—a woman fully alive indeed.

It is good that Gianna Jessen exists—very good. Good for her and good for all of us. Her life is not defined by what she can do. It is not defined but what she cannot do or by whether she was originally wanted. Her life is unrepeatable, irreplaceable, and of infinite and immeasurable worth. She has made an indelible mark on the entire world, as only she could.

Today, we have a chance to stand up and defend the truth that Gianna's life is, in fact, worthwhile, that all babies' lives are valuable and worth living, just like Gianna's. Women, like Gianna's birth mother, deserve better than what many in our society have told them. They deserve to be protected right alongside their babies.

Pro-life Americans like me believe that children like Gianna should be protected within the womb. Both the essential moral principle of human dignity and the undisputed scientific facts of human biology insist on this very point. But the bill I am here to discuss today does not. This bill, the Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act, takes no position on abortion or on the rights of the unborn child. It simply says that in this country, when a child is born, even if by accident, even in the most dangerous place in the world for an infant—that is, a Planned Parenthood clinic—he or she becomes a citizen of the United States under our Constitution and is entitled to the full protection of our laws.

Boy or girl, Black or White, rich or poor, each deserves—paraphrasing the immortal words of Abraham Lincoln—an unfettered start and a fair chance in the race of life. This is the essence of what it means to have rights and to be entitled to the equal protection of our laws. Among our inalienable rights is the right to “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness”—a concept that clearly encompasses the right not to be murdered. This bill will simply reaffirm that such fundamental rights extend not simply to the rich and the powerful but even to the furthest margins of our society and even to the

most vulnerable and newest citizens of our great Nation.

This legislation should not be controversial. In fact, if you think about it, what is more remarkable here is the fact that outlawing the murder of the innocent—in the first moments of life, no less—is even controversial among many Members of this body. Those objecting to this legislation, including the political media covering up the scandal, will say otherwise, but we know the truth, and so do they.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. DAINES. Madam President, last week, Governor Northam of Virginia gave chilling remarks that defended a law legalizing abortion to the point of birth—and even after. In fact, these were Governor Northam's exact words:

If a mother is in labor, I can tell you exactly what would happen. The infant would be delivered. The infant would be kept comfortable. The infant would be resuscitated if that's what the mother and the family desired, and then a discussion would ensue between the physicians and the mother.

I was asked by many what I thought about those words. The word "evil" comes to mind. "Chilling."

On January 23, my wife Cindy and I celebrated the birth of our first grandchild. Little Emma Rae Daines was born in Denver. She was about 10 days early. Her due date, in fact, was Groundhog Day. She is doing wonderfully—a healthy, beautiful granddaughter, our first grandchild.

When I think about what the Governor said, I can't help but think about looking at the pictures we receive. I think on darn near an hourly basis, we are getting new pictures of our new, beautiful, little granddaughter. But these comments the Governor made pull back the curtain on an extreme and dangerous abortion agenda that shows callous disregard for human life.

What the Virginia Governor is defending and what these ghoulish abortion-up-to-birth laws enable is the free rein of brutal killers like Kermit Gosnell. Babies who survive the violence of an attempted abortion must not be subject to further violence or neglect, and that is why we are here this afternoon.

Soon, Senator SASSE will be offering his legislation, the Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act. What Senator SASSE is proposing is that it would be a Federal law that born alive—let me say that again on the floor of the U.S. Senate—what this law says is that born-alive babies who survive an abortion must be treated the same as every other living baby—with dignity.

As a nation, how is it that we can go to the OB-GYN, the delivery section of our hospitals, and see the NICU areas where they are doing all they can to save the lives of these preemies, and yet we are going to hear—I think our colleagues across the aisle are going to object to this law that would protect a baby who is born alive.

If we can't agree on something so fundamental—that babies born alive deserve the right to life—I fear deeply for the direction that some are taking our country. I implore my colleagues on the other side of the aisle not to block legislation that would bring much needed protections for the most vulnerable among us.

I found it interesting that at the March for Life, one of the best tweets I saw that day was by someone who, in essence, said: It is the only march in America where those who are showing up to march are not marching for their rights; they are marching on behalf of those who don't have a voice. That is worth standing up for on the floor of the Senate today. Every human life must be valued. Every human life must be protected from conception until death.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

COLLEGE FINANCING

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam President, a college graduate who pays more than \$1,000 a month on student loans recently wrote the New York Times, "I was told to chase down a bachelor's degree by any means necessary. But no one mentions just how expensive and soul-crushing the debt will be."

The United States, our country, has most of the best colleges in the world, but we also have the most graduates paying off college debt. Roughly 40 million borrowers owe \$1.5 trillion in collective student loan debt.

The questions I hear most often about college are, No. 1, can I afford it? No. 2, is it worth it? And No. 3, can you make applying for financial aid and repaying student loans simpler? And from administrators, as well, I hear: Can't you do something about the jungle of red tape that makes it so hard to apply for Federal financial aid, to pay back student loans and that wastes money on overhead that ought to be spent on students?

Today, I addressed a group at the American Enterprise Institute, and I made three proposals to help make the answer to all four of those questions a yes. I want to briefly discuss those proposals today and other work that is going on in the Senate Education Committee, which I chair, and on which Senator MURRAY is the senior Democrat from the State of Washington. I will discuss what we are doing to answer those questions. Then I will ask at the appropriate time to submit most of my remarks at the American Enterprise Institute into the RECORD.

My first proposal was to simplify the FAFSA.

I ask unanimous consent to use a piece of demonstrative evidence in my speech.

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

Mr. ALEXANDER. Thank you.

This is a FAFSA. You may say that nobody knows what that is. Well, 20

million American families know what this is because 20 million American families fill this out every single year.

If you want a Federal loan to help you go to college or if you want a Pell grant that you don't have to pay back—60 percent of the 20 million students who go to college receive a Federal loan or grant—to do that they first must fill out this Federal student aid application form.

In our first hearing on this subject in 2013—I can remember it as if it were yesterday—we had four excellent witnesses who came from different parts of the country, with different directions. They weren't all singing the same song. One of them was Kim Cook from the National College Access Network. She said that simplifying the FAFSA would encourage as many as 2 million more Americans to go to college and make it more affordable for them.

