United States of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 113th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 160 WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, JULY 30, 2014 No. 121

House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. STEWART).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
July 30, 2014.

I hereby appoint the Honorable CHRIS STEWART to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 7, 2014, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

MEDICARE, MEDICAID, AND THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BUTTERFIELD) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, with the stroke of a pen 49 years ago today, several weeks after I finished high school, then-President Lyndon Johnson signed into law two of the largest and most important health-related programs the country had ever seen, Medicare and Medicaid. Those programs were created nearly half a century ago because our Nation's leaders saw, time and time again, the hopelessness of people who had no way to provide the most basic level of health care for themselves and their families.

It was President Harry Truman who initially conceived of a health care safety net for struggling Americans. Nearly 70 years ago, Truman said: ''Millions of our citizens do not now enjoy good health. Millions do not have security against the economic effects of sickness . . . and the time has arrived for action to help them get that protection.''

Since the creation of Medicare and Medicaid, no achievement has been as significant and consequential as the Affordable Care Act. In addition to providing affordable health insurance, to some for the first time ever, the ACA has also provided for significant expansion of states' Medicaid programs so that individuals with incomes less than 138 percent of the poverty level could finally have access to basic care.

A Supreme Court case would make Medicaid expansion voluntary. Now, nearly half a century after Medicaid was created to help the least among us, 24 States in this country, 24 States believe it best to disenfranchise millions and deny them access to Federal dollars they rightfully deserve by not expanding their programs.

States that have refused to expand point to the increased costs as a main reason for their decision. But, Mr. Speaker, the Federal Government has committed to pay 100 percent—that is, 100 percent of the cost of expansion—for the first 3 years and then 90 percent beyond the first 3. Nationally, the States would see only a 1.6 percent increase in their share of Medicaid spending, a 1.6 percent increase to provide health care for millions of deserving individuals.

The benefits of expansion far outweigh the costs. In my home State of North Carolina alone, expanding Medicaid will save the State more than $65 million over the next 8 years and would benefit its economy by adding nearly $1.5 billion to the State's revenue. It would not only help to save jobs, but help to create them, too. That is just in North Carolina. And this same scenario is playing out in nearly half of all the States in our country.

The cost of not expanding is simply too great. Pungo Hospital, located just outside of my congressional district in Belhaven, has closed its doors, closed its doors because North Carolina refuses to expand Medicaid.

The decision by Governor Pat McCrory and the Republican-led State legislature has cost a woman her life. Portia Gibbs was 48 years old. She had a heart attack and died on her way to the nearest open hospital, which was an hour away.

Providing care to the sick and injured is a moral imperative that Harry Truman saw nearly 70 years ago when he first spoke about it. Congress and President Lyndon Johnson believed caring for the least among us was a moral necessity when Medicare and Medicaid were passed and signed into law.

At the signing ceremony 49 years ago, former President Harry Truman said of the people that would benefit from Medicare and Medicaid: ''These people are our prideful responsibility, and they are entitled, among other benefits, to the best medical protection available. We don't want them to have any idea of hopeless despair.'' That was President Harry Truman.

In response to Truman, President Lyndon Johnson said improving the health of all Americans ''calls upon us never to be indifferent to despair. It commands us never to turn away from helplessness. It directs us never to ignore or to spurn those who suffer untended in a land that is bursting with abundance.''

Those elected officials standing in the way of Medicaid expansion should

Printed on recycled paper.

simply reflect on President Johnson's words. In a country that has come so far—so far—Americans who struggle financially deserve better than that. They deserve better than to have their elected officials tell them that their worth in this world is tied to their ability to afford health insurance.

ISRAEL HAS THE RIGHT TO DEFEND ITSELF

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BROOKS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROOKS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak strongly and unequivocally in support of Israel's right to self-defense, the same right to self-defense we would assert if America were attacked and Americans killed by rockets and other weaponry.

Israel launched Operation Protective Edge in response to relentless and unprovoked rocket attacks launched from Gaza by Hamas, a brutally ruthless terrorist organization. In just the last 3 weeks, more than 2,500 rockets have rained down on Israel, and the targets of these rockets are not military but civilian.

2,500 rockets fired at any country is a lot. It is an act of war that triggers self-defense military responses. But 2,500 rockets fired at a country as small as Israel is even worse. To put the size of Israel in perspective, Israel is smaller than the Tennessee Valley of north Alabama that I represent. If anyone dared to fire even a single rocket at the people of the Fifth District of Alabama, much less if 2,500 rockets rained down on the Tennessee Valley, you can be darn sure that we would demand an overwhelming military response.

In Israel, Hamas fires at communities, at schools, at daycare centers, all with the same goal: to invoke terror by injuring and killing as many innocent Israeli citizens as possible.

Fully 80 percent of the Israeli population is living under the constant threat of missile attacks, having to run into the shelters constantly at a moment's notice, in the middle of the night, at all times of the day with mere seconds of warning. No country on Earth would tolerate such a situation.

So that we are clear, Hamas consistently places and fires its rockets within heavily populated areas, including schools and hospitals. Hamas does this to use their own civilian population as human shields. This means that every time they fire a rocket, they are committing not one, but two, war crimes: targeting civilians in Israel while using human shields in Gaza.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said it very well in describing the juxtaposition of Hamas firing from civilian areas in the hope of drawing fire and the use by Israel of the Iron Dome missile defense system: ''We use missiles to protect our people. Hamas uses their civilians to protect their missiles.''

Mr. Speaker, I would be remiss if I did not emphasize how truly miraculous the Iron Dome missile and mortar defense system is. It is like hitting a bullet with a bullet.

I thank the Tennessee Valley's incomparable defense workers who, working hand-in-hand with very bright Israeli engineers and scientists, made hitting a bullet with a bullet possible. Untold Israeli citizens' lives have been saved as a result of the Tennessee Valley's technological contributions to Israel and the Iron Dome defense system.

Since the beginning of Operation Protective Edge, Israel has discovered more than 30 offensive Hamas terrorist tunnels dug from Gaza under the border and into Israel. These tunnels have 60 different access points, and the entrances have been found in houses and mosques.

The purpose of the tunnels is to allow armed Hamas terrorists to emerge in Israeli communities to murder and kidnap civilians—defenseless mothers, fathers, and children, it makes no difference to Hamas. Hamas kidnaps, tortures, and murders, and seemingly enjoys it.

Israel's only solution, the only path to peace in the face of those who kill in the name of religion, is Israel's disarming of Hamas and the demilitarization of Gaza.

Israel is the only democracy in the tumultuous and dangerous Middle East. Israel is unquestionably America's most reliable ally in the Middle East. The people of Israel are engaged in a fight to protect their home, a fight for survival, and America must stand with Israel without hesitation.

THE RIGHT TO VOTE IS A FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. SCHIFF) for 5 minutes.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, the right to vote is the most fundamental right in any democracy since it is the right from which all others meaningfully derive.

Deny someone the right to vote, and you may deny them the right to speak, to associate with whom they choose, or to freely exercise their faith. For if these other rights are infringed, how may we seek redress but at the ballot box?

Not even the courts can secure our rights in the absence of an effective franchise. Congress established the inferior courts, and Congress may abolish them. The right to vote alone is foundation to all of the others.

So it is deeply disturbing to see the right to vote being diminished in many States. These new State laws restrict voter registration drives, eliminate same-day voter registration, reduce the early voting period, and require photo identification and proof of citizenship to vote.

In total, 34 States have passed laws now requiring voters to show some kind of identification at the polls. For many Americans who already are registered to vote and can provide this documentation, these new requirements may not sound burdensome. But although these new laws apply to all Americans, they disproportionately impact young, elderly, minority, low-income, and disabled voters.

Eleven percent of American citizens do not have a photo ID; 7 percent do not have citizenship documents. That means a significant number of eligible voters have been disenfranchised by these new laws.

It has been argued that it is appropriate to put a significant burden on people who simply want to cast their vote because voter fraud is widespread, but it is not. It is true that in jurisdictions which allow people to pay a bounty for new voter registration cards that voter registration fraud exists. But voter registration fraud is not the same as voter fraud, since these false registrations do not result in nonexistent people voting.

The fraud artists should be prosecuted for violating the law and cluttering up the voter registration rolls, but legitimate voters should not be disenfranchised. Rather, we should crack down on the bounty system that incentivizes this kind of misconduct.

These new and stringent voter ID laws will not stop voter registration fraud, but they will prevent legitimate voters from casting their ballots. Indeed, in many places, this is their very intention. They are the worst form of voter suppression, not voter protection.

The backward movement on voting rights is not confined to the States. The Supreme Court has also made it more difficult to ensure adequate protection from disenfranchisement.

Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act required that nine States and many other counties and municipalities around the country with histories of voter discrimination obtain Federal preclearance before changing voter laws. However, the Supreme Court, in Shelby County v. Holder, ruled that the formula to determine which jurisdictions must get preclearance is out-of-date.

Immediately thereafter, Texas announced that a previously blocked voter identification law would go into effect and that redistricting maps would no longer need Federal approval, actions that could severely undermine minority voting rights in that State.

□ 1015

In January, the Voting Rights Amendment Act was introduced to restore and strengthen the protections of the VRA that were dismantled by the Supreme Court. This bill was introduced by Congressman JOHN CONYERS and Congressman JIM SENSENBRENNER, demonstrating the bipartisan support for restoring a crowning achievement of the civil rights movement. I am a strong supporter of the Voting Rights

Amendment Act, and I am encouraged that Members of both parties see the need for this legislation.

As a country, we have made incredible progress in expanding the right to vote to previously disenfranchised populations. Now is not the time to turn the clock back. We should, instead, be moving forward, ever forward, and encouraging legal, eligible voters to fully participate in their government, in democracy, and in voting—not working to exclude them.

Congress must commit to passing the Voting Rights Amendment Act and ensuring that the ballot boxes in our States, in our Nation, and in our democracy remain open to all.

CENTRAL ALABAMA VETERANS HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Alabama (Mrs. ROBY) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. ROBY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share with this Congress and with this Nation a story of mismanagement, malfeasance, negligence, and coverup at the Central Alabama Veterans Health Care System, or CAVHCS.

I know most of my colleagues can point to at least some problems at the VA systems in their State. But what has transpired in my hometown of Montgomery, Alabama, and central Alabama rises to a level of misconduct and mistrust I am not sure many other systems can match. And I do this not simply just to disparage the system for no reason. I do this to shine a light on some truly disturbing practices so we can finally clean up the mess. I do this so that the 50,000-plus veterans that depend on the Central Alabama VA can one day have confidence in the health care system we promised them.

After Phoenix, when the scheduling scheme began to unravel, it was revealed in early June that the Central Alabama VA had one of the worst wait times in the country. It was particularly bad for mental health patients.

I actually met with our local VA director, who acknowledged the discrepancies and tried to reassure me by leading me to believe that action had been taken to remove those responsible. It turns out that wasn't true. No one was fired. Mr. Speaker, if a Member of Congress can't get a straight answer from the VA, imagine what our veterans go through every single day.

In the wake of this clear breach of trust, we began digging deeper to find out what was really going on at the Central Alabama VA. The information that we received from sources who came forward was alarming. It is also consistent with reports gathered by independent inspectors and some great investigative reporters.

Here is what is being uncovered:

A Montgomery VA pulmonologist manipulated more than 1,200 patient records to show tests that never occurred. After being caught, the doctor was never fired or suspended. He actually was caught manipulating records again but somehow went on to receive a ''satisfactory'' performance review;

At least 900 unread patient X-ray tests, many showing malignancies, were lost over a 5-year period. When the tests were discovered recently, top hospital administrators tried to cover up the problem;

Email records show the Central Alabama VA director was alerted to the concerns over patient scheduling practices more than 8 months before taking action;

And finally, Mr. Speaker, perhaps the strongest evidence yet has emerged that the rampant scheduling manipulation at Central Alabama wasn't a misunderstanding at all but, rather, a facility-led standard operating procedure. More than 57 percent of staff surveyed at Central Alabama said they received ''instruction'' to manipulate patient wait times, 57 percent. Mr. Speaker, that is off the charts. The national average is 12.7 percent, and other systems near Montgomery aren't even close.

There is clearly a systematic problem in Montgomery, and it needs to be corrected. That is why I have joined with Senator RICHARD SHELBY to write the new Secretary of Veterans Administration, Robert McDonald, to call his attention to the Central Alabama VA. Specifically, Senator SHELBY and I are asking Secretary McDonald to review these instances of mismanagement, visit CAVHCS with us, and develop a plan of action to reform the Central Alabama system.

It is so important to remember that thousands of doctors, nurses, and public servants at the VA work very hard every day to give veteran patients the best health care that we can offer. Their service is honorable, and it is a shame that it is overshadowed now by a system that too often fails those it was created to help.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot allow the American people to forget about this. We cannot allow the news media to move on to the next story. I hear from veterans every day who are depending on us to make this right. This will be an uphill battle. I know that. But it is a fight we have to fight. We have to change this culture of complacency. That starts with new leadership, and I look forward to working with Secretary McDonald.

THE BORDER CRISIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, over the last couple of weeks, many of us have visited my home State and have gone to places where I have gone over the decades of service and living in Texas, and that is to our great neighbors who live on the border. Many great citizens of the State of Texas and of the great country in which we live, they have lived and worked and played, and they have created an economic engine, cities like Brownsville, Laredo, Harlingen, McAllen, and many others. And they have, in fact, experienced over the years an influx of individuals coming to do harm.

As a senior member of the Homeland Security Committee and a member who has served as chairwoman and ranking member on a number of subcommittees, we have made great strides.

I am reminded of the low number of Border Patrol agents some many years ago, and now we are upwards to 25,000 hardworking Americans who serve on both the northern and southern borders.

They have met the challenge of a serious influx. First, the drug cartels. The violence on the Mexican side of the border. We have come together with Mexican Presidents and have worked with the Mexican national defense forces, and we have quashed, to a certain extent, the extensive violence. But yet, our Federal agents of the ATF, the DEA, FBI, and certainly other collaborative efforts have worked to bring this violence down.

We take note of the fact that El Paso is noted as the safest city in the United States, and it is on the border. We note that a great deal of commerce comes through the southern border, as it does the northern border.

Over the last couple of weeks, beginning maybe in 2013, we saw a new phenomenon, an unplanned phenomenon, a phenomenon driven by the devastating and destructive elements found in Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Central America, none of which were driven by a pointed pronouncement from the United States or the President of the United States, President Barack Obama. But elements who wanted to misuse and abuse the need for comprehensive immigration reform decided to misrepresent the laws of the United States of America.

Every Member of Congress has adhered to a particular theme. I started using it in the 1990s. We are a Nation of laws and a Nation of immigrants. And the laws are intended to be used to instruct how we guide our hearts and our laws. We still have the Statue of Liberty in the harbor of New York that says, we welcome the forlorn and those who are in need.

Unfortunately, bad information was given to desperate people. Let me say that again, Mr. Speaker: desperate people. Desperate mothers and fathers who saw the beheading of young people, or people in their neighborhood threatened by MS–13 and other horrific gangs who say, if your child does not join, your child will be killed, or your little girl will be raped. Or maybe the 3-year-old that I saw down in Brownsville with a diaper on was given to someone just to save her life.

