S. 2262 has the support of a broad coalition of stakeholders, including energy efficiency, business, and environmental organizations, small and large businesses, utilities, and public interest groups. I am pleased to be a cosponsor of S. 2262 and urge its swift passage.

REQUEST FOR CONSULTATION

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the following letter be printed in the RECORD.

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

U.S. SENATE,
Washington, DC, May 13, 2014.

Hon. MITCH MCCONNELL,
Senate Minority Leader,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR MCCONNELL: I am requesting that I be consulted before the Senate enters into any unanimous consent agreements or time limitations regarding S. 357, National Blue Alert Act of 2013.

I support the goals of this legislation and believe suspects who seriously injure or kill federal, state or local law enforcement officers in the line of duty should be apprehended as quickly as possible. However, I believe the responsibility to address this issue, as it relates to state and local law enforcement officers, lies with the states and local communities that these brave law enforcement officers serve. Furthermore, while I do not believe this issue is the responsibility of the federal government, if Congress does act, we can and must do so in a fiscally responsible manner. My concerns are included in, but not limited to, those outlined in this letter.

While this bill is well-intentioned, according to the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), it will cost the American people $1 million dollars every year without corresponding offsets. I recognize this bill does not contain the authorization of appropriations included in prior versions of this legislation; however, establishing a new program which requires the Department of Justice (DOJ) to carry out additional responsibilities, even if implemented by existing staff, is not free of future costs, as recognized by CBO. Furthermore, there is no sunset provision contained in this legislation. Thus, once enacted, the annual $1 million price tag for this program will continue in perpetuity.

It is irresponsible for Congress to jeopardize the future standard of living of our children by borrowing from future generations. The U.S. national debt is now over $17.4 trillion. That means approximately $55,000 in debt for each man, woman and child in the United States. A year ago, the national debt was $16.7 trillion. Despite pledges to control spending, Washington adds billions to the national debt every single day. In just one year, our national debt has grown by $700 billion or 4.19%.

In addition to these fiscal concerns, there are several problems specific to this legislation. First, there is no need to establish a national Blue Alert system because many states have already developed their own Blue Alert programs for the same purposes outlined in this bill, including alerts issued for the injury or death of federal, as well as state and local law enforcement officers. In 2008, Florida and Texas were the first states to establish these programs. Seventeen additional states soon followed—Oklahoma, Maryland, Georgia, Delaware, California, Virginia, Mississippi, Tennessee, Utah, Colorado, South Carolina, Washington, Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana, Connecticut, and Illinois. The last three states to initiate a Blue Alert system did so in the 1-year period since the House passed its version of this bill in May 2012. Arizona and Kansas will likely begin their systems this summer and fall, respectively. Several state legislatures currently have legislation pending that would establish a Blue Alert system, including Minnesota, Alabama, and Missouri.

Furthermore, there is no data to support the success of the existing state Blue Alert programs. Oklahoma established its Blue Alert system in 2009, but it is not yet fully functional. The last three states to establish an alert system did so just within the last year. As a result, not only have states already established their own programs, but from the limited use of the existing systems, there is no clear evidence of a substantial need for a Blue Alert system, or of the consistent, successful apprehension of suspects as a direct result of a Blue Alert. If anything, we should wait for these programs to produce results that can be examined and determine whether this type of system is useful before instituting a federal, one-size-fits-all program.

Second, while the bill's supporters likely envision pursuing suspects who have injured or killed a law enforcement officer in a routine traffic stop or while fleeing a crime scene, for example, the bill's definition of ''law enforcement officer'' is much broader. The bill incorporates the definition in Section 1204 of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, which includes ''an individual involved in crime and juvenile delinquency control or reduction, or enforcement of the criminal laws (including juvenile delinquency), including, but not limited to, police, corrections, probation, parole, and judicial officers.'' As a result, a Blue Alert could be issued for a state court bailiff; a state parole officer, or an officer within a state's juvenile corrections facility, if injured in the line of duty.

Finally, I do not believe the federal government has the authority under the Constitution to provide federal funds to coordinate the tracking of state and local fugitives or to establish national protocols to apprehend suspects accused of injuring or killing state and local law enforcement officers. Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution enumerates the limited powers of Congress, and nowhere are we tasked with funding or becoming involved with state and local criminal issues.

There is no question those suspected of injuring or killing a state or local law enforcement officer in the line of duty should be aggressively pursued and prosecuted. However, I believe this issue is the responsibility of the states and not the federal government. Despite these Constitutional limitations, if Congress does act in this area, like most American individuals and companies must do with their own resources, we should evaluate current programs, determine any needs that may exist, and prioritize those needs for funding by cutting from the federal budget programs fraught with waste, fraud, abuse, and duplication.

Sincerely,

TOM A. COBURN, M.D.,
U.S. Senator.

TRIBUTE TO LINDA PAPP

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, it is with great pleasure that I wish to pay special tribute to an invaluable public servant, Mrs. Linda Papp. Coast Guard first lady, career educator, mother, and grandmother—Linda has tirelessly worked for more than 39 years to improve the lives of Coast Guard military families.

Linda is a native of East Lyme, CT, and is the oldest of Frank and Doris Kapral's six daughters. Her father, Frank, is a retired Coast Guard captain and fondly known throughout the service as ''Coach Kapral'' for his two decades leading the Coast Guard Academy football team. Linda holds a bachelor's and master's degree in education, and is the proud mother of three children, Lindsay, Caitlin and Jillian, and two granddaughters, Penelope and Ruby.

As the wife of the 24th Commandant, ADM Robert J. Papp, Linda serves as the Coast Guard's Ombudsman-at-Large and regularly travels to meet with Coast Guard families. She advocates on behalf of families to the First Lady of the United States, Members of Congress, Department of Defense, and other Federal, State and local leaders to improve the quality of life for thousands of servicemembers. She relentlessly focuses on improving military housing, member and family access to quality health care, and the Coast Guard's Ombudsman Program.

Of her 39 years as a military spouse, she spent 14 of those years watching six different Coast Guard cutters pull away from the pier. She understands that the strength and resilience of family members on the home front provides critical support to all of our Coast Guard men and women who stand the watch. She supports our men and women in uniform and those who keep the home fires burning and who every day face the unique challenges of a military lifestyle. They will always have a special place in her life, and in her heart.

I ask my colleagues to join me in paying special tribute to Mrs. Linda Papp. Our Coast Guard and our country are served well by honorable and giving military spouses like Linda who truly care about the health and well being of those who serve. We wish Linda, Admiral Papp, and their family all the best as we honor one of our dear friends.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

O'BRIEN COUNTY, IOWA

• Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, the strength of my State of Iowa lies in its vibrant local communities, where citizens come together to foster economic development, make smart investments to expand opportunity, and take the initiative to improve the health and well-being of residents. Over the decades, I have witnessed the growth and revitalization of so many communities across my State. And it has been deeply gratifying to see how my work in Congress has supported these local efforts.

I have always believed in accountability for public officials, and this, my final year in the Senate, is an appropriate time to give an accounting of