In our State of Tennessee, we became the first—thanks to the leadership of Governor Bill Haslam in our State legislature—to make 2 years of college tuition-free for high school graduates and now for adults as well. But in order to get the money from the State to make your tuition free, you first have to fill out this FAFSA. Those who help students file FAFSA at the community colleges and in the high schools tell me that it is the single biggest impediment for low-income Tennesseans to have a chance to go to college.

The President of Southwest Tennessee Community College in Memphis told me that he thinks he loses 1,500 students a semester because the families say to him: Well, we don't know how to fill this out. We are uncomfortable with the information. We have already given the same information to the Internal Revenue Service, so why should we give the same information to two governmental Agencies?

Here we have an opportunity in our State for every single student who wants to have 2 years tuition-free, and this form is the biggest impediment. From what I can remember of the testimony in 2013—and Senator BENNET of Colorado and I really came to the same conclusion—all four witnesses said that these 108 questions are unnecessary. They also agreed that they could probably be reduced to two questions. Ms. Cook said that if that were done, as many as 2 million more students would apply for student aid.

So Senator BENNET and I went to work. We worked with counselors in high schools. We worked with college aid specialists. We worked in a bipartisan way, and we came to a conclusion that we could reduce the amount of questions from 108 to between 15 and 25.

Senator BENNET is now on the Finance Committee and not on our education committee, but he stays very involved. Soon Senator BENNET with Senator DOUG JONES of Alabama, Senator SUSAN COLLINS, and I, are all going to introduce this legislation this year as one way of making college simpler and more affordable for students.

The second proposal that I hope to make and that I will talk about today is a new system of repaying loans. Today, there are nine different ways to repay student loans. Senators BURR and KING, among others, have introduced legislation to make that simpler.

Well, my proposal is to scrap the current system that has been called by Dr. Susan Dynarski a “rigid archaic payment system that unnecessarily plunges millions into financial distress” and reduce it to two new options. The first new option would be based on a student’s income. If you were to get a student loan under this option—which is the option I think most students will take—you would never be required to pay back more than 10 percent of your discretionary income. Your payments each month would be deducted from your paycheck, and you would continue to make those payments until your loan was paid off.

If you didn’t make enough money to make your monthly payment, you would owe nothing, and if you would pay nothing, it would not reflect on your credit.

Let me give you one example of how this income-based repayment system would work. Let’s take Joe, who earns a bachelor’s degree in engineering. He has an average loan for college graduates, which is \$28,500. That is the average loan for an American graduate with a 4-year degree. Joe makes about \$60,000 in his new job as an engineer. That is what the Census Bureau says is the median starting salary for someone with an engineering degree.

Joe is unmarried and has no children. Here is the way the repayment plan works for him. We deduct a portion of Joe’s income that is needed for necessities under a government formula; that is, about \$18,700. What is left we call his discretionary income; that is, \$41,265. So Joe will pay no more than 10 percent of that \$41,000, which is \$4,127 to be exact, or \$343 a month. That is Joe’s payment on a student loan. Under this proposal, if Joe, the engineer, never gets a raise, he will pay back his loan in 9 years.

There are other examples, which I will submit later for the RECORD, but here is one more example. For Maya, who earned a bachelor’s degree in economics, the average salary for that degree is less, according to the Census Bureau—closer to \$43,000. The same amount for living necessities and expenses is deducted. She will pay 10 percent of a lesser amount, which will be \$202 a month, in her case. Now it takes a little longer to pay off her loan, but if she never gets a raise she will still be able to pay it off within 16 years.

What if you can’t pay off your loan? What if you don’t make enough money to pay toward your loan? What if you drop out, and you owe money? Well, if you don’t earn anything, you don’t pay anything. And if it isn’t paid off at the end of 20 years, your loan is forgiven under current laws, and we don’t propose to change that.

My new loan repayment system should make it possible for students to avoid nightmares about paying back their student loans. Since the money to repay the loan is deducted from the paycheck each month, it should make the taxpayer whole. Under my proposal I believe most students will choose the option I just described. But if they want to choose to pay their loan in 10 years—like a mortgage loan with a flat payment—they can still do that and they will pay their loan off a little faster. The money will be deducted from their paycheck too, and it will be paid off a little faster.

The third proposal is a new accountability system for colleges based upon whether borrowers are actually repaying their student loans. This should encourage lower tuition for some programs or even discourage schools from offering programs that are not worth it to students.

So all three of these proposals—simplifying the FAFSA application form from 108 questions down to 15 to 25, No. 1; No. 2, scrapping the current method of paying back student loans from this archaic system we have now and replacing it by giving the students the option of an income-based repayment program with monthly payments deducted from their paychecks that are never more than 10 percent of their discretionary income or keeping the 10-year mortgage style payment, if they prefer, with monthly payments deducted from their paychecks; and the third is a new accountability system based upon whether borrowers are actually repaying their loans.

Now before I submit the rest of my speech for the RECORD, let me just mention the activity in our Senate education committee.

During the last 4 years, we have held 27 hearings on the Higher Education Act, and there are a number of bipartisan proposals that have emerged from that.

I mentioned the proposal by Senators JONES and BENNET and COLLINS and I to simplify the FAFSA.

There is another proposal to simplify the FAFSA that Senator MURRAY and I passed in the Senate last year and that we plan to introduce this year. It allows a student, with one click, to answer 22 questions.

Senators BURR and KING have proposed ways to simplify loan repayment.

Senators MURPHY, ENZI, and HASSAN are interested in expanding competency-based education programs. Professor Walter Russell Mead describes these programs as “measuring whether a student is learning stuff instead of measuring how long he or she sits in their seat.” In other words, if you show up and already know how to be a welder, you don’t have to stay there just because of the Federal dollars it is giving out based on how long you sit in your seat.