That is the misnomer and the abuse that has been going on in the debate

here. These are the real lives of children who fled with a more than credible fear of the loss of life. I am so disappointed sometimes in how we can reinvent truth, and that is that these children are fleeing because of what President Obama represented. That is not true. And it is important to tell the American people the truth.

They were fleeing because of the sheer unbelievable violence, insane violence, mixed in with the mistruths and misrepresentations of those who just wanted to make money and abuse the system. So now we have the surge, maybe 50,000 plus here in the United States. And we have to do something about it.

I listened to three young people yesterday. Most of us have not heard from the children because we were protecting the children's privacy. But these youngsters explained the arduous journey that they took and how they came here for nothing more than a better life, and that violence was all around them.

Yes, we need to work with Honduras and Guatemala and El Salvador. But we started out trying to do what was right. The President offered a supplemental. He knew it was right to have funding for the wilderness funding. He knew it was right to give the Border Patrol agents their appropriate moneys, and he knew it was right for enforcement to add more judges.

But what I would say is, what we have on the floor now, Mr. Speaker, is a pitiful example in H.R. 5230. This is a bad emergency supplemental. It is not even that. It is not worth voting for. America is better than this, and we need to do better than this with the supplemental to help these children and help America.

AFGHANISTAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, to begin my short statement today, I would like to read you a recent headline from The Washington Times: ''Golden Hammer: U.S. squandered $34 million on failed Afghan soybean project.'' The first few sentences of this report read: ''Call it the great American soybean heist, the latest tale of U.S. taxpayer abuse to emanate from Afghanistan. Despite clear evidence that Afghanistan's arid soil was a bad place to grow soybeans, the U.S. Department of Agriculture spent $34.4 million tying to establish the crop in that country, according to the Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction.''

Mr. Speaker, here we go again, talking about the waste, fraud, and abuse of American resources in Afghanistan.

Yesterday I spoke on the House floor in memory of three members of the United States Army who died as a result of their service in Afghanistan. The deaths of these three men represent my greatest concern with our servicemembers continuing to remain in Afghanistan: that more and more of our men and women in uniform will be killed and wounded.

The loss of life and limb is far more important than the money that is being wasted. However, Mr. Speaker, our country is in a dangerous financial situation.

In addition to the soybean report, I want to read three more headlines that accentuate the waste of our taxpayer money in Afghanistan. From CBS News: ''Is the Pentagon wasting taxpayer money in Afghanistan?'' From the Center for Public Integrity: ''The U.S. military was no match for Afghanistan's corruption.'' And from the World Affairs Journal: ''Money pit: The monstrous failure of U.S. aid to Afghanistan.''

Mr. Speaker, how much more can the poor American taxpayer continue to spend on a failed policy in Afghanistan? I cannot emphasize enough that we have children, senior citizens, and veterans here at home that desperately need our assistance, yet we run out of money for their programs because we refuse to make cuts to the funds that are being funneled overseas, and especially in Afghanistan.

I say to the administration and to Congress that it is time to fix America's problems, not Afghanistan's problems, and not the world's problems.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I want, again, to mention the three Army soldiers who were killed last week on July 25: Staff Sergeant Benjamin G. Prange, PFC Keith M. Williams, and PFC Donnell A. Hamilton, Jr.

□ 1030

Mr. Speaker, beside me, I have poster after poster of the cost of war. As a young kid named Tyler Jordan—this is actually from 2003, our early days in Iraq, a very unnecessary war—his father was a gunny sergeant named Phillip Jordan, and he was killed, and here is Tyler being given the flag that was folded after it was taken off his father's grave.

I don't know how many of these three names I just mentioned—I know one family, he had two little girls, maybe they got a folded flag—but it is time for Congress to wake up.

There is no need to have our young men and women overseas giving their life and limb and to see the money wasted overseas in fraud, waste, and abuse when we can use it right here to fix America's problems.

Please, God, continue to bless our men and women in uniform; and please, God, continue to bless America.

THE FUTILITY OF LITIGATING THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SPEIER) for 5 minutes.

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, with just 1 day before the recess and many pending issues before us, the majority has focused on one issue and one issue alone: suing the President of the United States for essentially doing what they seem incapable of.

The lawsuit focuses solely on a small part of the ACA, one that Republicans themselves wanted to roll back. I am going to list my objections to this monumental waste of time on this poster.

First is standing. The S is for standing because the Speaker is trying to sue the President, and he does not have standing. He must show that there is some concrete harm to him that goes beyond the general interest in seeing the law enforced.

In fact, he should listen to conservative legal minds like Justices Roberts, Scalia, and Rehnquist, all of whom have expressed skepticism about a court granting standing to the House to sue the President.

It is absurd to think that the House of Representatives, as an institution, has been harmed by President Obama's attempting in good faith to implement the ACA. I understand their feelings might be hurt, but acting out only gets them negative attention, and the Americans agree that this is a waste of time.

The next reason that I object is the taxpayer waste of money. The last time the Republicans sued the President, it was over the implementation of DOMA, which went nowhere and cost the taxpayers $2.3 million. Like this previous fruitless lawsuit, this will bounce around the courts for years, making rich lawyers rich. That is the only jobs program the Republicans will have passed in Congress this year.

The next reason I object to it is that it is useless. Just what are the Republicans trying to accomplish with this circus? It is certainly not governing. As of June 30, this Congress has only enacted 125 bills into law—the lowest number of any Congress in history since 1973, when they started keeping data.

Now, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle will say, well, it is all about the Senate, but in five previously divided Congresses before this one, the average number of bills enacted at the same time period was 254—almost twice as many.

The next reason I object to this lawsuit is P, political stunt aimed at appeasing the fringe elements in the Republican Party that want to impeach the President. The same people calling for this lawsuit shut down the government last fall because they wanted to delay the Affordable Care Act, and it cost us over $24 billion. Now, they are suing the President over the fact that he did something they wanted him to do in the first place.

The only other group of people I know who scream that they want something and then throw a tantrum when they get it are toddlers.

The next reason I object to this lawsuit is that it is inconsistent. It is inconsistent because when George Bush

was proposing the prescription drug benefit and we were trying to implement that, he asked to have it delayed for 1 year—and guess what? The Republicans didn't object then.

Then the final reason that I object to this lawsuit is because it is a distraction. The Republicans are trying to distract Americans from the fact they have ruled over a do-nothing Congress.

While we are frittering away our last few days in session in this pointless and childish exercise, we are not creating jobs, fixing immigration, renewing the Export-Import Bank, doing tax reform, or even completing a full appropriations process.

Words fail me in describing the petulance of the other side. This toddler is more adult than some of my colleagues. She has figured it out. I suppose I will have to let her express her feelings.

GENOCIDE IN IRAQ

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF) for 5 minutes.

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I want to share two pictures showing the tomb of the prophet Jonah in Mosul, Iraq. The first shows Jonah's tomb as it looked for centuries prior to last week. The second shows the site after it was destroyed by ISIS last week. Thousands of years of Biblical cultural history were erased in a matter of moments by Islamist terrorists.

This ancient site had once been the location of a church and then a mosque famous for its architectural beauty which stood there since the 14th century. The mosque of the prophet Yunus—built around Jonah's tomb—honored a figure who is sacred to Jews, Christians, and Muslims.

Jonah, who was sent by God to preach repentance to the people of Nineveh, is the subject of a book in the Hebrew Tanakh—the Old Testament—and multiple passages in the Koran.

While ISIS has targeted Christians for elimination in its destructive rampage through Syria and Iraq, this atrocity is an offense not just to Christians, but to all humanity. This is more than fundamentalism or extremism. It is nihilism. It is genocide. It is genocide of an entire people of faith in this region.

The world should be outraged at the crime against our shared cultural heritage, including the Islam that ISIS claims to represent. ISIS has destroyed millennia of history by detonating an explosive charge and turning this ancient site of pilgrimage to rubble.

However, it is not just Biblical sites and Christian churches that are targeted by ISIS extermination. It is exterminating the Christian people of this region. The Christian people of this region are being exterminated.

I want to share another picture. Do you see this spray-painted symbol on the wall to the right of the gate? That is the Arabic word ''nun'' which stands for nasara, a pejorative name for Christians. They are singling out Christians. ISIS has been marking the homes of Christians to symbolize their ultimatum: convert to Islam or die.

Similarly, ISIS has used the letter ''raa'' for rawafidh, a slur against Shiites that they also expelled from Mosul.

This is the sixth time in a week that I have appeared on this floor to call attention to the genocide that is taking place right before our eyes. The media is starting to pay more attention, but where is the Obama administration?

It has to make protecting this ancient community a priority. It needs to encourage the Kurds to do more of what they can to protect those fleeing ISIS and provide safe refuge. It needs to ensure that of the resources going to the region, that a portion should be guaranteed to help the Christian community. It needs to have the same courage as President Bush and former Secretary of State Colin Powell had when they called it genocide in Darfur because this is genocide.

For the sake of these communities and for the sake of the ancient, tangible heritage that is being destroyed daily by ISIS and Iraq, President Obama must speak.

President Reagan consistently made human rights and religious freedom a hallmark of American diplomacy. He famously described the U.S. Constitution as ''a covenant we have made not only with ourselves, but with all of mankind.'' He understood that the promises enshrined in that document transcended time and place.

There is no more urgent time and place to speak out than now, given what is happening to Christians and other religious minorities in Iraq. We are seeing, during this Congress where everyone here is serving and during this administration, we are seeing the end of Christianity in Iraq, and soon, we will see the end of Christianity in the Middle East, where it all began.

HOUSE DEMOCRATS' ECONOMIC AGENDA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. ESTY) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ESTY. Mr. Speaker, this past Saturday, I held my Congress on Your Corner at the Litchfield Public Library, and there, I had conversations with folks young and old, and we talked about what matters to them and to their families, and I heard about their concerns with the pressing issues facing our country right now.

How can Washington jump-start our economy again? When will we rebuild our aging bridges and roads? What is Congress doing about our broken immigration system?

Here we are, 2 days before the Speaker's August recess, and there is a vote to sue the President. Yes, that is right, we are wasting time and taxpayer money voting on politically-motivated attacks against the President, rather than this House taking action to help the American people.

Mr. Speaker, we should be debating a long-term, sustainable solution to fund the dwindling highway trust fund, fix our infrastructure, and create jobs. We should work together to fix our broken immigration system and to address the humanitarian crisis at the border, and we should vote to enact Make It In America legislation that supports good-paying jobs right here at home.

Mr. Speaker, moms in my district and across this country ask me every day: When will this House allow a vote on commonsense gun violence prevention? Coming from a State that is working to regain jobs that were lost during the recession, I believe that we should cancel this recess to extend emergency unemployment for jobseekers in my State of Connecticut and all across America.

No; instead, we are wasting time and taxpayer money on a frivolous lawsuit, rather than working together—working together—to stop corporate tax inversions or close tax loopholes for companies that are shipping our jobs overseas.

The folks I listened to in Litchfield last Saturday morning deserve better. The American people deserve better. It is time to put partisanship aside and to put middle class families first. We should cancel recess. We should stay here and work together on policies to jump-start our economy and get the job done for all of the people we represent.

THE ORDEAL OF FIRST LIEUTENANT NADIYA VIKTORIVNA SAVCHENKO OF THE UKRAINIAN ARMY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. GIBSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. GIBSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address a solemn and pressing issue that unfortunately has not received the attention that is warranted. This issue is the illegal capture, transport, ongoing detainment, and upcoming trial of First Lieutenant Nadiya Viktorivna Savchenko of the Ukrainian Army by pro-Russian Ukrainian separatists and, now, the Russian Government.

Lieutenant Savchenko, whose first name Nadiya means ''hope'' in Ukrainian, is a true patriot and hero. She was born in 1981 in what was then the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and grew up in that Soviet Union-aligned Republic.

At the early age of 16, 1 year younger than myself when I joined the United States military, Nadiya joined the Ukrainian Army as a radio operator and started an incredible and groundbreaking career in service to a free and independent Ukraine.

Now 33, she has not only been trained as an elite paratrooper, she also became the first female air force pilot in

the Ukrainian military. Her exemplary time in uniform includes service in Iraq between 2004 and 2008 as a member of Ukrainian peacekeeping troops, during which time she served alongside and earned the respect of U.S. personnel, including Special Operations Forces.

In fact, her tour in Iraq overlapped with part of my own time serving in that theater. I personally know the hardships and exemplary work done by our coalition forces during that difficult period, including Nadiya's Ukrainian contingent.

She has since become a national hero and icon, serving in the 3rd Army Aviation Regiment and being recognized by Ukrainian defense forces and the United Nations. Nadiya also became a leading national figure in the Euromaidan demonstrations, which led to the fall of President Viktor Yanukovych.

□ 1045

After Yanukovych, pro-Russian forces began stoking anger and violence across Ukraine's eastern provinces and the Crimean Peninsula. Lieutenant Savchenko then joined one of many volunteer, pro-government units that were organized to supplement deployed government forces. As the leader in the Aidar Battalion, she served alongside Ukrainian military personnel and civilians alike to quell the Russian-supplied, -trained, -supported, and -supplemented separatist forces.

On June 28, Nadiya was captured by the separatists. After several days of unknown whereabouts, she resurfaced in Russia in the custody of the Russian Government on charges of murdering two Russian journalists. Access to her by family and Ukrainian officials has been very limited, and calls for her release based on her illegal capture, transport, transfer, and detention have gone unanswered. This is unacceptable. As Americans, we must recognize those who have fought alongside us and those who have stood up for democracy and freedom across the globe. Furthermore, we cannot let international law and due process be violated by any entity or nation.

For these reasons, I call on the United States Government and the United Nations to take immediate action to seek release of First Lieutenant Nadiya Viktorivna Savchenko. If she, a citizen of the sovereign state of Ukraine and a war hero, is to face trial, she must be granted the full ability to do so in an open, transparent, and unbiased venue such as through the international court system or be granted the privilege of a full and proper investigation by her own country. Lieutenant Savchenko deserves due process of law. I further call on Russia to comply with its international obligations and immediately release Nadiya Savchenko to her family or appropriate authorities.

MEDICAID EXPANSION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, as a cochairman of the State Medicaid Expansion Caucus, I rise this morning to talk about how important expanding Medicaid is for my State and for every State in this great Nation.

It gives me great pride to be in the well of the House this morning speaking on the topic of expanding the Medicaid program today, the 49th anniversary of the date when the legislation creating the Medicaid antipoverty program was signed into law by President Lyndon Baines Johnson. More than 30 Members of Congress have joined the State Medicaid Expansion Caucus because we know that opening the way to health care for the poor is good, it is righteous, it is just, it is merciful. It is the right thing to do because, according to Matthew 25:40:

> Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.

And for those who have not a care about the poor, then you should know also that expanding Medicaid to more poor people will stimulate the economy by creating jobs in the burgeoning health care and other ancillary industries. More jobs mean more spending, which leads to more profits. For those of you who are only concerned about your bottom line, then you should also know:

> Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the Lord, and he will reward them for what they have done.—Proverbs 19:17.

The stimulation of economies is exactly what expanding Medicaid has accomplished in the 27 States that have expanded eligibility. It is exactly what will happen in every recalcitrant State when their political leaders finally come to their senses and choose to accept the Federal funds to expand their Medicaid systems, the funds having already been paid into the system by their own taxpayers.