Senators GRASSLEY and SMITH have a bill that would require institutions to tell you exactly whether the money

you are being awarded when you are admitted is a loan you have to pay back or is a grant you don’t have to pay back. Financial aid letters are confusing for many students. Senators CASSIDY and WARREN have legislation about data. Senators GRASSLEY and SMITH have other legislation to counsel students about how much money they should borrow. Senators MURPHY and WARREN want to expand Pell grants to prisoners, which I think is a good idea. Senators YOUNG and HASSAN are interested in experimental sites. Senator KAINE and I have discussed allowing students to use their Pell grants to pay for shorter programs.

In 2013, Senators BENNET, BURR, Mikulski, and I asked a distinguished group of college administrators to give us specific steps to simplify and to make more effective the thousands of pages of regulations that govern our 6,000 institutions. The result was the Kirwan-Zeppos report that gave us 59 grant recommendations to eliminate the jungle of red tape.

In conclusion, this year, I have met with Senator MURRAY several times and with most of the members of our committee. We want to work on a broad piece of legislation that would update the Higher Education Act. Our goal would be to have it ready for the committee this spring so the Senate can consider it this summer. That schedule should permit a conference with the House of Representatives that would produce a Christmas present for 20 million families by the end of the year.

Our Federal aid for students began with the GI bill for veterans in 1944, when only about 5 percent of students attended college and had bachelor’s degrees. Today 35 percent of students have bachelor’s degrees, and 60 percent of our country’s 20 million college students receive Federal aid—\$28 billion in grants and \$90 billion in new loans.

It is time for us to update our Federal laws on higher education. My proposal is to simplify the FAFSA—to scrap the current system of repaying student loans with an income-based option, by which a student would never pay more than 10 percent of his discretionary income, and create a new accountability system that would apply to all colleges and all programs that would be based on whether students are actually repaying their loans, which would tend to discourage colleges from offering programs in which students couldn’t earn enough to pay back their loans and could encourage lower tuition. All of those, along with the other proposals we have seen in our committee, should give the Senate plenty to work on.

First, simplifying the FAFSA.

The cumbersome FAFSA is one major impediment to low-income students who want to go to college.

They and their parents are intimidated by the complexity, are wary of the government form, and don’t see

why they should have to give the Education Department information they have already given to the IRS.

The former president of Southwest Community College in Memphis told me he believes that he loses 1,500 students each semester because of the complexity of the FAFSA.

A woman who has mentored with Tennessee's free tuition program, the Tennessee Promise program, said the complex form has a "chilling effect"—intimidating parents who may themselves never have attended college and have no experience navigating the process.

And over and over families have asked me, "I've already given most of this information to the federal government when I paid my taxes. Why do I have to do it again? Once is enough."

To make matters worse, there is a verification process that stops the payments of Pell Grants while the family scrambles to resubmit its tax information again and the government checks to make sure that the information is correct.

I recently talked with another administrator from Southwest Community College who told me that over one third of the applicants who put down the school as an option on their FAFSA applications were selected for verification last fall.

At a school where over 60 percent of students receive a Pell Grant, this is a huge burden for the low-income students who we want to fill out the FAFSA the most.

This is happening across Tennessee—the President of East Tennessee State University told me one third of his students who receive federal financial aid were subjected to this verification procedure this year.

I have two proposals to simplify the FAFSA:

First, Senator JONES and I, along with Senators BENNET and COLLINS, are reintroducing legislation soon that would reduce the number of questions from 108 to 15–25 basic questions about students, their families, and their plans for college.

We would keep providing the information that States and institutions use to calculate additional aid to prevent students and families from having to complete additional paperwork down the line.

Senator JONES's and my legislation would allow students as young as middle school to easily learn about their likely Pell Grant awards with a phone app or a chart so they can begin to think about and plan for college.

The second way to simplify the FAFSA is legislation the Senate passed last year and that Senator MURRAY and I plan to reintroduce this year, which would allow families to answer up to 22 FAFSA questions with just one click.

It does this by ending the need for families to give the same information to two different federal departments—the Department of Education and the Internal Revenue Service.

It would also:

Simplify the burdensome application process for the 40 percent of applicants who do not file Federal income taxes but likely qualify for Pell Grants;

Dramatically decrease the number of students whose aid is tangled up when they are selected to be verified; and

Eliminate the \$6 billion in mistakes that the Treasury Department estimates are made each year by awarding an applicant too much or too little aid.

My second proposal, to help make federal loans more affordable once students graduate, will simplify the nine different ways to repay loans into two options.

The current system is so complex that even college administrators struggle to navigate it.

At a roundtable at the University of Tennessee—Martin, a Tennessee college president, told me it took him months to figure out how to help his daughter pay off her Federal student loans in full even with the money in hand.

This proposal would streamline those nine plans into a new option that guarantees that borrowers would never have to pay more than 10 percent of their income that is not needed for necessities.

And if a borrower loses his job or does not make enough, he would not pay anything, and it would not hurt his credit score.

The monthly payment would be automatically withheld from borrowers' paychecks, just like Federal taxes.

I believe all students will want to take advantage of this simple and affordable new option, but if not, they will still be able to opt to pay on the existing 10-year loan repayment plan schedule, which, for many borrowers, will help them pay off their loans faster.

Just like the new repayment plan, borrowers who wish to pay their loans off faster would have their payments automatically deducted from their paychecks.

Let's talk about how the new income-based repayment plan would work:

Joe earned his bachelor's degree in engineering.

He has the average loan for college graduates of \$28,500.

He makes \$60,000—that is what the Census Bureau says is the median starting salary for someone with an engineering degree.

He is unmarried and has no children.

So that year, we deduct the portion of his income that is needed for necessities—that is \$18,735—and what is left is what we call his discretionary income—\$41,265.

He will pay ten percent of that \$41,265 a year, which is \$4,127—or \$343 a month.

Under this proposal, even if he never gets a raise, Joe will pay back his loan in 9 years.

Now let's take Maya, who earned a bachelor's degree in economics.

She also has the average loan of \$28,500.

Her starting salary is \$43,000—the median starting salary for someone with a degree in economics, according to the Census Bureau.

She is also unmarried and has no children.

So, that year, we deduct the same thing for necessities—\$18,735—and that leaves her discretionary income at \$24,265.

Maya will pay 10 percent of that \$24,265 a year, which is \$2,427, or \$202 a month.

Under this proposal, even if she never gets a raise, Maya will pay back her loan in 16 years.

Stephanie earned her associate's degree from a local community college.

She has \$10,400 in student loan debt—the median amount a recent community college graduate would expect to have.

Her starting salary is \$39,000—the median salary for a 25–29-year-old with an associate's degree.

She is unmarried and has one child. So the portion of her income that is needed for necessities—\$25,365—is larger because it is supporting two people. That leaves her discretionary income at \$13,635.

Stephanie will pay 10 percent of that \$13,635 a year, which is \$1,364, or \$114 a month.

Under this proposal, Stephanie will pay back her loan in 10 years even if she never gets a raise.

Finally, let's look at someone who isn't able to repay his loan.

John went to community college for a year, took out \$7,500 in student loans, but dropped out after his first year.

He makes \$20,000 a year.

He is unmarried and has no children.

So we deduct the portion of his income that is needed for necessities—\$18,735—and that leaves his discretionary income at \$1,265.

John will pay 10 percent of that \$1,265 a year, which is \$127.

Under this proposal, assuming he never gets a raise, John will have not repaid his loan in 20 years.

In three out of these four examples, the borrowers were able to pay back their loans in 20 years.

And if these students have reasonable salary increases, they would pay off their loans even sooner.

But for those undergraduate students like John who never make enough to pay back their loans in 20 years, the amount that hasn't been paid after 20 years is forgiven under current law, and that seems like a policy we should keep.

Under this new repayment system, students will have manageable payments and most will completely pay off their loans, which is good for the students and is good for the taxpayers.

This new option should end the nightmare that many students have of never being able to afford their student loan payments.

My third proposal is a new accountability system for colleges to make sure the degrees they offer are worth students' time and money.

This new accountability system would measure whether students are actually paying off their loans.

The proposal would simplify and expand what the gainful employment rule—proposed in 2014 by the U.S. Department of Education—tried to accomplish.

What is different is it would apply to every program at every college—public, private, and for-profit—and the measure will be much simpler.

For some programs, this should provide colleges with an incentive to lower tuition and help their students finish their degrees and find jobs so they can repay their loans.

TITLE IX

There will be other good ideas, and some of them are difficult.

One of these is a rule about campus safety.

The U.S. Department of Education has proposed a rule addressing campus safety by clarifying what is required by title IX.

I'm glad to see the Department is going through the rulemaking process, which allowed the public to submit comments.

It is my belief that Congress can also address some of these issues, and I am committed to trying to do that.

CONCLUSION

We have a committee with many different voices and diverse views, but we have been successful in bringing legislation with broad bipartisan support, including with a divided government, including fixing Federal student loans, the law fixing No Child Left Behind, the 21st Century Cures Act, and legislation to combat the opioid crisis.

In my conversations with Democrat and Republican Senators, I have found a remarkable degree of bipartisan consensus about the directions we should take to make college affordable and make students' degrees worth their time and money.

Of course, there will be differences of opinion, and if there are, we will resolve them the traditional way: by voting.

And if we cannot agree on one thing, I would be willing to do, as our committee has in the past, which is to move forward on those important matters on which we can agree.

There has never been a time when more Americans have agreed that education and training beyond high school is essential to a good life and a higher income.

It is our responsibility to take whatever steps we can to help students afford college and make sure that the degrees they earn are worth the time and money they pay for them.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BOOZMAN). The Senator from Kentucky is recognized.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST

Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, I compliment President Trump on being bold enough and strong enough to do some-

thing no President has contemplated in decades, Republican or Democratic, and that is to end the war in Afghanistan.

We have been there for 17 years. We voted on a resolution initially that said we would go after the people who attacked us on 9/11 and anyone who aided or abetted them. We did that. Today there is no one living who attacked us on 9/11 or who is free. There is no one living who aided or abetted the people who attacked us on 9/11. By any measurement, we are victorious. We killed bin Laden. We have disrupted the terror camps in Afghanistan. Is Afghanistan a mess? Sure, it is a mess. It has always been a mess and always will be a mess, but now our mission has changed to nation-building.

I compliment President Trump for being bold and brave in saying enough is enough. Let's spend that money at home. We spend \$51 billion a year in Afghanistan. That money could be spent at home. I have three members of my family who are in the military. I don't want them to go to Afghanistan. Every one of our political and military leaders—Republican, Democratic, and Independent—will tell you there is no military mission in Afghanistan. Yet we stay. Some of the very same people who say we have no mission, in their next breaths say we need to send more troops there. We sent 100,000, and we completely had victory. Then they came back as our troops came down. Are we to send 100,000 and keep them there forever?

This resolution is an insult to the President, and I will oppose it. This resolution has been put forward by Republicans, who say to President Trump: You are leaving precipitously from Afghanistan. How do you leave precipitously after 17 years? We are no longer fighting anyone who attacked us on 9/11. The people we are fighting were not even born when 9/11 happened. The war over there has nothing to do with 9/11. It has to do with nation-building. I will tell you what one Navy SEAL, whom I met a year or two ago, told me. He said: We will go everywhere. We will kill our enemy. We will do what you ask of us, but the mistake is when you ask us to stay, plant the flag, and become policemen. They don't want to be policemen. Our military members do not want to be the policemen of the world.

We fight when we have to, and we should come home. That money should be spent here at home. I completely and vigorously oppose this condemnation of the President. They say we are leaving precipitously. We have been there 17 years. The same people in the war caucus—and they are on both sides of the aisle—will also tell you, if you announce that you are leaving in 6 months, then you are telegraphing to the enemy that you are leaving. So they don't want us to leave precipitously, but they don't want us to leave in a planned way. They have left us no way to leave.

People talk about bipartisanship. What is the one thing that brings Republicans and Democrats together? War. They love it—the more the better, forever war, perpetual war. We are spending \$51 billion a year in Afghanistan. We spend it on luxury hotels that are half completed. The contractors have run off with the money. One of the hotels that sits across from our Embassy serves as a place for snipers to shoot at our soldiers. We have to now patrol this half-built hotel, and the guy who was building it ran off with the money. The government we supported for a decade—the Karzai government—grew more poppy than anybody in the world. The guy's brother was a drug dealer, and his other brother was a thief and ran off with the money. Is it any wonder that the Afghan people turn away from the government we have given them? It is time to declare victory and come home.