So 27 States, a majority of the States of this great country, looked at the facts and made the choice to help their people be healthier and therefore lead more productive lives. Expanding Medicaid in those States provided health care coverage to approximately 10.5 million people who otherwise would not have had it, according to Families USA.

Despite the politics, this is a bipartisan issue, as we see when Republican Governors in Arizona and Ohio, for example, expanded Medicaid. As a result of their action, almost a million people will have access to affordable health care. States led by Republicans and Democrats that expanded Medicaid should be commended for their actions. In California, almost 3 million people have benefited by getting access to health care when their State expanded Medicaid. These are just some of the success stories.

The Federal Government will cover 100 percent of the costs of expanding Medicaid today, and 90 percent of the cost for the duration of the program in every State. Expanding Medicaid will bring billions of Federal tax dollars back into States that will help develop the health care infrastructure and improve the economy.

It will also help low-income Americans access health care. We must remember that the people who will benefit from expanding Medicaid are no less deserving of health care than anyone else.

In my home State of Georgia, expanding Medicaid would mean access to health care for 684,000 poor people, according to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. The Georgia Budget and Policy Institute estimates that expanding Medicaid will bring $65 billion in new economic activity to Georgia over 10 years, which will support more than 56,000 new jobs throughout the State. My Governor reacted to this news by signing a bill eliminating his own authority to expand Medicaid. I can't think of a time that a chief executive has willingly given away some of his authority.

We know why Governors and State legislators are choosing to deny access to health care for their people. It is politics, pure and simple.

I am here today to urge every State to expand Medicaid. I urge my colleagues and those watching at home to contact their Governor and their State legislator in support of expanding Medicaid.

CONGRESS LEAVES WITH WORK UNDONE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RIBBLE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. RIBBLE. Mr. Speaker, one of the things that I am concerned about and I think every American is concerned about is the reputation of the Congress of the United States in the eyes of the American people. We know what our approval ratings are, and we are well aware of it; but we often don't take a moment and pause and say what are the things that we could do to have the American people once again view this Chamber, the people's House, as a place of honor, as a place that is actually doing the people's business.

Here we are, 48 hours away from a recess. We are going to be going back and talking with the people in our districts. Each one of us represents around 700,000 American citizens. We are going to go home and we are going to spend some time talking with those citizens, and I think that is appropriate. However, I also think it is appropriate for us to get our work done, and I want to talk this morning, Mr. Speaker, about a key fundamental requirement of the law of this Congress, and that is to provide the Nation and the American people with a budget that is fiscally secure and to provide

for spending bills under the law so that the money that the taxpayers are sending to Washington, D.C., they are aware of how that money is being spent.

This is 2014, Mr. Speaker. Leaving for the entire month of August was a tradition, as I have read, brought to this Chamber because of the extreme heat of Washington, D.C., prior to air-conditioning. But here we are in 2014, the building is air-conditioned and the lights are on. It is a relatively comfortable place to work. We could stay here and actually finish up some of the work of the people.

For example, in 1974, four decades ago, the Congress of the United States passed a budget act and the President signed into law a budget act that required the Congress to actually pass a budget and to do its spending bills and complete them by September 30. In four decades, here we are on the 40th anniversary of that law. In four decades, it has not happened even one time when the Congress did its work and completed its spending bills within the amount of time allotted under the law. The American people are struck by that.

How can the Congress of the United States ignore the law? How can the Congress of the United States say we are going to find ourselves in agreement, Democrats and Republicans, House and Senate and the President, and we are going to agree to do these things? Well, quite frankly, the law had one weakness: it had no enforcement trigger in it.

A few years ago, a good friend of mine, a gentleman from across the aisle, Congressman JIM COOPER from Nashville, Tennessee, wrote a piece of legislation called No Budget, No Pay. A couple of years ago, we finally signed that bill into law—a part of it into law—and for the first time since I have been in Congress, the Senate of the United States actually passed a budget because they found out that if they didn't, there would be an enforcement trigger that happened.

I have recently written a bill called the Do Your Job Act, which would require the Congress to do all 12 of the spending bills prior to the end of the year or they can't recess for more than 24 hours. They have to stay here and do their job so the American people can see firsthand what our priorities are.

I came to Congress in 2011, and in the 4 years I have been here, we have been required by law to pass 48 spending bills. The U.S. Senate, in those 4 years' time, has passed two. The House has done quite a bit better. They have passed 24. But they are required to pass 48. This year, the Senate has passed zero. They have done none. The House of Representatives has passed seven, and has referred another four out of committee that are ready to go. We ought to stay here and pass those bills and send them to the Senate.

Mr. Speaker, this is the people's House. We ought to be here doing the people's business for the good of the American people. We should stay here and do our job.

HEALTH EQUITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my colleagues in the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, the Congressional Black Caucus, and the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, I rise to introduce the Health Equity and Accountability Act of 2014.

The Congressional Tri-Caucus, over the past 10 years, has been tireless in its effort to educate Congress and the country about the disproportionate burden of premature deaths and preventable illnesses existing in our minority communities. Towards that end, the Tri-Caucus developed a national strategy for the elimination of racial and ethnic health disparities. The keystone of this strategy is the Tri-Caucus Health Equity and Accountability Act, first introduced in 2003 and every Congress since.

HEAA, in many ways, is unique. First, the bill and its introduction rotates each Congress among the three caucuses. This year, as chair of the CHC Health Task Force, I have the distinct honor of carrying on the tradition by introducing the bill for the 113th Congress.

Second, and most importantly, HEAA outlines the collective institutional knowledge of a diverse group of policymakers, health professionals, and advocacy organizations from throughout the country on what policies are needed to halt, reduce, and eliminate health disparities.

At the beginning of each new Congress, the HEAA working group convenes and several hundred minority and health advocacy organizations meet on a regular basis to discuss the bill and update it based on new research and recommendations to meet the ever-changing needs of our Nation's most vulnerable populations.

Also, just as the bill introduction rotates each Congress between Member offices, the leadership of the HEAA working group rotates among advocacy organizations. In the 113th Congress, this effort was spearheaded by the National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health, whose members I commend for their deep commitment to social justice and for their tireless work on this bill, which included coordinating the input of over 350 health and minority advocacy groups.

The HEAA is a principled living road map that can be used by policymakers and providers alike. For example, the Affordable Care Act contains many groundbreaking policies first introduced in HEAA, including expansion of Medicaid eligibility, increased resources for community health centers, and institutionalizing Federal efforts to achieve health equity.

Nevertheless, while the ACA has made a significant impact on access to quality health care, many inequities and obstacles remain that prevent the elimination of health disparities in our country. That is why the HEAA of 2014 provides Federal resources and advanced policies to improve health outcomes in all populations regardless of race, ethnicity, immigration status, age, ability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or English proficiency.

□ 1100

The HEAA is made up of ten titles proposing a wide spectrum of health initiatives that address disparities and mental health and specific high impact minority diseases.

The bill also provides guidelines for improving the health outcomes for women, children, and families, and targets resources to communities striving to overcome negative social factors.

Finally, the bill includes recommendations to enhance data collection, technology, accountability, and evaluation; increase workforce diversity; and ensure access to culturally and linguistically appropriate care.

Mr. Speaker, the members of the Tri-Caucus and members of the HEAA working group believe no one's health or life expectancy should be determined by the color of their skin or the Zip Code in which they are born.

The Health Equity and Accountability Act of 2014 is a consensus blueprint of the most comprehensive and strategic plans to eliminate health disparities in our country.

I urge my colleagues to support the Health Equity and Accountability Act of 2014.

RISE OF ISLAMIC FASCISM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, we are watching the rise of Islamic fascism on a scale unprecedented in modern times. It may be wrapped in different symbols and trace genealogy through a different line, but at its core, it is fascism. Listen to its virulent anti-Semitism, the explicit promise of genocide against Israel, the utter rejection—indeed, disdain—for fundamental principles of democracy and human rights and justice. There can be no doubt what is happening.

European fascism might have consumed all of Europe except for one gritty holdout: for more than a year Great Britain stood in the breach. Had it fallen, the consequences would have been unthinkable.

Today, one gritty holdout stands against the rise of Islamic fascism in the Middle East. Israel is the only island of democracy and civilization left in that region, and it is standing alone and in the breach.

The current conflict between Israel and Hamas offers a clear distinction between good and evil.

Israel took control of the Gaza Strip as a result of the Six-Day War in 1967. It granted self-governance to the region in 1994, and in 2005, unilaterally withdrew its forces.

The resulting Hamas government has since militarized Gaza and used it as a launching site for continuing and escalating attacks against the civilian Israeli population, with the avowed objective of wiping Israel off the map.

The Arab Spring welcomed by the Obama administration brought the Muslim Brotherhood to power in Egypt. During its brief tenure, it opened a road for the mass importation of weapons to Hamas. These weapons, and others smuggled in by sea, were strategically placed in schools and hospitals and fired upon Israeli cities without provocation.

As Churchill once said of Britain: Israel did everything it could to secure peace. Perhaps it did too much.

The result was thousands of rocket attacks and many terrorist incursions by Hamas aimed solely at the civilian population. Israel finally did what any civilization must do under such circumstances: it finally fought back.

Hamas has deliberately staged its attacks from hospitals, schools, and mosques, using children as human shields, leaving the Israelis the Hobson's choice of enduring the killing of their own population or taking out the instruments of destruction that are deliberately sited in schools and hospitals. They have chosen to defend themselves.

There is absolutely no doubt of Hamas' objectives and that of its allies: they have been crystal clear and unwavering on their intention to destroy Israel and kill every Israeli. They seek to eradicate the Jewish homeland, whose history in the region stretches back more than 3,000 years.

Their allies have been intent on annihilating every Christian and Jew in the Middle East, and they are well on their way toward achieving this goal. It would be the height of naivete to believe that it will stop. Yet, this administration, and many on the Left, seem to view the two sides as moral equivalents. Many on the Left even portray Israel as the aggressor.

Israel has made the decision to by force demilitarize Gaza for its own survival. It is now making serious progress and degrading Hamas' ability to make war. That is the only true path to peace.

Yet, the Obama administration is now working to halt Israel's progress and allow Hamas the time to resupply and regroup and resume its attacks. This serves only the objectives of Hamas and is a prescription for prolonged war and bloodshed.

Hamas has broken every cease-fire it has agreed to, and Israel has abided by every cease-fire, often holding return fire for hours after Hamas has broken these accords. There is no reason to believe that Hamas will abide by future cease-fires the moment it has recovered its war-making capabilities.

Why would this administration interfere in this manner, the effect of which is to take sides against the only pro-Western regime left in the Middle East?

Today, all that stands between a peaceful and free world and a fanatical fascist caliphate stretching from the Bosphorus to North Africa is the state of Israel and the influence of the Western democracies, particularly that of the United States.

In 1929, Churchill warned of Britain's irresolution in the Middle East. He said: ''Any appearance of lack of willpower on the part of the British government or of lack of confidence in its mission in these countries blows like a draught of air on the dull, fierce embers.''

Mr. Speaker, at this perilous hour, let us not repeat the mistakes of history.

ADDRESS OUR TRANSPORTATION NEEDS NOW

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, yesterday afternoon, I stood at the back of the Senate Chamber and watched a critical debate. Under the leadership of Chairman RON WYDEN of the Senate Finance Committee, his partner, Ranking Member HATCH; Chairwoman BARBARA BOXER from California, CHRIS MURPHY from Connecticut, BOB CORKER from Tennessee, and Senator TOM CARPER from Delaware held forth on critical legislation to be able to help America deal with our infrastructure crisis.

America—it is no secret—is falling apart and is falling behind. It is well overdue for us to have a robust, important 6-year reauthorization to deal with our transportation needs.

We can't do that unless we resolve the funding conundrum. We have been limping along. We can't even get through the current 27-month extension without a summer slowdown, cutting back on critical Federal funding for contracts around the country.

What the Senate did was tackle this issue head on. They had a funding proposal that was fairly debated, where they were able to provide enough funding to get us through the end of the year, but not so much that it allows this Congress off the hook to slide into the next Congress, and probably the Congress after that, but instead, face up to our responsibilities now.

Mr. Speaker, the presentation of Senator CORKER from Tennessee urging us to be grownups and move forward, and Senator BOXER talking about the critical needs and not to be waylaid by this fantasy that somehow the Federal Government should abandon its commitment to a National Transportation Highway System that we initiated under President Eisenhower, that somehow that is a thing of the past, turn our back on it, slash transportation funding, and just kind of wait and see what happens around the country—she was eloquent and forceful. Again, we have watched Senator MURPHY and Senator CARPER be focused on that which we need to do.

Mr. Speaker, we need to address and embrace the bipartisan Senate vote yesterday: 79 bipartisan votes to be able to do our job, avoid the summer shutdown, and do so in a way with a funding approach that is much more sustainable and reasonable, not the so-called pension smoothing that is ill-advised on so many levels.

Two weeks ago, Democrats in the House of Representatives were united: 99 percent supported what is, essentially, the Senate outcome. That didn't prevail on the floor of the House in a motion to recommit that I offered. But Democrats didn't pick up our marbles and quit. We actually provided the votes necessary to keep the issue alive and send the suboptimal Republican approach across to the other body. There weren't enough Republican votes to pass it, but we kept it alive hoping that we could see what happens on the Senate side, that we might have a stronger more reasonable proposal.

That optimism and cooperation on the part of the Democrats in the House was rewarded because we have this bipartisan proposal, which is, in fact, better, supported by 79 Senators.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for the House to be able to address this bipartisan approach from the Senate. Allow us to vote on it. It ought to be the first step in our being able to avoid the summer shutdown and be able to get on with the 6-year bill.

Rarely have we seen the stakeholders so united. The American Trucking Association, the road builders, the U.S. Chamber, building and construction trades, the bicyclists, and the engineers. We watch across the country the people who build, who maintain, and depend on our infrastructure united, supportive of the approach that has emerged from the United States Senate. Even as we speak, they are contacting congressional offices, urging Members support the bipartisan Senate approach.

I respectfully urge the Republican leadership to allow those voices to be heard, to heed the stakeholders, heed the American people, give them a bill worthy of voting on. It will pass overwhelmingly, and we will be doing our job.

SPURRING TEACHER EDUCATION MOVEMENT FOR STEM ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. PEARCE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Speaker, every country must deal with and answer the

question: What does it take to be prosperous and to have prosperity for future generations?

There are many answers to that question, but one of the keys is science, technology, engineering, and math—the STEM fields—in our educational system.

The United States needs to be able to compete in these fields on a global scale, and children of all schools should have the opportunity to develop these skills no matter where they live.

Recently, teachers in the Second District of New Mexico brought up the question: What about us? Can we use funds that are set over here in the Education Department to develop better skills in the STEM areas?

Those questions were not answered in a completely positive way—that maybe it was not possible. Therefore, the teachers put forward an idea that maybe we should just get the flexibility in, a practical suggestion for an important concept.

Teachers and educators in the Second District provided firsthand experience and developed the idea into a concept. Several teachers formed an ad hoc working group. Brian Claar from White Sands Schools, Lindsey Guerrero and Marci Hearn from Gadsden Independent School District, Marci Behrens from Las Cruces Public School District, as well as Susan Brown, Nicole Delgado, and Christina Abeyta from the New Mexico State University STEM Outreach Center, all came together and developed that concept into a proposed legislation.