This resolution, like so many resolutions, could be misinterpreted as being another affirmation that we stay forever. So I also support language that should be added to this resolution that says: Nothing in this resolution is to be construed as an authorization for war. Why? Because we had an authorization like this about Libya that didn't give power to the government to commit war. It passed on a Thursday evening, when many Members were traveling back to their States, and President Obama, at that time, used it and said: Oh, everybody is in favor of the new war in Libya, which also turned out to be a disaster.

With regard to the troops in Syria, President Trump said: I will defeat ISIS, and we will come home. Now the people are changing the mission. They say: We have to stay there until the Russians leave. We have to stay there until the Iranians leave. They have been there a long time. They are not leaving. That means we stay there forever. We have 2,000 troops compared to tens of thousands of other troops, compared to a couple hundred thousand Turkish troops along the border. Do we really want to be involved in another enormous land war in the Middle East? To what end?

The great irony of this is, the war caucus on both sides—Republicans and Democrats, those who will not ever let the soldiers come home—typically vents its anger and says: The President has unlimited power, and how dare Congress get in his way with regard to war. Here is the irony. We now have a President who wants to use his power to come home, and they are stepping in and saying: Oh, no. We need to make sure he is consulting with Congress because we want to stay at war forever, and the President wants to bring troops home. So this is a resolution to condemn the President for trying to bring troops home for the first time in 17 years.

What are we spending the money on—\$51 billion a year? We have spent

over \$6 trillion between the Iraq war and the Afghan war—\$6 trillion. The \$51 billion a year we are spending in Afghanistan is being spent on a luxury hotel, and we have spent \$45 billion on a gas station. I think we spent about \$90 million on the hotel and \$45 million on the gas station. Do you know what kind of gas they pump? Natural gas. How many people have a car in America that runs on natural gas? Virtually nobody. How many people in Afghanistan have a car that runs on natural gas? Zero. So we bought them some cars. Then they didn't have any money, so we gave them credit cards so they could use the gas pumps. I sent my staffers to see if the gas station even existed, but they couldn't get there because it was too dangerous. After 17 years, you can't travel more than a few blocks in Kabul except without helicopter warships and an escort of dozens of marines.

It is completely a disaster. More poppy was grown there last year than in any recent year, and the people say: We shouldn't give up. All we have to do is send more soldiers. All we have to do is fight longer. When are they going to fight? They have 300,000 people in their army. When are they going to fight? If they want their homeland, stand up and fight for it. I am tired of America always doing everybody else's fighting. I am tired of America always paying for everybody else's war.

People say: Oh, they might come and attack us. We should be prepared. We should have robust intelligence. We should know what is going on, and we should disrupt terrorist camps if we have to. Yet every person out there who believes in this radical Islam, in this radical jihad is not coming over here. Every misbegotten village in Africa is not a threat to the United States, and that is the debate we should be having.

They say: It is in our national security interests. Really? To go to Niger to go to Mali? to be fighting in Somalia? to be fighting in Yemen? to be fighting in Afghanistan and in Iraq? That is not in our national interest.

People say: We must fight them there or they will come here. Well, guess what. They have been coming here since 9/11. We have arrested over 300 terrorists in our country. It was only a year ago that a dozen people were killed in New York by a terrorist, so it is not as if they haven't been coming. In fact, we don't condone terrorists' reasons for coming, but if you look at their reasons for coming, they say it is because we are over there.

So we are trapped by this platitude. This platitude is: We must fight them over there so they will not be over here. Well, they are over here, and when they tell you why they are over here, they say they are over here because we are over there. I am not saying we do nothing. I am not saying we don't have counterterrorism, but I will tell you that when in some remote village in Yemen we swoop in at night

and kill 15 people, including women and children, the surrounding neighborhood and countryside, for 100 years, will speak to an old tradition of the night the Americans came.

Ultimately, Islam must police Islam. They are never going to accept Americans coming in and telling them how to live or how they should behave or getting rid of even the bad elements among them. They need to step up and do it.

We have taken 99 percent of the land back from ISIS. That is not enough. People say there are still suicide bombers. Yes, there will be suicide bombers in the Middle East until the end of time. If we are waiting until there are no suicide bombers in the Middle East, we will wait forever. Can the people there do nothing to take care of themselves? Is there nobody there who can stop the 1 percent from coming back? Will people not step up and fight their own wars?

We have given them trillions of dollars—the uniforms, the weapons. Everything has been ours. Every time we say we have to be involved, there are unintended consequences. In Syria, we gave arms to people who were radical extremists. We gave arms to people who were actually allied with al-Qaida. Some say there is no difference between al-Qaida and the people to whom we gave arms. At one point in time, it was said that ISIS had \$1 billion worth of humvees that were from the United States. The arms that were coming out of Libya—and Hillary Clinton supported taking those arms into Libya—were going to the wrong people. We were taking them to one set of bad people and giving them to another set of bad people.

Maybe, sometimes, there isn't a lesser of two evils. Maybe, sometimes, we have to be concerned about America. What I am saying with this resolution is I am for replacing it completely and saying to President Trump: We think we are doing a great job, and thank goodness for being bold enough to say it is time to start thinking about America first.

I ask unanimous consent that we get rid of the resolution condemning the President and that we replace it with the resolution that simply says that we applaud President Trump for being bold and brave enough to consider bringing our troops home, declaring victory, and ending America's longest war.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Idaho is recognized.

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, first of all, I want to respond to a number of things said by my distinguished colleague from Kentucky.

He makes a number of points that he has been making over the years that deserve serious consideration. I say this is something that deserves a debate. I agree with him that the Presi-

dent of the United States should be commended, not condemned, for raising these issues for a debate. Indeed, that is the purpose of this resolution.

As you know, this resolution is made up of many different parts, the most recent of which is the resolution that talks about the very things my good friend was speaking about. This resolution we have in front of us is not a rebuke or an insult to the President of the United States. Indeed, as I read it, it recognizes the President's efforts in this regard and recognizes his efforts for us to examine exactly what we are doing in these places, as Senator PAUL has already so eloquently talked about.