Working with my staff, they actually got the bill written, and on June 25 of this year, I introduced H.R. 4973, titled: Spurring Teacher Education Movement for STEM Act, also known as the STEM for STEM Act.

H.R. 4973 increases flexibility for teacher development funds under the Rural and Low Income title of the Elementary and Secondary School Act of 1965. It allows the funds to be used for teacher development in teaching STEM.

The STEM for STEM Act also expresses the need for the U.S. to compete on a global scale. A teacher should have the high-quality professional development opportunities in STEM to increase their content knowledge and improve student learning.

Professional development is essential for providing teachers and educators with growth opportunities that then are presented to our children.

□ 1115

Teacher professional development enriches the learning environment for students and educators alike. It is important for us to say thank you to those teachers who make it possible for America to compete into the next generation.

Hopefully, this bill, H.R. 4973, will provide a small element of help for the rural areas that stretch across the Western part of this country.

HUMANITARIAN CRISIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. COSTA) for 5 minutes.

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak on the importance of comprehensive immigration reform and the growing humanitarian crisis we are facing at our southern border.

It is the job of the Congress to face and resolve challenging issues like our broken immigration system. We ought to pass the bipartisan Senate bill that would provide commonsense solutions to address not only reforming our immigration system, but to deal with this immediate humanitarian crisis at our border.

Instead, the Republican House leadership refuses to allow a vote on comprehensive reform and has come up, instead, with a plan that would change the law passed in 2008 to combat human trafficking. In addition, this partisan bill will provide limited funding for this fiscal year.

Again, House leadership plans to pass a short-term fix, so that they can go back to their districts next month and say: well, we tried to fix this crisis that we are facing.

This is not how we should be solving our Nation's problems. Each day that our immigration system remains broken, jobs are lost, and our economy suffers. It is time to set politics aside and focus on fixing our current immigration system. In fact, failure to address reform is making it more difficult to deal with the thousands of unaccompanied children arriving at our southern border in hopes of finding safety.

The humanitarian crisis that we are facing is in part a result of the increasing turmoil in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras, where drug trafficking, human trafficking, and violence is rampant. Families have been tortured and killed, and today, there are people who are literally running for their lives.

Atrocities are being committed in those countries, and they must bear the responsibility of addressing and resolving their issues. Mexico also has a role to play.

We in the United States must now face the humanitarian crisis this violence is causing at our southern border. In a joint statement, President Obama, along with Presidents from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras, pledged to reduce criminal activity in Central American countries by promoting greater social and economic opportunity.

It is my hope that these leaders stay true to their word and demonstrate leadership by addressing the humanitarian crisis taking place within their own countries.

These young unaccompanied children must be treated in a humane and dignified way. Ultimately, these children's fate rests in the hands of our immigration judges, and those children who are not granted asylum must return to their countries. Playing politics with this grave crisis, as some are doing, is not productive.

It is the height of hypocrisy that Republicans want more border security, but have refused to allow a vote on a comprehensive immigration reform bill that would in fact provide more funding to secure our borders. That makes no sense. We have spent billions of dollars on border security, but clearly, our border is not yet secure.

The comprehensive immigration reform bill passed by the Senate in a bipartisan fashion requires that a long-term plan be developed and executed with an initial $8.3 billion in funding to focus on securing the borders today and an additional $6.5 billion in funding to be spent over the next 6 years to in fact secure our border.

What we need now, more than ever, is an open and honest discussion on the House floor about the relationship between immigration reform and this humanitarian crisis. Therefore, I urge my Republican colleagues to join together, in a bipartisan fashion, like they did in the Senate, to find an effective and humane short- and long-term solution to this crisis, which is directly related, in my opinion, to fixing our broken immigration system.

ABLE ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. CRENSHAW) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CRENSHAW. Mr. Speaker, this morning, I want to bring attention to proposed legislation known as the ABLE Act, or Achieving a Better Life Experience. It is something that is important to me and to a lot of Members of the House.

I first filed this legislation 7 years ago. Since then, we have come a long way. Today, 377 Members of the House and 74 United States Senators are cosponsors of this legislation. There is no piece of legislation in the Congress today that enjoys more bipartisan, bicameral support than the ABLE Act. Tomorrow, the Ways and Means Committee in the House will take up this legislation, and I hope that they will pass it with a favorable vote.

Just what is the ABLE Act? It is a piece of legislation that attempts to help those individuals with disabilities achieve their full potential. How does it do that? Well, it allows individuals with disabilities to set up a tax-free savings account. They take that account, it grows tax free, and they can use the proceeds, as long as they meet qualified expenses.

Those individuals face challenges that you and I can sometimes hardly imagine. They might be medical, transportation, education, or housing needs. We already allow other individuals to use tax-exempt savings accounts to help them.

If you want to save for retirement, you can set up a tax-free savings account called a 401(k). If you want to set

up a tax-free savings account to help you go to college, you can do that through what is called a 529. If you want to help with your health care, you can set up a health savings account. It seems only fair that we level the playing field and allow those individuals the same opportunity.

Let me introduce you to someone by the name of Sydney Leach. She lives in Jacksonville, Florida. Today, she is a fifth-grader at Crown Point Elementary School. She has Down syndrome. When she was born, her proud mom and dad, Stacy and Jeff Leach, made a commitment to make sure that she would not only have a happy life, but that she would be able to realize her hopes and her dreams and her full potential.

Soon they realized that when you raise a child with Down syndrome, you face challenges that a lot of people can't imagine. Unlike her classmates, she had to have special behavioral counseling. She had to have special medical care. She needed individual counseling. So it was difficult.

Her parents then found out that if you have Medicaid, you are limited to $2,000 for the amount of assets that you can have in your name. If her parents or loved ones wanted to give her a gift, they jeopardized the care that she needed.

So the ABLE Act seeks to correct those inequities. It says that you can, number one, set up a tax-free savings account and let those proceeds grow. Number two, it won't count against your $2,000 limitation on assets.

This is America, home of the American Dream. Individuals with disabilities ought to be able to live the American Dream, just like you and I. They ought to be able to have an education and work on their own, if they can. They ought to be able to save for the future. The ABLE Act allows them to do just that.

We live in a great, prosperous country. Sometimes, we are called upon to speak out for the people that can't speak out, to stand up and seek justice for those that can't seek justice on their own.

The ABLE Act will have a positive impact on millions of people with disabilities all across this land. That is worth fighting for. I hope soon the ABLE Act will become the law of the land.

HEALTH EQUITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM) for 5 minutes.

Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, last September, I was honored to welcome the Tri-Caucus Health Disparities Summit to my home State of New Mexico. The Center for Health Policy at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque brought experts from all over the country together to talk about what they are seeing as providers, researchers, and patients; and we heard that communities of color continue to face substantial cultural, social, and economic barriers to obtaining quality health care and achieving equitable health outcomes.

Several of my colleagues in fact joined me at that summit, and we all pledged not to just acknowledge these disparities, but to act to provide the tools and resources necessary to achieve health equity. That is what the Health Equity and Accountability Act does.

It is a comprehensive bill, developed with significant stakeholder input, that would build on the gains of the Affordable Care Act and put in place the policies and the infrastructure needed to eliminate health disparities.

The bill sets national standards for culturally and linguistically appropriate care and includes programs to address diseases that disproportionately impact minority communities. It also provides grants and scholarships to build diversity in the health care workforce and extends funding to strengthen the health IT infrastructure in minority communities.

These provisions are just part of a larger strategic approach because problems like this really are more systemic. We can't just add some funding here or make a policy change there and walk away. This takes thoughtful, comprehensive policy to make a substantial long-lasting difference on issues like this.

I would like to commend my colleague, Congresswoman LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD from California, for her leadership on this bill. It is not easy to put together a bill of this size in consultation with dozens of Members' offices and more than 300 stakeholder groups, but she managed to do just that, and I thank her for putting together one of the best versions of this bill I think Congress has had before it.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

CHAPLAIN JENNIFER NIELSON

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. RODNEY DAVIS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and work of Chaplain Jennifer Nielson of the 108th Sustainment Brigade. I believe it is important that we recognize and value the work performed by our country's military chaplains.

Following an initial deployment as an enlisted soldier, Jennifer Nielson became a chaplain while waiting to fulfill a second deployment in Kuwait. As a resident of the capital city of Springfield, Illinois—which I am proud to represent—Jennifer has served as a Wounded Warrior chaplain, providing support for our Nation's veterans, and has organized yellow ribbon events welcoming home our returning veterans.

Currently, Chaplain Nielson is working with the National Guard's Family Program Division, providing support and counsel in Illinois. Because of her unyielding support and compassion, I am proud to recognize her service today.

As we take time this week to recognize the chaplains who have bravely provided spiritual guidance to their fellow servicemen and -women throughout history, it is important that we also acknowledge those who carry on their traditions and thank them for their service.

Chaplain Nielson has faithfully served her country for the Illinois Army National Guard, and I am proud to honor her and the rest of the dedicated chaplains supporting our troops across the globe.

HONORING TEACHER CYNTHIA DIPERT

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I would be remiss today if I weren't able to honor a former teacher of mine who made an impact in my life that she may never have known.

When I was 7 years old, my family moved from Des Moines, Iowa, to Taylorville, Illinois, and almost a week later, I was sitting in a brand-new classroom as a second-grader at South Elementary School in my hometown of Taylorville, Illinois.

A young graduate student teacher who was doing some work in that classroom came up to a very shy boy who was determined not to talk to anybody in class that day. That was me. When she knelt down beside my desk, all the heads of my classmates around me turned and welcomed me as one of the new kids in that second grade class.

□ 1130

That confidence that Mrs. Cynthia Dipert gave me that day was confidence that built up throughout my elementary school career, junior high, and high school. Frankly, maybe that instance—maybe that gesture of compassion that Cynthia gave me that day—helped lead me here to this great institution we call the House of Representatives.

Now, Mrs. Dipert went on to teach my daughter. I always enjoyed going to parent-teacher conferences when my daughter was in Cynthia's class. Then we saddled her with my twin boys in the exact same class, and I thought I would enjoy going to parent-teacher conferences then, too. However, I walked in one day, along with my wife, and we asked Cynthia, Why is a bloody hand hanging from the ceiling? It was fake, of course. She said, Oh. Your son sits there, and I am reminding him that he needs to raise his hand before he talks.

I think, Mr. Speaker, we might need to have props like that here in the House of Representatives sometimes.

It is hard for me today to stand here and think about those fun times I had and the impact that Cynthia Dipert had on so many kids—my own, me, and those of so many people in my hometown of Taylorville—as she is not going

to be able to have that impact any longer because, just under 2 weeks ago, Cynthia passed away.

I stand here on the floor of this great institution to tell her thank you and to tell her thank you for the service that she has provided so many people in central Illinois.

Rest in peace, Cynthia Dipert.

God bless you all.

THE CANCER OF ANTI-SEMITISM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. JEFFRIES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Junior, once insightfully and eloquently observed that injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.

In the wake of the current conflict between Israel and Hamas, there has been a disturbing outbreak of the cancer of anti-Semitism in many parts of the world.

In France, there have been firebombs directed at synagogues, a radio station, and a library, amongst other incidents that have taken place in a country which is home to the third-largest Jewish community in the world.

In Germany, there has been hate speech permeating rally after rally all throughout the country, including at one where the chant was: ''Hamas. Hamas. Jews to the gas.'' This is disturbing language in any location, but it is particularly disturbing given the context of what we know occurred in Germany.

In England, there has been an epidemic of violent crime directed at the Jewish community, an exponential increase rivaled in recent times only by a similar outbreak of hate crime that took place in 2009 during the last conflict in that region.

Now, in a civil society, reasonable people should be able to disagree without being disagreeable, but anti-Semitism is not a legitimate form of criticism. It is a cancer that needs to be stamped out in the same way that racism and sexism and homophobia—whenever and wherever it might be found—need to be crushed to the ground.

I urge this Congress to speak out to condemn and to do everything possible to eradicate this outbreak. As Dr. King observed, injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois) laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, July 30, 2014.

Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,
The Speaker, U.S. Capitol, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on July 30, 2014 at 8:56 a.m.:

That the Senate passed with an amendment, H.R. 5021.

That the Senate agreed to without amendment, H. Con. Res. 108.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, July 30, 2014.

Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,
The Speaker, U.S. Capitol, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on July 30, 2014 at 9:31 a.m.:

That the Senate passed without amendment, H.R. 4028.

That the Senate agreed to without amendment, H. Con. Res. 106.

That the Senate agreed to without amendment, H. Con. Res. 103.

That the Senate passed, S. 2577.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 35 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

Reverend Dr. Alphonso Jackson, Second Baptist Church of Richmond Heights, Miami, Florida, offered the following prayer:

Hast thou not known? Has thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the Earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? There is no searching of His understanding. He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might, He increases their strength. Even the youth shall faint and be weary. The young men shall utterly fall. But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings as eagles. They shall run and not be weary. They shall walk and not faint.

Dear Heavenly Father, I thank Thee for this day.

I thank You for the privilege to stand in this hallowed place and invoke Thy presence. I pray now that You would bless these men and women that serve in the House of Representatives. Please grant them with a double portion of wisdom and understanding as they seek Your will in the affairs of this great Nation.

I pray that they accomplish what Moses instructed the leaders to do in Deuteronomy 1:16: ''Hear the disputes between the people, and judge them fairly.'' I ask these blessings in the name of my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. BONAMICI) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. BONAMICI led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

WELCOMING REVEREND DR. ALPHONSO JACKSON

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GARCIA) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. GARCIA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize today guest chaplain, Reverend Alphonso Jackson, Sr., of the Second Baptist Church of Richmond Heights in my district. I hope you will all join me in thanking him for honoring us with today's opening prayer.

For over 30 years, Reverend Jackson has dedicated himself to serving God, his family, and our community in Richmond Heights, a community created for African American World War II veterans so that they could use the GI bill.

Founded 50 years ago by Reverend Ferguson, the Second Baptist Church of Richmond Heights has grown to more than 4,000 members and continues to flourish under his leadership.

Reverend Jackson also helps strengthen his community outside his church by serving as moderator for the Seaboard Baptist Missionary Association of Florida, second vice president to the Florida Baptist State Convention, and president of the Richmond Heights Community Alliance.

We can all look to his words today for guidance as we work to resolve our

country's most pressing issues, and I invite you to join me in honoring the words of his prayer.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. YODER). The Chair will entertain up to 15 further requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

EBOLA

(Mr. PITTENGER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTENGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Nancy Writebol, a dedicated Christian missionary from Charlotte who chose to run toward danger.

Ms. Writebol and her husband, David, serve as missionaries with SIM at a hospital in Monrovia, Liberia. They turned down the opportunity to evacuate when Ebola struck Liberia. Instead, Nancy volunteered to help sanitize the medical personnel and their equipment as they worked in the Ebola isolation ward.

This week, Nancy learned that she, too, has contracted Ebola. Like the people she volunteered to help, Nancy is now in isolation. Although stable, she is battling an illness that kills 60 percent of the victims. Nancy and David could have chosen the easy route. Instead, they chose a higher calling of sacrificial love and service.

Please join me in praying for Nancy's complete recovery and giving thanks for the Writebols, Samaritan's Purse, and the SIM mission agency for working tirelessly to help Ebola victims and others in need in Liberia.

DEMOCRATS' MIDDLE CLASS AGENDA

(Ms. BONAMICI asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, the economy is rebounding, but many of our constituents are still feeling the effects of the recession. Millions of people are still unemployed after losing jobs that never came back during the recovery.

The recently passed Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act is a step that will help prepare Americans for in-demand jobs based on the needs of local businesses, resulting in a more skilled workforce and greater business productivity. But our failure to fully embrace and address this challenge is unacceptable. So today I rise to highlight the importance of investing in the true engine of our economy, the American worker.

We have a great opportunity to build the middle class with a jump-start agenda that focuses on American workers. This agenda incentivizes U.S. job creation, increases infrastructure investments, and raises the minimum wage, all of which will help workers find quality, stable employment. We still have a lot of work to do to rebuild our economy, but investing in American workers is the right path forward.

TONY GELDENS: DUTCH RESISTANCE FIGHTER, AMERICAN PATRIOT

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Tony Geldens was a Dutch boy when on May 10, 1940, the Nazis invaded and occupied the Netherlands. Persecution of the Jews began immediately by the occupiers. Jews were required to wear yellow Stars of David on their clothing. Jews were shot, beaten, and sent to concentration camps.

Tony and a few of his Boy Scout friends joined the Dutch resistance. Tony began a 4-year career of being the Robin Hood of the Netherlands. He would steal supplies and food from the Nazis and give them to local Jews and citizens, much to the risk of his own safety. He hid Jews and helped rescue American and Allied pilots that had been shot down over the Netherlands. He would help the pilots through the Dutch underground and help get them safely to England.

Tony was arrested, beaten, and imprisoned numerous times by the Nazis, only to escape. He was on trial by the Nazis when the Canadians liberated his hometown. Numerous Jews and Allied pilots lived because of Tony Geldens.

Tony moved to America in 1967, married Anna, had five kids, and finally became a U.S. citizen in 2000. He wore the American flag lapel pin every day of his life.

He was an architect and political and community activist. My very good and personal friend Tony Geldens died yesterday in Kingwood, Texas, at the age of 90. Tony will be missed deeply. He was quite an individual.

And that is just the way it is.

REPUBLICAN LAWSUIT AGAINST THE PRESIDENT

(Mr. PAYNE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, with just 2 days left until the Congress leaves for a 5-week recess, I rise today to urge my colleagues to take the little time we have left to address the issues that are most important to the American people.

As we speak, Republicans in Congress are wasting taxpayer money and time on a lawsuit against the President. Over what? Because they disagree with his political ideology. From the very day he was elected, the Republicans have been determined to delegitimize this President, even at the cost of their constituents not receiving their unemployment insurance extension and other things. What is it, Mr. Speaker, about this President that will have our colleagues on the other side of the aisle resort to anything to delegitimize him?

He is the President of the United States, elected by the majority of the people in this Nation. And I say that he should be respected, as every other President in this great Nation has been.

STOP DISABILITY FRAUD ACT OF 2014

(Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, every worker in America pays a portion of their hard-earned wages into the Social Security Disability Insurance program for promised benefits if he or she becomes too disabled to work.

While providing a vital safety net, the disability program is plagued by major fraud. This fraud reveals significant weaknesses in the program that put at risk not only billions of taxpayer dollars but also the benefits on which millions of disabled Americans rely.

At a time when the program revenues will cover only 81 percent of benefits in 2016, not one dime should be lost to fraud, waste, or abuse. That is why as chairman of the Social Security Subcommittee, I am introducing the Stop Disability Fraud Act which makes fair, commonsense changes to combat fraud and better protect taxpayers and beneficiaries. Americans want, need, and deserve no less. I urge my colleagues to support this effort.

DO YOUR JOB

(Mr. DEUTCH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, thanks to the GOP majority, our immigration system is still broken, offshore tax loopholes are still open, criminals can still buy guns on the Internet, and corporations can still pay workers poverty wages.

When you have no record to run on, when you have destroyed what little faith Americans have left for this institution, what do you do? You sue the President for doing his job, when the problem is that you refuse to do your own.

Mr. Speaker, the GOP is guilty of recklessly abandoning 3.5 million job seekers who need unemployment insurance to feed their families, guilty of putting gun industry interests ahead of public safety, and guilty of willfully neglecting the priorities of the American people.

Mr. Speaker, in the condominiums of south Florida, my constituents sometimes turn to Yiddish to find the perfect word. They have a message for the GOP majority: Stop this mishegas—craziness—and do your jobs.

EXECUTIVE OVERREACH

(Mr. LAMBORN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, article I of the Constitution vests the power to make laws in the United States Congress. The President is given the responsibility to faithfully execute the laws passed by the Congress. President Obama has failed to understand this vital distinction. The President is not able to unilaterally bend the law to his own goals and desires.

Take, for example, the latest news reports indicating that he plans to expand amnesty and extend work permits and visas for millions of illegal aliens, all by using executive orders. These are not lawful actions. These are the power-hungry actions of a President who refuses to work with Congress.

By suing President Obama for failing to faithfully execute the laws of the land, we are saying, stop. The people's representatives will not turn a blind eye to the lawlessness of this President. We will do whatever it takes to hold him and future occupants of the Oval Office accountable. We must make it clear that the U.S. Congress is a coequal branch of government and one that represents we, the people.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from improper references to the President.

THE BUFFALO BILLS

(Mr. HIGGINS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, in my western New York community, there is no shortage of pride for our NFL Buffalo Bills. Taxpayers are currently investing millions into the existing stadium, and the community is engaged in discussions about future ownership and potential construction of a new stadium.

Despite this, outside interests are making moves to pull the team out of Buffalo, and antiquated rules turn TV screens black on game day. Both threaten to take the team away from its loyal fan base.

Our legislation, the Furthering Access and Networks for Sports Act, eliminates the antitrust exemption that gives NFL teams the ability to black out home games that haven't sold out and ensures that local fans will be able to watch their teams from home.

The people of Buffalo have stood by our team. And the next owner of this franchise, the Buffalo Bills, must be one that will stand with this community for generations to come.

□ 1215

(Mr. HARRIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HARRIS. Mr. Speaker, article I of our Constitution says Congress makes the laws, article II says the President enforces them, and according to article III, the judicial branch resolves conflicts between Congress and the executive. That is the system the Founders gave us. That is why the House of Representatives is taking the President to court to stop his unlawful actions.

According to legal experts, legislators sued the executive branch 41 times. Sixty-eight percent of the time, they were brought by Democrats, including the Rules Committee ranking member, who joined a 2006 Democratic lawsuit against President Bush. Now, you would think the Democrats could have better spent that time working to avoid the Great Recession of 2008.

President Obama unilaterally delayed the legislative mandate in the Affordable Care Act without consulting Congress. This is only one of many areas he has abused his executive authority, with the latest abuse leading up to the current border crisis.

No President of either party should ever abuse their power. That is why this lawsuit is so necessary.

HIGHWAY TRUST FUND

(Mr. BLUMENAUER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, 2 weeks ago, Democrats overwhelmingly supported a sustainable solution to the current shortfall in the highway trust fund, but when the entire House didn't adopt it, the Democrats provided the votes to move the issue on to the Senate, confident that with more time and discussion, we can do better, especially working with the vast army of stakeholders who build, maintain, and use our Nation's transportation system.

Our cooperation and confidence yesterday was rewarded as the Senate overwhelmingly passed what was essentially the Democratic motion of 2 weeks ago. With the artful and strong leadership of Chairman WYDEN, Chairwoman BOXER, Ranking Member HATCH, Senators CARPER, CORKER, and MURPHY, they carried the argument, and they carried the day. The result was 79 votes for a sustainable solution.

Mr. Speaker, the stakeholders are united. They are out now across the country, arguing that we allow the House to vote on the Senate proposal. Let's commit to working together to solve this transportation problem.

RECOGNIZING HOBE AND SUE WILLIAMS FOR THEIR WORK IN THE DAILY BREAD COMMUNITY KITCHEN

(Mr. ROE of Tennessee asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Hobe and Sue Williams for their service to the people of the great State of Tennessee.

Hobe and Sue founded the Daily Bread Community Kitchen in Morristown, Tennessee, in November of 1994 in response to what they saw as a growing need for feeding the poor. Upon opening, the Daily Bread managed to feed around 50 people a day.

Today, the nonprofit feeds over 350 people a day, every day except Sundays, and has just renovated their building, providing them with an even greater opportunity to serve their east Tennessee neighbors. Twenty years later and staffed with 150 volunteers, the Daily Bread continues to provide for those most in need.

At age 89, Hobe Williams, with his wife, Sue, by his side, have no immediate plans to retire and continue to work hard for the people of east Tennessee. East Tennessee is a better place to live and our community is stronger because of the dedication of people like Hobe and Sue Williams.

God bless you, Hobe and Sue, for your service and friendship, and I wish you all the best with the newly-renovated building.

ANOTHER LOST SUMMER

(Mr. CONNOLLY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, the Republican House is about to go out for 5 weeks, but first, they are going to sue the President and hope that we don't pay attention to the unfinished business of this country. I only have 1 minute, so I am going to have to read it fast.

Let me list for you some of the bills they are not going to address: comprehensive immigration reform, propping up the highway trust fund, funding the Federal Government, reauthorizing the Ex-Im Bank, providing additional resources to fight wildfires in the West, bipartisan Federal IT procurement reform, raising the minimum wage, extending emergency unemployment insurance, reauthorizing terrorism risk insurance, comprehensive tax reform, modernizing the Voting Rights Amendment Act, and ensuring equal pay and nondiscrimination of the workplace.

I have run out of time, but our constituents have run out of patience with this majority.

MAJORITY LEADER ERIC CANTOR AND ISRAEL

(Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Majority Leader ERIC CANTOR and to support a country I know is so dear to his heart.

Yes, Leader CANTOR has been focused on making life better for the American people, and his recent contributions in the areas of workforce training and pediatric research will have a lasting impact on generations to come.

He has also been a mentor and a friend to many new Members of the House. He and his wife, Diana, have led several freshman trips to Israel for many years, and I was very fortunate my husband and I were able to participate on one of those trips last summer.

Seeing this innovative nation and preeminent ally is truly a life-changing experience. In Israel, I found a people that craves peace for all of its citizens of all faiths, even when faced with enemies who want nothing more than to erase Israel from the map.

I want to say, loud and clear, that Members of this body are committed to Israel. We stand together with Israel and its obligation to defend its people from attacks from the terrorist group Hamas.

We are so grateful we have had a member of our leadership team so committed to a strong and thriving Israel. Leader CANTOR's efforts in Congress have lived up to the title he holds. He is a true leader. This is a tribute to that strong leadership for Israel.

VETERANS DESERVE CARE AND BENEFITS

(Mrs. DAVIS of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, the recent revelations of corruption and scandal at the VA have cast a dark cloud over a Department that should be held to the highest possible standard.

We cannot forget the cost of war does not stop when the last bullets are fired. We have an obligation to make sure that every last veteran gets the care and benefits that he or she earned on the battlefield.

The compromise that is before us today is an important step forward. It provides emergency funding for access to timely care and invests in the VA's long-term capacity to address veterans' needs, but still, there is more to be done.

I regularly meet with young veterans in San Diego who are having trouble adapting to civilian life. These are some of the brightest, hardest-working men and women in the United States, and yet they often find it hard to prove that the skills they developed in the military have prepared them for work or school.

To help them, we need to take a broader look at the challenges veterans face entering the workforce, getting an education, and managing their finances as they transition out of the service.

I certainly look forward to working with my colleagues to ensure that our veterans have the tools they need to succeed. It is the least we can do.

RECOGNIZING NAVAL CHAPLAINS

(Mr. WITTMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize our military chaplains. As a member of the House Armed Services Committee and the Congressional Prayer Caucus, I am blessed to often witness firsthand the importance of a strong chaplain corps.

Two chaplains I have encountered recently are prime examples: Navy Commander Roy Hoffman and Navy Captain Michael Gore.

Commander Hoffman serves as the senior chaplain aboard USS *Ronald Reagan*, an aircraft carrier with over 4,000 sailors, most of whom work long, exhausting hours, only to return to cramped racks for a brief rest.

Commander Hoffman and his staff support these sailors through traditional prayer and worship, as well as counseling, mentorship, and community outreach.

As senior chaplain at the Naval Academy, Captain Gore is a valuable resource for the thousands of midshipmen facing rigorous academics and training as they prepare to be leaders in our military.

Serving in our All-Volunteer Force can be challenging, and the presence of chaplains like Commander Hoffman and Captain Michael Gore is critical for maintaining strong morale across our military.

Please join me in showing support and gratitude toward all of our military chaplains.

MIDDLE CLASS FAMILIES

(Mr. LANGEVIN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, too many middle class families are still struggling to make ends meet. Income inequality continues to grow, and unemployment remains unacceptably high, particularly in my home of State of Rhode Island. Our constituents deserve solutions that will promote job creation and increase economic opportunities for everyone.

One of the most important things that we can do for our country is to ensure that our workers have 21st century skills for a 21st century economy. In particular, I have been proud to work across the aisle to expand career and technical education, securing a $52 million increase for funding for Perkins Act career training programs this year alone.

However, skills training is only one piece of the puzzle. We must incentivize companies to bring jobs back home, increase the minimum wage so that full-time workers aren't living in poverty, and invest in infrastructure to ensure safety, boost commerce, and create jobs.

Mr. Speaker, economic opportunity should not be subject to partisan politics. It is time to act on these commonsense policies and provide all Americans with the means to make it in America.

VETERANS EMPLOYMENT

(Mr. MULLIN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MULLIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring attention to an ongoing employment challenge facing our Nation's veterans. When I go back home to Oklahoma, I speak with a lot of local veterans who can't find jobs.

It is unfortunate because these men and women are some of the hardest-working individuals you will ever find. I know because I have hired veterans in my private sector business, and I currently have two congressional team members who are veterans.

So I can tell you they are motivated and they are ready to work, but we must remember that serving our Nation is no easy task, and these men and women are facing transitional challenges. On top of that, our wounded warriors battle a whole host of adversities, but with the right training, I have seen our veterans do amazing things.

In my district, companies like Baker Hughes—one of the world's largest oil field service companies—are training and hiring veterans and seeing tremendous results.

So I stand here today to encourage both the private and public sector to come together to give our Nation's heroes a fighting chance for their incredible service to this great Nation.

GOP LAWSUIT TO NOWHERE

(Ms. SEWELL of Alabama asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to denounce the baseless, misguided, and partisan lawsuit that our Republican colleagues have brought to the floor for a vote today. This lawsuit is just a continuance of the outright disrespect and disdain that the House Republicans have given President Barack Obama since he was elected.

While millions of Americans are waiting for Congress to renew emergency unemployment insurance and raise the minimum wage, we are here debating a senseless lawsuit. I am disappointed by the shameful partisan politics that is being played.

In contrast, I am proud of the work that we are doing as House Democrats trying to put the American people first with our Make It In America agenda and working to jump-start the middle class. With a long laundry list of things we need to get done, it is time to promote the people's business, not our political parties' business.

Enough is enough. With only 2 days left before our 5-week recess, we need

to be doing the business of the American people, not the business of our political parties.