I think there are a lot of people both in Congress and outside of Congress who recognize that after World War II, the United States was very successful in nation building. Whether or not you agreed with it—and there is always a debate as to what our obligation is, how far we should go, and how much of the American taxpayers' money we should spend on nation building—we rebuilt Germany, we rebuilt Japan, and after the Korean war, we rebuilt South Korea, and we were very successful in that regard. Not only did we rebuild the nation itself, but we also trained the necessary police efforts there and military efforts for ongoing work.

Now, fast-forward to the Middle East and the difficulties we have had there. I don't think there is anyone who could stand up and successfully defend that this has been a successful nation-building effort in the areas Senator PAUL referred to. Indeed, they have not been. My view is that before you can give something to somebody, they have to want it.

I think we have spent a couple of trillion dollars in Afghanistan. As Senator PAUL pointed out, there are things going on there that are very difficult and no better than when we got there 17 years ago. Indeed, in some places, it is probably worse than when we got there 17 years ago. It is appropriate to have that debate as to whether we should continue nation building and whether we should continue to try to stand up and train fighting units in Afghanistan or, for that matter, in other places.

Senator PAUL referred to only a minimum number of places where we have attempted to train fighters to fight like Americans. The fact is, they just don't. No matter how much training you give them and no matter what kind of equipment you give them, they just don't fight like America's finest.

In addition to that, Senator PAUL correctly pointed out that in some instances in the Middle East, there are places where tribal disputes have gone on for centuries, and they are still going on. When you try to stand them up to do something else, they just don't do it. They may train, but they will not train to fight for what we want and for the kinds of values and cultures we have.

Having said all of that, again, I come back to what we are attempting to do

here with the resolution we have in front of us, and that is, we are recognizing that President Trump has started this conversation, and we are encouraging him in that regard.

I note that in recent days the national media has delighted in saying that Congress is rebuking the President of the United States. I have a different view of this. The President of the United States, as the Commander in Chief, as the Chief Executive, started this conversation, and after the conversation was started, there have been numerous discussions—both internally within the executive branch and between the legislative branch and the executive branch—as to the issues the President raised and the issues my good friend Senator PAUL was talking about. The result of that is the language we have in front of us that recognizes that the President of the United States started this conversation. It recognizes that he thinks we ought to be talking about some of these things, just as Senator PAUL has raised and has debated, and we should continue talking about those.

So the purposes of the resolution are, I would urge, pretty much the opposite of what Senator PAUL talks about when he says we are rebuking the President or criticizing the President or in any other way insulting the President. Indeed, nothing could be further from the truth. This progress—this process is working exactly the way it was intended to work, and that is for someone—in this case, the leader of the Nation—to raise these issues, and then discussions take place amongst all of the people who have an interest in this and everyone who believes they have some input into this, recognizing both the shortcomings and the successes of what we have had.

Certainly, the President is to be commended for what he has said about defeating the vast majority of ISIS. That group is a shadow of its former self. As Senator PAUL noted, the vast majority of the land holdings it had have been taken back, so there is a great victory there. There is certainly more work to be done.

I agree with Senator PAUL that this is a little bit like the laundry—it is never going to be completely done. As long as the Middle East exists, as long as there are people who are inclined to do this sort of thing, people who are radicals, this sort of thing is going to go on. Where I part company a bit with Senator PAUL is that we can do things over there that will make us safer here.

Senator PAUL is right. Intelligence plays a huge role in this. Indeed, had we had a better handle before 9/11, that could have been disrupted, just as we have disrupted many other efforts to attack the homeland, the vast majority of which the American people will never hear about.

In any event, I think we should all get behind this particular resolution. I think it encourages the President for the road that he is going down to take

each of these elements, to look at them critically, and to determine what we need to do to continue to protect Americans.

When the President first rolled out this idea, one of the things I think is important is that I don't think he ever indicated that he was somehow going to withdraw from the Middle East and give up all the platforms that we have and that we must have if, indeed, we get something going on to a point like we had right before 9/11 where there were these training camps in Afghanistan that were training people to come to America and do what they did. If the intelligence people are able to determine that, then I think we need to be able to hit that with an operation that will dismantle it. It doesn't have to be a war that goes on for very long; indeed, many of these are 1-night operations. That is the way these things need to be handled.

In any event, I would urge everyone to get behind this particular resolution we have encouraging the President and encouraging people on all sides of the issue who have strong feelings about it, just as my good friend Senator PAUL has, to get their two cents' worth in here and then we all work together to make this work right and not be pulling at each other and encouraging our enemies in that regard.

Mr. President, I object to the request made.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from Kentucky.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—AMENDMENT
NO. 102

Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, one of the things that I think are fundamental to our country is the freedom to protest, the freedom to dissent, and the freedom to boycott if you so choose. Our country was actually founded with a boycott. The boycott was dumping English tea into the ocean. In my State, Henry Clay was famous for passing legislation boycotting British goods so that people could wear American clothing. He actually fought a duel over that and became famous and then became one of the most famous U.S. Senators.

The idea that you should be allowed to boycott, that it is an extension of your speech, that it is an extension of the First Amendment, I think goes to the very heart of who we are as a people. It is hard for me to believe that part of this bill they are putting forward would affirm State law that says you can't do business with the government if you are involved with the boycott against Israel.

I am not really making a point on whether the boycott is good or bad or with regard to Israeli policy; my point is whether it is good or bad with regard to the First Amendment. You see, the First Amendment isn't really about hearing from people about things that you like. If it is speech that you like and people say you are a great guy, you are not going to be offended by that

speech. It is when people are critical of you or critical of your thoughts or have different thoughts—that is what the First Amendment is about.

It is an extraordinary thing in our country that people can actually speak up and speak their minds. If people don't think the settlements on the West Bank are a good idea, should they be allowed to speak their mind? Should they be forbidden from doing work for the government?

The problem is that the government has gotten so big. There is a teacher in Texas who is Muslim. I think she teaches autistic or special needs kids. She is a contractor. She was asked to sign a statement saying that she would never boycott goods made in Israel. Well, she objects to some of the policies, I presume, on the West Bank. I don't agree with her, but that is a fundamentally American thing—to be able to object. Should we have a law that says you can't boycott your government and that you can't boycott your government's policy? To me, that is a real danger.

I have an amendment to this overall bill that would simply say that we remove any kind of affirmation of anti-boycotting legislation, that boycotting or protesting is something so fundamentally American, so fundamentally associated with the First Amendment that even if we don't like what you are boycotting, even if we don't like what you are saying, that in America we allow that to happen because that is what freedom of speech is about.

Freedom of speech is not about the easy stuff. It is not about the language you like. It is not about saying "Oh, if you are a Republican and everybody is saying Republican things, that is fine, but we are not going to hear from Democrats," or if you are a Democrat, it is not about saying "Well, the First Amendment is fine for Democrats, but we don't want to hear from those Republicans." It is about speech, whether you like it or not. Boycotting is speech.

I went to a Baptist college. I remember when I was in college that the Baptist women of the Southwest Baptist Convention didn't like pornography being out in front at the store where kids could view it. Do you know what they did? They marched. They didn't hurt anybody. They didn't commit violence. They did nonviolent protests by marching in front of the utility stores until—guess what—because of the economic boycott and the bad press, the people put the pornographic magazines behind the counter, and only adults were allowed to buy them and look at them. That is from a boycott.

We boycotted English tea to found a country.

Does anybody remember the boycotts in Montgomery? Rosa Parks didn't like the fact that she was being separated and told to sit in the back of the bus, so African Americans from around the country but definitely across Alabama

and Montgomery boycotted the bus system.

Are we here to say that we are going to forbid boycotting, that you can't do business with the government? Here is the problem. People say: Oh, it is a privilege to do business with the government. What if you are a physician and half of your business is with the government? What if you are a nurse? Half of the healthcare in our country is paid for by the government. What if you are a teacher and you work in the public schools? Are we going to ask all of these people to take a litmus test that they are not going to boycott or protest against their government's policy? What kind of country would we live in? Yet it is groupthink around here. Everybody is so paranoid and saying: Oh, we can't object to this lobby. Because this lobby is so powerful, we can't object to them.

Look, it isn't about the ideas; it is about the freedom of speech.

I ask unanimous consent that my amendment be put forward, which is a germane amendment.

Listen to what you will hear here. There is going to be an objection. They are not going to let me vote on this. So not only are they going to ban boycotting, they are banning the idea that, in the Senate, we would vote on whether we would allow boycotting in our country.

My amendment is to take out the language that supports banning boycotts and reaffirms the First Amendment. It will be denied because nobody wants to vote on this. Nobody wants to have a debate over the First Amendment.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to set aside the pending amendment and call up my germane amendment that has everything to do with the bill, amendment No. 102.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. RISCH. Reserving the right to object.

Mr. President, fellow Senators, again I part ways with my good friend Senator PAUL on this one, to a large degree.

The speech he gave, I am in absolute agreement that the government should not be stopping any individual from boycotting whatever they want to boycott for whatever reason they want to boycott. This is America. You have the First Amendment right to do that, but I would draw attention to section 402, which simply states: "Nonpreemption of measures by state and local governments to divest from entities that engage in certain boycott, divestment, or sanctions activities targeting Israel or persons doing business in Israel or Israel-controlled territories."

Look, if an individual wants to do this, this is America. People can do what they want, but if a government—State or local government—is going to use taxpayer dollars to engage in anti-Israel activities, that is a different ball game. They are then using people's

funds who disagree with what they want to do, and that is not right. State and local governments should not in any way be involved in boycotting other countries, particularly—a country that is one of the best friends we have in the world, really the only democracy in the Middle East, and they are doing it, why? Because they are Jewish people. This is wrong. This is very wrong.

The BDS Act we have here prohibits State and local governments from doing that. Any person who wants to do that has the First Amendment right to do that.

In any event, we think this is a good measure that prohibits State and local governments from spending taxpayers' money in a way that many taxpayers don't want it spent. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have 20 seconds.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. PAUL. I think this is an important debate, and time will tell. This will go to the Supreme Court, and I expect the Supreme Court will rebuke this body for not carefully considering the First Amendment.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 96

The PRESIDING OFFICER. If there is no further debate, the question is on agreeing to amendment No. 96, offered by the Senator from New Jersey [Mr. MENENDEZ].

The amendment (No. 96) was agreed to.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 65

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to amendment No. 65.

Mr. RISCH. 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 bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER), the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI), and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) is necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 70, nays 26, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 14 Leg.]

YEAS—70

Alexander	Burr	Cortez Masto
Barrasso	Capito	Cotton
Bennet	Carper	Cramer
Blackburn	Casey	Crapo
Blumenthal	Cassidy	Daines
Blunt	Collins	Duckworth
Boozman	Coons	Enzi
Braun	Cornyn	Ernst

Feinstein	McConnell	Scott (SC)
Fischer	McSally	Shaheen
Graham	Menendez	Shelby
Grassley	Moran	Sinema
Hassan	Murray	Stabenow
Hawley	Peters	Sullivan
Hoeben	Portman	Tester
Hyde-Smith	Reed	Thune
Inhofe	Risch	Tillis
Isakson	Roberts	Toomey
Johnson	Romney	Warner
Jones	Rosen	Whitehouse
Kaine	Rounds	Wicker
King	Rubio	Young
Lankford	Sasse	
Manchin	Scott (FL)	

NAYS—26

Baldwin	Hirono	Sanders
Booker	Kennedy	Schatz
Brown	Klobuchar	Schumer
Cardin	Leahy	Smith
Cruz	Lee	Udall
Durbin	Markey	Van Hollen
Gillibrand	Merkley	Warren
Harris	Murphy	Wyden
Heinrich	Paul	

NOT VOTING—4

Cantwell	Murkowski
Gardner	Perdue

The amendment (No. 65), as amended, was agreed to.