COMMENDING SAMARITAN'S PURSE

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend the dedicated work undertaken by Samaritan's Purse, an international Christian aid group based in Boone, North Carolina. Specifically, I want to bring to your attention Dr. Kent Brantly, who has been heading up Samaritan's Purse work with Ebola patients in Monrovia, Liberia.

Tragically, Dr. Brantly, along with fellow American missionary Nancy Writebol, has contracted the Ebola virus. Both are currently fighting for their lives in an isolation ward in an African hospital.

Mr. Speaker, today, I ask my colleagues and all who hear this to join me in prayer for Dr. Brantly, Mrs. Writebol, and the more than 1,000 other patients who have contracted Ebola in this outbreak, which has already claimed over 600 lives.

The disease continues to spread, and Dr. Brantly, true to the selfless spirit of his missionary calling, has asked that his case not be treated differently from any other. Let us keep all those affected in our prayers.

DO-NOTHING GOP

(Mr. CICILLINE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow, the Republican Speaker JOHN BOEHNER will adjourn the House, and Congress will leave town for 5 full weeks. I rise to urge Speaker BOEHNER to cancel this recess and keep us in session, so we can address the urgent issues facing the American people.

Democrats have a clear list of priorities that will jump-start the middle class. We want to renew emergency unemployment benefits, raise the minimum wage, fix our broken immigration system, reauthorize the Ex-Im Bank, invest in repairing and rebuilding America's infrastructure, and make sure women earn equal pay for equal work.

We have an opportunity to lift millions of hardworking Americans out of poverty, create jobs, and grow the economy by passing these bills that will help the middle class.

It is a complete dereliction of duty for Speaker BOEHNER to adjourn the House and leave town without addressing any of these issues, but what is even worse, instead of getting these things done for the American people, the Republicans will take up a bill to sue the President for moving too slowly to enact a bill that they oppose, that they have tried to stop over 50 times.

You can't make this stuff up. The American people deserve better, and the American people cannot afford 5 weeks of inaction.

□ 1230

ALARMING SITUATION ON OUR SOUTHERN BORDER

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, the situation on our southern border and the influx of unaccompanied migrant children is both tragic and alarming. Even more concerning is the lack of leadership coming from the White House.

We also know that a law passed in 2008—the William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization—has further complicated the administration's response. The law guarantees minors from Central America a court date and assistance for temporary relocation as they wait out their pending appeal. Unfortunately, a large number of these individuals evade attending these proceedings. Few minors are sent home, and most are able to stay for years, if not permanently.

The current situation is a stark reminder of just how flawed the Senate's immigration reform bill is. Granting amnesty to millions would merely reinforce the perception that, if you come to the United States illegally, you will be rewarded. Unfortunately, billions in new spending will not reverse the perception of a lenient enforcement environment in the United States.

What we need is for the White House to enforce the laws, secure the borders, and put aside political games and start working with Congress in a bipartisan manner.

NOTARIO VICTIM RELIEF ACT

(Mr. VEASEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, while America waits for House Republicans in Washington to bring immigration reform to a vote, we cannot forget about the invisible casualties of our broken immigration process, notario fraud victims.

While there are many communities and religious organizations that are providing legitimate immigration-related services, there is also a growing number of nonlawyers posing as legal consultants, and they are known as ''notarios,'' and they are not licensed to give legal advice. Notarios are basically scam artists who prey on immigrant communities.

This week I introduced H.R. 5228, the Notario Victim Relief Act, which would allow victims of notario fraud to reopen their cases and immigrate lawfully. The bill is just the first step toward stopping fraudulent immigration services in our Nation.

I urge my colleagues to join me as a cosponsor of H.R. 5228 and help the victims of our broken immigration system.

THANKING JAY KROEZE

(Mr. PERRY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize and thank a constituent from the wonderful little town of Biglerville, Pennsylvania, for his service and sacrifice to spread the cooperative principle of concern for community.

Jay Kroeze, a lead lineman at Adams Electric Cooperative, volunteered for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's International Foundation in Haiti as part of the Caracol Community Electrification Project. He spent 2 weeks in northern Haiti building and upgrading more than a mile and a half of power lines to help communities receive affordable, safe, and reliable electricity.

To date, more than 4,800 consumers in the northern part of Haiti now have access to electricity. Some now have TVs. A few have water treatment plants. Doctors can provide better care to patients, and residents have opened their own small businesses.

National Rural Electric Cooperative Association International currently is providing support to USAID in Haiti to bring safe, reliable, and affordable electricity to areas in northern Haiti.

On behalf of the Fourth Congressional District of Pennsylvania, I commend Jay Kroeze and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association International Foundation for their tireless efforts in Haiti and around the world.

AFFORDABLE CARE ACT SUCCEEDS IN KENTUCKY

(Mr. YARMUTH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. YARMUTH. Mr. Speaker, my home State of Kentucky has been a national model for how the Affordable Care Act can succeed. Through Kynect, our State exchange, more than 413,000 Kentuckians have gotten health insurance, nearly 310,000 of them for the first time.

These two maps show how health reform has reduced the rate of the uninsured in the Commonwealth's 120 counties. The orange and red in the top map show counties with pre-Affordable Care Act uninsured rates of 14 percent to more than 20 percent. Some of the most impoverished areas, such as eastern Kentucky, also had the highest uninsured rates.

The bottom map shows Kentucky today under the health care law. Only one county still has an uninsured rate

of more than 14 percent. In three counties in the heart of Appalachia, the uninsured rate plummeted from more than 20 percent to less than 5 percent, as shown in blue.

Mr. Speaker, overall, in just 6 months, the Affordable Care Act reduced the total number of uninsured Kentuckians by nearly a half. Behind every number, behind every red county turned blue or green are the stories of a person or family getting the health care they need. That is success by any standard, but most importantly, Kentucky standards.

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

(Mr. WESTMORELAND asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Mr. Speaker, some of our military have been sent emails telling them not to eat or drink in front of their Muslim brothers who are with them during Ramadan. I have never heard the military come out and say don't eat leavened food in front of your Jewish colleagues during Yom Kippur or Passover. I have never heard the military put out something such as be careful what you are eating in front of your Christian brothers during Lent because they may have chosen to do without.

Last Christmas, soldiers at Camp Shelby in Mississippi were told during a diversity briefing that they could not use the word ''Christmas.'' A VA hospital in Texas refused to accept holiday cards from boys and girls because the cards mentioned ''Christmas'' or ''God bless you,'' and a nativity scene near a lake on Shaw Air Force Base in South Carolina was removed after someone complained.

So you might understand why Ron Crews, executive director of the Chaplain Alliance for Religious Liberty, is a bit surprised by the Pentagon's recent behavior.

There is a good Biblical word for this: hypocrisy.

CLIMATE CHANGE

(Mr. LOWENTHAL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Speaker, I sit on the Natural Resources Committee here in the House, and through our investigations into our treasured national parks, my colleagues and I have discovered a number of tragic choices and changes that are in store for all of us and our children.

Mr. Speaker, because of a changing climate, Glacier National Park's glaciers will melt and be no more.

Mr. Speaker, because of a changing climate, Joshua Tree National Park's Joshua trees will disappear from the park named after them.

Mr. Speaker, because of a changing climate, Rocky Mountain National Park's forests are dying because mild winters cannot kill pine beetles, which are devastating the park's trees.

Climate change is upon us now. We are paying for its effects today, regardless of the number of votes this body takes to deny what is happening before our eyes.

COMPETING FOR JOBS

(Mr. RICE of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RICE of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, counties and States around this country compete every day for jobs. How they do it is not complicated. They adjust their tax and their regulatory burdens to attract businesses, and those that do the best job attract the most jobs. The problem is that they are competing for a declining pool of jobs in America because Washington is not competitive. We need to adopt that competitive attitude right here.

In times of war, we forget partisanship and pull together. In truth, we are in an economic war. Countries around the world have teams of people that work every day to beat us economically. The House has passed 39 jobs bills in this Congress which are gathering dust in the Senate. Surely HARRY REID and the President can find one among these 39 bills they can work with to make our country more competitive and put our people back to work.

COMMEMORATING 49TH ANNIVERSARY OF MEDICARE AND MEDICAID

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, thank you President Johnson, and happy birthday to Medicaid and Medicare. I am excited about the lives that have been saved, and I am looking forward to the full expansion in all 50 States of Medicaid in 2015, its 50th birthday.

I will tell you, when President Johnson signed Medicare into law, less than 50 percent of our seniors had health insurance and 35 percent lived in poverty. Now, over 52.4 million Americans are given health care benefits through Medicare, Medicaid, regardless of their condition, and then for some also when their income is very low.

Mr. Speaker, 43.6 million Americans age 65 and above have Medicare and Medicaid, including 8.8 million disabled. Our seniors are able to be in long-term living because of Medicaid. By the time the baby boomers reach 65, it is expected that 80 million people will be covered by Medicare.

What is the common sense and lack thereof of the States that have not accepted expanded Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act? Mr. Speaker, Medicare and Medicaid together save lives. I am interested in saving lives. Let's stand up for the Affordable Care Act, Medicare, and Medicaid to save the lives of Americans.

ISSUES CONGRESS NEEDS TO ADDRESS

(Mr. SCHRADER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SCHRADER. Mr. Speaker, I rise deeply disappointed in Congress this week. There are real issues that Congress needs to address for the American people. But instead of addressing the long-term issues of comprehensive immigration reform, comprehensive tax reform, our debt and deficit, getting our economy going, we are considering suing the President of the United States and beating the drum of impeachment.

Where were my Republican colleagues when President Bush was issuing his egregious executive orders? The hypocrisy here is appalling.

We need to provide long-term funding for the highway trust fund, the Export-Import Bank to keep the American businesses competitive, Federal education programs to prepare our people and children for the next generation and workforce. We need to pass a long-term solution for our doctors. We need to provide funding to address the wildfires that are ravaging the Western United States, including my home State of Oregon. We need to get the unregulated amount of money out of politics.

We need to get back to work.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H. RES. 676, AUTHORIZATION TO INITIATE LITIGATION FOR ACTIONS BY THE PRESIDENT; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 935, REDUCING REGULATORY BURDENS ACT OF 2013; AND PROVIDING FOR PROCEEDINGS DURING THE PERIOD FROM AUGUST 1, 2014, THROUGH SEPTEMBER 5, 2014

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 694 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 694

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order without intervention of any point of order to consider in the House the resolution (H. Res. 676) providing for authority to initiate litigation for actions by the President or other executive branch officials inconsistent with their duties under the Constitution of the United States. The amendment recommended by the Committee on Rules now printed in the resolution shall be considered as adopted. The resolution, as amended, shall be considered as read. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the resolution, as amended, to adoption without intervening

motion or demand for division of the question except one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Rules.

SEC. 2. Upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 935) to amend the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act and the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to clarify Congressional intent regarding the regulation of the use of pesticides in or near navigable waters, and for other purposes. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. The bill shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and on any amendment thereto to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure; and (2) one motion to recommit.

SEC. 3. On any legislative day during the period from August 1, 2014, through September 5, 2014,—

(a) the Journal of the proceedings of the previous day shall be considered as approved; and

(b) the Chair may at any time declare the House adjourned to meet at a date and time, within the limits of clause 4, section 5, article I of the Constitution, to be announced by the Chair in declaring the adjournment.

SEC. 4. The Speaker may appoint Members to perform the duties of the Chair for the duration of the period addressed by section 3 of this resolution as though under clause 8(a) of rule I.

SEC. 5. Each day during the period addressed by section 3 of this resolution shall not constitute a calendar day for purposes of section 7 of the War Powers Resolution (50 U.S.C. 1546).

SEC. 6. Each day during the period addressed by section 3 of this resolution shall not constitute a legislative day for purposes of clause 7 of rule XIII.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Florida is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER), the ranking member, pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, H. Res. 964 provides for consideration of H.R. 935, the Reducing Regulatory Burdens Act of 2013.

On Monday, the House had a full and thorough debate on H.R. 935. While the bill did not gain the two-thirds majority necessary to pass by suspension, it did receive 253 bipartisan votes.

□ 1245

It is important we pass this bill in order to reduce the regulatory burden that has been placed on the nearly 365,000 pesticide users, and this rule allows us to do that.

The rule also allows the House to consider H. Res. 676.

This resolution will allow the Speaker to initiate litigation for actions by the President—or other executive branch officials—inconsistent with their duties under the Constitution.

The fact that we have to sue the President simply to ensure that he is working within the constraints of the Constitution, to me, Mr. Speaker, is troubling, but that is the situation we are facing.

While there have always been disagreements between the legislative and executive branches about how expansive the President's authority is, the Constitution is explicit that Congress writes the laws and the President's role is to ''take care'' that those laws are faithfully executed. No President may have both powers.

Our Founding Fathers understood the danger of having a President who not only enforced the laws, but made them. An executive with those powers would easily infringe on citizens' liberty. Our Founders saw this firsthand. That is why they were fleeing to come to this country and form this country. They knew the Executive would try to exceed the power afforded under the Constitution, even when it is occupied by someone who previously taught the limits the Constitution puts on Presidential power. That is why they were so careful in delegating among the three branches.

This system of checks and balances has served America so well for so long. Now, I am sorry for the civics lesson, but it is clear that some on the other side of the aisle have temporarily lost sight of how important these checks and balances are to the functioning of this House and to the legislative branch in general.

But that wasn't always the case. When Representative CONYERS, for instance, was chairman of the Judiciary Committee, he remarked:

> We are coequal branch of government, and if our system of checks and balances is going to operate, it is imperative that we understand how the executive branch is enforcing or ignoring the bills that are signed into law.

Representative NADLER, for his part, cautioned:

> And I hope that anyone who thinks that inquiring into the excesses of the executive branch and into what appears to be a concentrated effort in every different aspect of law to destroy the power of the Congress and the judiciary and to limit our power to protect the liberties of the American people against encroachments by the Executive are a waste of time, I hope they will rethink what they are doing here.

Mr. Speaker, I read these quotes to illustrate the concern of the executive branch overstepping its authority isn't confined to just one party or one President. This is a legislative versus executive issue; it is not a Democrat versus Republican issue. And, to be frank, the legislative branch has been on the losing end of this for quite some time.

But my point is that we shouldn't be so callous or shortsighted as to not defend our article I powers simply because the President in question happens to belong to one party.

If we don't take action now, what stops future Presidents—Republican or Democrat—from eroding our powers further? Congress, itself, has shown little opposition to the harm it has done to the separation of powers over the years. That is why it is critical that we take action now. This should be a cause that the legislative branch can unite around, not divide over.

Instead, we have Members of Congress standing in applause when the President says he will bypass Congress to enact his agenda. Mr. Speaker, half of this body stood up in applause. It should be done in defiance. Here we have Members of Congress cheering for the President for basically saying he is going to eliminate their purpose here.

This isn't the first President whose actions have raised the alarms of an overreaching executive, and it is clear if we do nothing, it will not be the last.

I urge my colleagues to defend our role in government, and to stop the assault on the separation of powers.

Let's finally say to the Executive: ''Enough is enough.'' Let's finally say: ''Support the Constitution, support the separation of powers, and support this rule.''

With that, Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I thank my good friend from Florida for yielding me the customary 30 minutes.

Today, we are taking up the very serious issue of the constitutionality of separation of powers, but the rule also covers the deregulation of pesticides. I think that should be noted here as well, because one is as ridiculous as the other.

This is a ridiculous lawsuit of one House of Congress seeking to sue the President for not implementing a law they have tried everything to kill.

The majority has wasted time, money, and energy on legislative proposals designed to distract us from the real problems of the United States.

Instead of tackling climate change, ensuring that college is affordable, and modernizing our crumbling infrastructure, the majority wants to sue the President for doing his job. The record is clear. This has been judged the most recalcitrant and useless Congress in history.

This lawsuit will be a monumental waste of time, energy, and funds. This is a political maneuver timed to peak as Americans go to the polls in November for the midterm elections. This lawsuit is a drumbeat pushing Members of the Republican Party to impeachment.

Last week in the Rules Committee, Democrats attempted to amend this resolution. In the pursuit of transparency and accountability, we offered

several amendments that addressed the cost of this lawsuit.

The majority in the Rules Committee voted down every amendment that the minority offered. With this closed rule, we have set a new record, by the way, for the most closed rules in a single Congress. On the committee level, on the House floor, and in the minds of our citizens, this is a closed process, a partisan maneuver, and nothing but a political messaging opportunity.

This lawsuit is a gimmick, which even legal scholars of the majority's own party say will fail, including the conservative writer and former Justice Department official Andrew C. McCarthy. He wrote about this lawsuit and said it is:

> A classic case of assuming the pose of meaningful action while in reality doing nothing.

Democrats in the House and the American people could not agree more.

The House minority has three main concerns about this lawsuit: first, the cost; second, the partisan nature; and third, the lack of legal standing and the implications for our constitutional separation of powers.

First, the cost. Since the passage of the Affordable Care Act, which not a single Republican voted for, the majority has mounted a Herculean effort trying to repeal, dismantle, and discredit it. It seems that they will spare no expense attempting to take health care away from millions of Americans.

Not only did they shut down the government to deny Americans health care, it took from this economy $24 billion to pay for that shutdown. In addition, with over 50 votes on the House floor to undermine the Affordable Care Act, the majority has spent more than $79 million on that voting effort.

When the minority of the Rules Committee requested from the majority the proximate costs of this lawsuit, we got a response that read: ''A lawsuit is a small price to pay.''

Cost is not a hypothetical question, because there are real consequences for our country.

The minority and the American people still would like to know how much will this cost and where will the money come from. We asked directly through letters and by offering amendments to the resolution, and we have gotten no clear answers.

What cuts will come from what programs that Americans depend on to pay for this ridiculous lawsuit? The majority will spend money on more than 13 hearings, 50 briefings, 25,000 pages of documents produced, and allocated $3.3 million for a Select Committee on Benghazi. All that money for Benghazi, but they won't give us a concrete answer on where the funds will originate to pay for the lawsuit.

In a similar lawsuit, when Republicans defended the discriminatory Defense of Marriage Act, they paid their lawyers $520 an hour. I choke over that figure. At that rate, we would have paid over $1 million a year for a 40-hour workweek. If we are spending that kind of money, we ought to do it out in the open, and that amendment was defeated on party lines.

The majority does not intend to make this lawsuit anything but another opportunity to attack the President, which leads me to our second concern: its partisan nature.

As I said, no Republican voted for the Affordable Care Act. After strenuous efforts to take health care away from millions of Americans, the majority plans to file a lawsuit that, if successful, would result in the faster implementation of the Affordable Care Act. The inconsistency is breathtaking. Let me reiterate that. After not a single vote for health care, with over 50 votes to kill it, they are suing the President of the United States because he did not implement it faster. I don't know if anybody can make sense out of that, but all this effort to derail a law that is working. Just 2 days ago, The Washington Post reported in an article, titled ''Medicare finances improve partly due to ACA, hospital expenses, trustee report says,'' that the Affordable Care Act has extended the life of Medicare by 4 years because of the savings, and that will only get better.

I would like to insert this article from The Washington Post dated July 28, 2014, into the RECORD.

[From the Washington Post, July 28, 2014]

MEDICARE FINANCES IMPROVE PARTLY DUE TO ACA, HOSPITAL EXPENSES, TRUSTEE REPORT SAYS—OUTLOOK FOR SOCIAL SECURITY, HOWEVER, REMAINS THE SAME

(By Amy Goldstein)

Medicare's financial stability has been strengthened by the Affordable Care Act and other forces that have been subduing health-care spending, according to a new official forecast that says the fund covering the program's hospital costs will remain solvent until 2030—four years later than expected a year ago.

The annual report, issued Monday by trustees overseeing the government's two largest entitlement programs, found little change overall in the finances of Social Security. The trustees warned, however, that the part of Social Security that pays monthly benefits to people with disabilities is especially fragile and, without changes, will start to run short of money for benefit checks in 2016.

Taken together, the findings provide a nuanced portrait of the fiscal future of these two programs, which act as cornerstones of social insurance—and a buffer against poverty—for older people and other vulnerable Americans. The trustees welcomed the improved financial prospects for Medicare but acknowledged that the underlying reasons are not yet entirely understood. At the same time, they exhorted Congress to take steps to prevent both programs from collapsing in the long term.

''Neither Medicare nor Social Security can sustain projected long-run program costs,'' the trustees said in a message accompanying their reports.

For the past few decades, Democrats and Republicans have fretted about the unsustainability of the Medicare and Social Security programs. They have appointed high-level commissions, proposed legislation and tried to stoke public fears that benefits might not be available for their parents—or themselves. But Congress has not restructured either program to withstand long-term fiscal pressures, and the issue has been absent lately from the agendas of both parties.

At a news briefing Monday, Cabinet secretaries and two public trustees reiterated the call for Congress to act. ''[We] must make manageable changes now, so we do not have to make drastic changes later,'' Treasury Secretary Jack Lew said.

''It is getting very late in the game'' to find a bipartisan consensus, said the trustees' only Republican, Charles P. Blahous III, who worked on Social Security and other economic issues as an aide to President George W. Bush. ''A solution much further delayed is a solution much less likely to occur.''

Both programs are being strained by the nation's demographics. As more baby boomers reach retirement age, people 65 and older are making up an increasing percentage of the country's population, with proportionally fewer working-age Americans chipping in payroll taxes.

Medicare's finances are facing other pressures, too, including from scientific advances that lead to new treatment and therapies, the report said.

The trustees' forecast said that the trust fund that pays for hospital care—Medicare Part A—has been strengthened significantly, with the date when it is predicted to start running short of money extended by 14 years since the Affordable Care Act was enacted in 2010. The report also predicted that the insurance premiums that older Americans pay for the portion of Medicare that covers doctors' visits and other outpatient care would probably remain the same for a third year in a row.

Health and Human Services Secretary Sylvia Mathews Burwell said that it is impossible so far to gauge how much of that trust fund's improved fiscal health was due to the health-care law as opposed to other changes in the health-care system that are slowing cost increases. She said both had a role. The ACA, for instance, is slowing payments to Medicare Advantage, the part of the program in which older Americans join private health plans, while other provisions focus on curbing hospital readmissions.

The report said that spending on hospital stays last year was less than expected, although trustees noted that analysts have not determined whether this trend reflected broad economic trends or stemmed from specific changes in the practice of medical care.

If Medicare is unchanged by 2030, the year it is projected to become insolvent, it would then be able to pay 85 percent of its beneficiaries' hospital bills, a proportion that would slip to 75 percent by 2047, the forecast said.

For Social Security, the trustees predicted that the program's two separate trust funds will, combined, have enough money to pay all the retirement and disability benefits it owes until 2033, the same time horizon as in the last two annual forecasts. They forecast that Social Security will be able to afford checks for retirees and workers' survivors until 2034—nearly two decades longer than the part of the program that pays disability benefits.

Social Security's expenditures last year exceeded its income from payroll taxes, as it has each year since 2010, the report says, although interest so far is making up the difference.

This year, President Obama backed away from an idea he broached in his budget last year to save money for Social Security by changing the basis on which inflation is calculated for the program. But his 2015 budget proposal reprises the idea of charging more for care under Medicare to older Americans who are relatively well-off—an idea that Congress has not touched this year.

In calculating Medicare's future finances, the trustees for the first time acknowledged that Congress has each year overridden scheduled reductions in Medicare doctors' fees—cuts that, if adopted, would lower payments for doctors' services by 21 percent in 2015. In the latest report, the trustees assumed that such cuts would continue to be waived.

The trustees noted that their new forecast was released 49 years to the week that President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the law that enacted Medicare, a major component of the Great Society programs of the mid–1960s. Social Security was a response to the Great Depression of the 1930s.

Last year, Medicare insured 52 million Americans, including 43.5 million age 65 and older and nearly 9 million younger people with disabilities. Social Security last year provided benefits to 41 million retired workers and their families, 6 million survivors of workers who died, and 11 million working-age people with disabilities.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, a recent poll from the Commonwealth Fund found 77 percent of people were pleased with their new coverage. Republicans themselves have a 74 percent satisfaction rate with the new plan that they have bought.

The House majority is going to spend unknown millions of dollars coming from somewhere to stymie a law their own party Members support.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to insert this article from Talking Points Memo, citing a survey from July 10, 2014, entitled: ''Survey: Most Republicans Who Bought ObamaCare Coverage Like Their Plans,'' into the RECORD.

[From Talking Points Memo Livewire, July 10, 2014]

SURVEY: MOST REPUBLICANS WHO BOUGHT OBAMACARE COVERAGE LIKE THEIR PLANS

(By Dylan Scott)

About three-quarters of Republicans who obtained health insurance under Obamacare are satisfied with their coverage, according to a survey published Thursday by the Commonwealth Fund.

The survey found that 74 percent of Republicans said they were very or somewhat satisfied with their new coverage. Overall, 78 percent of Americans said they were satisfied: 73 percent of those enrolled in a private plan and 84 percent of those enrolled in Medicaid.

There was a minimal difference between the previously uninsured and the previously insured: 79 percent of the former were satisfied and 77 percent of the latter were, according to the survey by the group, which is generally supportive of Obamacare.

Those surveyed also reported being better off: 58 percent said that they were better off now than they were before, while 9 percent said they were worse off. And 81 percent said that they were optimistic that their new coverage would help them get the health care they need.

Some of the survey's broader findings, on the overall drop in the number of uninsured and the percentage of Obamacare enrollees who were previously uninsured, generally fell within other findings. It found that the uninsured rate for adults under 65 fell from 20 percent to 15 percent since Obamacare enrollment began. It also found that 63 percent of Obamacare enrollees had been previously uninsured.

The survey, conducted from April 9 to June 2, covered 4,425 U.S. adults.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, it is also obvious to the American people that this is a political stunt. A recent poll, commissioned by CNN, shows 57 percent of us oppose this lawsuit. That is right: the majority of this country recognizes it for what it is: a political scheme. They recognize that there is no basis for this lawsuit.

And our third concern is the legitimacy of standing, in the legal sense, as well as the constitutional principles that the Supreme Court has said limit the kind of disputes that a court can consider.

Perhaps the best authority for the inadequacy of the majority's claim to standing is one of the majority's own witnesses at our Rules hearing, the Florida International University College of Law professor, Elizabeth Price Foley. Professor Foley wrote in a February article:

When a President delays or exempts people from a law—so-called benevolent suspensions—who has standing to sue him? Generally, no one. Benevolent suspensions of law don't, by definition, create a sufficiently concrete injury for standing.

That's why, when President Obama delayed various provisions of ObamaCare, his actions cannot be challenged in court. Congress probably can't sue the President, either.

If the majority's own witness doesn't think that Congress has standing, what judge will?

Finally, one of the most dangerous possible consequences of this lawsuit would be an unprecedented transfer of powers from the legislative to the judicial branch.

This concern for maintaining the separation of powers as it was written into the Constitution by the Founding Fathers is exactly why courts have established what is called the ''political question doctrine.''

It says that courts should stay out of fights between the other two branches of the Federal Government and should defer to the other branches when the Constitution says the matter to be resolved is the responsibility of the President or the Congress. That couldn't be clearer, Mr. Speaker.

□ 1300

The mismanagement of our Nation's funds is deplorable, the partisan nature of the stunt is a abundantly clear, and our constitutional balance of powers is in jeopardy. I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' on the closed rule which, yet again, distorts the legislative process and stifles debate even on the most important issues.

Mr. Speaker, we will ask the House to defeat the previous question. If we defeat the previous question, I will offer an amendment to bring up four bills: first, the Bring Jobs Home Act; second, the Paycheck Fairness Act, which pays women equal to men for the same job; third, a bill to increase the minimum wage to $10.10; and finally, the Students Emergency Loan Refinancing Act, which makes it easier for young people to pay their college loans.

These are the priorities of the American people, and I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' on the previous question and align themselves with those priorities instead of this lawsuit, which is surely a waste of time, money, and resources.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of my amendment in the RECORD, along with extraneous material, immediately prior to the vote on the previous question.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from New York?

There was no objection.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. MILLER), chairman of the House Administration Committee.

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the rule and the underlying resolution.

Mr. Speaker, the ultimate law of our great Nation is not just the important work that we undertake here in the House. Above all else, it is the Constitution that we all swear to preserve, protect, and defend. Above everything, it is the Constitution.

The first words of the Constitution, article I, section 1, are the following:

All legislative powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and a House of Representatives.

It doesn't just say ''some.'' It says all legislative powers are vested in the Congress of the United States. No other entity of our Federal Government has the power to write law, not the executive branch or the judicial branch—only Congress.

Article I, section 7 states the following:

Every bill which shall have passed the House of Representatives and the Senate shall, before it becomes a law, be presented to the President of the United States; if he approves, he shall sign it, but if not, he shall return it.

So if he approves, it shall become law. If not, he vetoes the law and sends it back to Congress. Nowhere is the President given the authority to rewrite the law on his own.

Article II, section 3 places the following responsibilities with the President:

He shall take care that the laws be faithfully executed.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution asks the third branch of government, the judicial branch, to solve problems arising from the President's failure to faithfully execute the law and, specifically, aspects of the Affordable Care Act, as he is required in article II, section 3 and to have exercised power expressly given to Congress to write the law under article I.

Mr. Speaker, the Founders, in their genius, put in place this system of checks and balances for a very, very important purpose, which is to make certain that no one person could both impose and then enforce the law—because that type of action amounts to

tyranny, Mr. Speaker. In short, we have no king in this Nation. In America, we have a President. We do not have a king.

Mr. Speaker, as a representative of the people of the 10th District of Michigan and someone who is sworn to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution, I believe strongly that I have a responsibility to support this resolution, so that the courts can affirm that legislative power is vested in this House—the people's House—and not in the White House.

As the chairman of the Committee on House Administration, I will have the responsibility to verify that any contracts with those who will litigate this case comport with the rules of the House. That is a responsibility I take very, very seriously.

As such, many on the minority side have asked how much this will cost. My answer is that we don't know yet because no contracts have been negotiated. We don't know how long such litigation will take to conclude, but the questions I would ask are: What price do you put on the adherence to the rule of law? What price do you place on the continuation of our system of checks and balances? What price do you put on the Constitution of the United States? My answer to each is: priceless, Mr. Speaker.