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 bill 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 Calendar No. 1, S. 1, a bill to make improvements to certain defense and security assistance provisions and to authorize the appropriation of funds to Israel, to reauthorize the United States-Jordan Defense Cooperation Act of 2015, and to halt the wholesale slaughter of the Syrian people, and for other purposes.

Mitch McConnell, Pat Roberts, Shelley Moore Capito, Mitt Romney, Richard Burr, John Cornyn, Rick Scott, Mike Crapo, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Michael B. Enzi, Kevin Cramer, Mike Braun, John Boozman, Steve Daines, James M. Inhofe, Thom Tillis, Joni K. Ernst.

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 S. 1, an act to make improvements to certain defense and security assistance provisions and to authorize the appropriation of funds to Israel, to reauthorize the United States-Jordan Defense Cooperation Act of 2015, and to halt the wholesale slaughter of the Syrian people, 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 senior assistant bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER), the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI), and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. PERDUE).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) is necessarily absent.

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 72, nays 24, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 15 Leg.]

YEAS—72

Alexander	Ernst	Risch
Barrasso	Fischer	Roberts
Bennet	Graham	Romney
Blackburn	Grassley	Rosen
Blumenthal	Hassan	Rounds
Blunt	Hawley	Rubio
Boozman	Hoeven	Sasse
Braun	Hyde-Smith	Schumer
Burr	Inhofe	Scott (FL)
Capito	Isakson	Scott (SC)
Cardin	Johnson	Shelby
Casey	Jones	Sinema
Cassidy	Kennedy	Smith
Collins	King	Stabenow
Coons	Klobuchar	Sullivan
Cornyn	Lankford	Tester
Cortez Masto	Lee	Thune
Cotton	Manchin	Tillis
Cramer	McConnell	Toomey
Crapo	McSally	Warner
Cruz	Menendez	Whitehouse
Daines	Moran	Wicker
Duckworth	Murray	Wyden
Enzi	Portman	Young

NAYS—24

Baldwin	Heinrich	Peters
Booker	Hirono	Reed
Brown	Kaine	Sanders
Carper	Leahy	Schatz
Durbin	Markey	Shaheen
Feinstein	Merkley	Udall
Gillibrand	Murphy	Van Hollen
Harris	Paul	Warren

NOT VOTING—4

Cantwell	Murkowski
Gardner	Perdue

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 72, the nays are 24.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Idaho.

AMENDMENT NO. 97

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, I call up amendment No. 97.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Idaho [Mr. RISCH] proposes an amendment numbered 97.

Mr. RISCH. I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To clarify the deadline for the reporting requirement relating to the establishment of a Jordan Enterprise Fund)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . CLARIFICATION OF DEADLINE FOR REPORT ON ESTABLISHING AN ENTERPRISE FUND FOR JORDAN.

For purposes of section 205(a), the term “establishment of the United States Development Finance Corporation” means the end of the transition period, as defined in section 1461 of the Better Utilization of Investments Leading to Development Act of 2018 (division F of Public Law 115–254).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

AMENDMENT NO. 98 TO AMENDMENT NO. 97

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I call up an amendment numbered 98 to amendment No. 97.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from New Jersey [Mr. MENENDEZ], for Mr. RISCH, proposes an amendment numbered 98 to amendment No. 97.

Mr. MENENDEZ. I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To provide for a classified annex to be submitted with the report on the cooperation of the United States and Israel with respect to countering unmanned aerial systems)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . FORM OF REPORT ON THE COOPERATION OF THE UNITED STATES AND ISRAEL WITH RESPECT TO COUNTERING UNMANNED AERIAL SYSTEMS.

The report required under section 123(d) shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may include a classified annex.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Idaho.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. RISCH. Mr. 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. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO KATHLEEN GARDNER CRAVEDI

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, today I recognize the distinguished career of Kathleen Gardner Cravedi, who is retiring after 41 years of dedicated Federal service and for whose public service we should all be grateful.

As somebody who started his career in public service as the co-director of the Oregon Grey Panthers, I appreciate the work of individuals who are committed to improving conditions for older Americans. Kathy began her career in public service on Capitol Hill working on exactly those issues. As a Member of the U.S. House of Representatives, I had the benefit of working with Kathy when she was staff director for the Subcommittee on Health and Long-term Care of the U.S. House of Representatives Select Committee on Aging. Working under her chairman, the late-great Congressman Claude Pepper, Kathy helped pass legislation ending mandatory retirement and providing hospice care under Medicare. She worked on fighting elder abuse, health fraud, and she worked on the first congressional hearing ever on Alzheimer’s disease.

She helped to establish the National Center for Biotechnology Information and National Institute on Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases and the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders.

Following her service in Congress, Kathy continued her healthcare advocacy by directing a nationwide campaign to bring citizens from all 50 States to Washington, DC, to testify before Congress and talk with the First Lady on the need for healthcare reform.

In 1996, Kathy moved over to the National Library of Medicine, or NLM, which is the world’s largest biomedical library and a key resource for some of the most exciting medical science out there. Serving as NLM’s first public liaison, she worked hard connecting NLM’s work with the public, spearheading campaigns that drew huge attention in the United States and abroad. She brought in lawmakers and celebrities and athletes and scientists to promote the organization’s mission.

Over 23 years at NLM, Kathy steadily moved up the ranks, and she is now retiring as the director of the Office of Communications and Public Liaison. Her career at NLM has been key to connecting the American public with the astounding work this organization does.

Forty-one successful years in public service is a tremendous accomplishment. So I want to thank Kathy for all her many years of hard work, and I want to congratulate her on her well-earned retirement.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

S. 311. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit a health care practitioner from failing to exercise the proper degree of care in the case of a child who survives an abortion or attempted abortion.

PRIVILEGED NOMINATION REFERRED TO COMMITTEE

On request by Senator CHUCK GRASSLEY, under the authority of S. Res. 116, 112th Congress, the following nomination was referred to the Committee on Finance: Elizabeth Darling, of Texas, to be Commissioner on Children, Youth, and Families, Department of Health and Human Services, vice Rafael J. Lopez.

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–197. A communication from the Acting Secretary of Defense, transmitting a report on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General Jerry P. Martinez, United States Air Force, and his advancement to the grade of