I am certain that this process will move forward with due diligence, will be conducted within the rules of this House, and it is my firm hope that in the end the courts will uphold the constitutional principles that are the bedrock upon which our great Nation has been built.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN), my colleague on the Committee on Rules.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, it is important that we remember why we are here today. We are here today not because of the majority's commitment to the rule of law, but because of politics. We are here because the Republican leadership of this House is trying desperately to placate the far right-wing of their base.

They are trying to placate a vocal and organized faction that refuses to accept the fact that the American people elected Barack Obama twice as President of the United States. They are birthers and Tea Partiers and minutemen militia members and supporters of nullification, but here is the problem: they will never, ever, ever be satisfied.

Listen to this finding from a poll taken just this month: 41 percent of Republicans surveyed believe that President Obama is not really an American citizen. That is percent. That is the base of the modern-day Republican Party, and it is ugly. If you are really concerned about the balance of power between the executive branch and the Congress, there are ways to address it.

Just last week, I worked with the Republican and Democratic leadership of the House and of the Foreign Affairs Committee to reaffirm the proper role of Congress in matters of war and peace. I brought a resolution to the floor under the rules of the House, and it passed by a vote of 370–40. That is the way we should do our work around here, not this nonsense about lawsuits.

It is the same with the Affordable Care Act. I know my Republican friends are devastated that the bill they hate so much is actually working. Millions of people who didn't have health insurance are now covered. Millions of people can now get preventive care. Millions of young adults can now stay on their family's insurance plan.

Being a woman is no longer considered a preexisting condition. Insurance companies can no longer discriminate against the sick, and as we learned just yesterday, the Affordable Care Act has already helped to extend the life of the Medicare trust fund by 4 years.

The entire Republican majority in this House was built on opposition to the Affordable Care Act, and yet it stands. The fact that it stands makes the Republican leadership do desperate and irrational things. It makes them vote to repeal the ACA over 50 times. It makes them decide it is somehow a great idea to sue the President for the way he is implementing the law.

It saddens me to see how low a once great party—the party of Abraham Lincoln and Teddy Roosevelt—has sunk. Instead of addressing the real and pressing needs of our country—passing an immigration reform bill, raising the minimum wage, passing a long-term highway bill—they have been reduced to government shutdowns and lawsuits and partisan stunts and gimmicks.

This is show business at its worst. Enough of this stupidity. I say to my Republican friends: Do your job, do the people's work, this is shameful.

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from North Carolina, Dr. FOXX, my distinguished colleague on the Rules Committee.

Ms. FOXX. I thank my friend from Florida for yielding, and I want to commend my colleague from Michigan, Congresswoman MILLER, for explaining our motivation on this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the rule, in support of the underlying resolution, and in support of this effort to restore every branch of this government to its proper constitutional bounds.

This is not about politics. If there were a Republican President doing the same thing, I would feel just as strongly. This is about the Constitution.

Our Constitution was drafted deliberately to ensure that the greatest power in our government resided closely with the people. That is why the portion dealing with Congress was placed first.

In article I, the Framers placed the ultimate power of creating and changing laws with the Congress, and they particularly empowered the House of Representatives, the people's House.

Every 2 years, Members of this House face the voters, and our actions in this body are judged. No other member of this government must submit to the people more regularly.

For too long, this body, under the leadership of both Democrats and Republicans, has ceded parts of our constitutional authority to the executive branch and the agencies that are, at best, remotely accountable to voters. It is time for that to stop. Today, we take a step to make it stop.

This lawsuit is about actions—the actions of an administration that has claimed more power than it has been given, even when we have already given it more authority than we should have.

I bear no animus to this President, but I strongly disagree with many of his policies, his stated priorities, and, ultimately, his actions. This lawsuit is not entered into lightly. It is not our first response, but rather, it is our last resort.

I will vote ''yes'' on this rule and this resolution, not for electoral gain, but rather to preserve our Constitution and the separation of powers enshrined therein.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of a unanimous consent request, I yield to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BUTTERFIELD).

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 1010, the minimum wage increase, to jump-start the middle class, instead of this partisan lawsuit attacking President Obama.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would advise that all time has been yielded for the purpose of debate only.

Does the gentleman from Florida yield for the purpose of the unanimous consent request?

Mr. NUGENT. I do not, Mr. Speaker. I want to reiterate my earlier announcement that all time is yielded for the purpose of debate only, and we are not yielding for other purposes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Florida does not yield. Therefore, the unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Parliamentary inquiry, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman is recognized for a parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, hasn't it been the tradition of this House that the Speaker yields to Members who want to make unanimous consent requests during the course of debate?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. On the pending resolution, all time has been yielded for the purpose of debate only.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of a unanimous consent request, I yield to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE).

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 4582, the Students Emergency Loan Refinancing Act, to jump-start the middle class, instead of this partisan lawsuit attacking the President.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair understands that the gentleman from Florida has not yielded for that purpose. Therefore, the unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of a unanimous consent request, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. HAHN).

Ms. HAHN. Mr. Speaker, I also ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 377, the Paycheck Fairness Act, to jump-start our middle class, instead of this partisan lawsuit attacking our President.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair understands that the gentleman from Florida has not yielded for that purpose. Therefore, the unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of a unanimous consent request, I yield to the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. RAHALL).

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 1010, the minimum wage increase, in order to jump-start the middle class, instead of this partisan lawsuit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair understands that the gentleman from Florida has not yielded for that purpose. Therefore, the unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of a unanimous consent request, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MATSUI).

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 377, the Paycheck Fairness Act, to jump-start the middle class, instead of this partisan lawsuit attacking the President.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair understands that the gentleman from Florida has not yielded for that purpose. Therefore, the unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

□ 1315

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of a unanimous consent request, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. CHU).

Ms. CHU. Mr. Speaker, I rise to bring up H.R. 4582, the Students Emergency Loan Refinancing Act, to jump-start the middle class, instead of this partisan lawsuit attacking the President.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair understands that the gentleman from Florida has not yielded for that purpose. Therefore, the unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of a unanimous consent request, I yield to the gentlewoman from Massachusetts (Ms. CLARK).

Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I rise to bring up H.R. 377, the Paycheck Fairness Act, to jump-start the middle class, instead of this partisan lawsuit attacking the President.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair understands that the gentleman from Florida has not yielded for that purpose. Therefore, the unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of a unanimous consent request, I yield to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DEUTCH).

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise to bring up H.R. 851, the Bring Jobs Home Act, to jump-start the middle class, instead of this partisan lawsuit against the President.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair understands that the gentleman from Florida has not yielded for that purpose. Therefore, the unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of a unanimous consent request, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. ESHOO).

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to bring up the Students Emergency Loan Refinancing Act, H.R. 4582, to strengthen the middle class, instead of this partisan lawsuit attacking the President.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair understands that the gentleman from Florida has not yielded for that purpose. Therefore, the unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of a unanimous consent request, I yield to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. NOLAN).

Mr. NOLAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to bring up H.R. 1010, the minimum wage bill, to give America a pay raise and to jump-start the middle class, instead of this partisan attack on the President.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair understands that the gentleman from Florida has not yielded for that purpose. Therefore, the unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of a unanimous consent request, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LOFGREN).

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to consider H.R. 4582, the Students Emergency Loan Refinancing Act, which would help the middle class, instead of this partisan lawsuit attacking the President.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair understands that the gentleman from Florida has not yielded for that purpose. Therefore, the gentlewoman's unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of a unanimous consent request, I yield to the gentlewoman from Maryland (Ms. EDWARDS).

Ms. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to bring up H.R. 1010. America deserves a raise by raising the minimum wage, which will jump-start the middle class, instead of this partisan lawsuit attacking the President of the United States.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair understands that the gentleman from Florida has not yielded for that purpose. Therefore, the unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of a unanimous consent request, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD).

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise to bring up H.R. 851, the Bring Jobs Home Act, to jump-start the middle class, instead of this partisan lawsuit attacking the President.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair understands that the gentleman from Florida has not yielded for that purpose. Therefore, the unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of a unanimous consent request, I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY).

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to bring up H.R. 377, the Paycheck Fairness Act, to jump-start the middle class, instead of this unprecedented, partisan lawsuit against our President.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair understands that the gentleman from Florida has not yielded for that purpose. Therefore, the unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of a unanimous consent request, I yield to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to bring up—and I am pleading to bring up—H.R. 377, the Paycheck Fairness Act, to jump-start the middle class, instead of this partisan lawsuit attacking the President of the United States of America.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair understands that the gentleman from Florida has not yielded for that purpose. Therefore, the unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of a unanimous consent request, I am pleased to yield to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO).

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to bring up the Paycheck Fairness Act—for men and women, same job, same pay—to jump-start this middle class, instead of this partisan lawsuit attacking the President of the United States.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair understands that the gentleman from Florida has not yielded for that purpose. Therefore, the unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of a unanimous consent request, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. DAVIS).

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise to bring up H.R. 851, the Bring Jobs Home Act, to jump-start the middle class, instead of this partisan lawsuit, which we don't need, attacking the President.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair understands that the gentleman from Florida has not yielded for that purpose. Therefore, the gentlewoman's unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of a unanimous consent request, I yield to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY).

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to bring up the Paycheck Fairness Act and a minimum wage increase, which would jump-start the middle class, instead of this partisan lawsuit attacking the President.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair understands that the gentleman from Florida has not yielded for that purpose. Therefore, the gentlewoman's unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of a unanimous consent request, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. AL GREEN).

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to bring up H.R. 1010, a minimum wage increase, to jump-start the middle class, instead of the partisan lawsuit attacking the Honorable Barack Obama, President of the United States of America.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair understands that the gentleman from Florida has not yielded for that purpose. Therefore, the gentleman's unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of a unanimous consent request, I yield to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), the minority whip.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

I rise to bring up H.R. 851, the Bring Jobs Home Act. Surely, Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Florida would want to yield time for that—to jump-start the middle class—instead of this partisan, pointless lawsuit attacking the President of the United States.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair understands that the gentleman from Florida has not yielded time for that purpose. Therefore, the unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of a unanimous consent request, I yield to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE).

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to immediately bring up H.R. 377, the Paycheck Fairness Act, which would jump-start the middle class, instead of this partisan lawsuit attacking the President of the United States.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair understands that the gentleman from Florida has not yielded for that purpose. Therefore, the gentleman's unanimous consent request cannot be entertained.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BUTTERFIELD).

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to oppose the resolution authorizing the Speaker to bring a legislative branch lawsuit against the President.

Never before in the history of the Congress has there been institutional litigation between two coequal branches of government—never.

Don't my Republican friends understand that the House's acting alone cannot by itself enforce a legislative enactment? It must be bicameral.

This resolution will establish a precedent unknown in our jurisprudence. It is an abuse of power. It will threaten the separation of powers principle and the checks and balances that we have long cherished in this country.

Do you want the judiciary to become the arbiter of disputes between Congress and the President? Our branches are coequal.

Do you really want to cede to the courts the authority to resolve disputes between the branches?

Would you want the President to sue the House for missing a budget deadline? Where does it end?

How do you plan to pay for this litigation? This resolution would give the Speaker a blank check to pay legal costs and expert costs, which would add to the deficit.

I call on House Republicans to talk to objective legal scholars, to read the literature and court decisions, to protect the integrity of our Federal system, and to reject this dangerous legislation.

This is a very sad day in the House. I know what you are doing, and the American people know what you are doing. You are using this legislation in your constant effort to discredit President Obama. Every day that President Obama has occupied the Oval Office, you have attacked him. You have attacked his ideas, and you have attacked those who surround him and his Cabinet. You are denying the American people a functioning government.

I sincerely believe that you are trying to set the stage for a despicable impeachment proceeding should you hold the majority in the House and gain the majority in the Senate. Shame on you, House Republicans. Shame on you.

I ask my colleagues to vote ''no'' on this rule and on final passage.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to direct their remarks to the Chair.

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. RICE).

Mr. RICE of South Carolina. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, the only people I hear talking about impeachment in this Chamber are the Democrats. The Democrats must want the President impeached as far as I can tell.

My favorite piece of art in this Capitol Building is a picture in the rotunda of a group of our forefathers, who gathered together because they could no longer bear living under a monarchy, and they decided that they would fight for freedom. They signed the Declaration of Independence, knowing full well that they were signing their own death warrants if they were caught and tried for treason.

Our forefathers fought a Revolution against the greatest military power on Earth in order to escape the bonds of a monarchy. At the end of the bloody Revolution, the last thing they wanted was another king. They wanted freedom. To protect that precious freedom, they designed a government where power rested with the people based on the separation of powers.

The legislative branch makes the laws. The President enforces the laws. President Obama has decided that he cannot be bothered with the separation of powers. He has bragged that, if Congress will not accept his priorities, he has a pen and a phone, and he will make the law. He may have a pen, but the people have the Constitution. Our forefathers recognized that one man who can both make the law and enforce the law is not a President—he is a king.

Thomas Jefferson once said that freedom does not disappear all at once; it is eroded imperceptibly day by day.

The prosperity of our great country sprang from our freedom. Our form of government, set forth in the Constitution by our forefathers, has protected that very fragile freedom for 200 years.

My friends across the aisle worry about the price of a lawsuit to protect our freedom. Our forefathers paid dearly for that freedom. Many paid everything. Our freedom is in peril. We cannot stand by and watch the President shred our Constitution.

I stand in support of House Resolution 676.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 30 seconds to respond to the fact that only Democrats are speaking of impeachment.

Just today, The Hill newspaper announced that a most respected and admired member of the Republican Conference said of the lawsuit, spearheaded by JOHN BOEHNER:

> Theater is a show. Why not impeach instead of wasting $1 million to $2 million of the taxpayers' money? If you are serious about that, use what the Founders of the Constitution gave us.

He was referring to impeachment.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased now to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. JEFFRIES).

Mr. JEFFRIES. I thank the distinguished gentlewoman from the Empire State for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, this lawsuit is nothing more than a waste of time and a cover-up with respect to the House Republicans' failure to effectively govern.

You have failed to create jobs. You have failed to increase the minimum wage. You have failed to deal with our broken immigration system.

□ 1330

You have failed to extend unemployment insurance for the millions of Americans who have been left on the battlefield of the Great Recession. You have failed to deal with our crippling transportation and infrastructure system.

Mr. Speaker, your majority has failed to do what is in the best interest of the American people, and so, to cover up the mess, you are taking us on a joyride through the article III court system. It is an effort that will crash and burn. Yet, nonetheless, you are willing to waste millions of dollars of taxpayer money in order to make a down payment on impeachment.

Instead of engaging in responsible legislative action, the majority has chosen to act up and to act out in order to satisfy the thirst of the blame Barack Obama caucus.

Shame on you, Mr. Speaker. It is time to get back to the business of the American people.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to direct their remarks to the Chair.

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Vermont (Mr. WELCH).

Mr. WELCH. Mr. Speaker, I have been kind of scratching my head as to why it is we are filing this lawsuit. Why is it that the independent House, the Speaker of the House, second in line for the Presidency, instead of passing a bill, is filing a lawsuit? I think I have kind of figured it out. The power of the majority is being used in a way to make that power useless and impotent.

They can pass any laws they want in this House. They can repeal any laws they want in this House, in fact, have repealed health care 55 times. But once it goes across this hall into the Senate, it dies. It is not taken up. If it were taken up, it would never be signed by the President.

I have got another idea. Instead of filing a lawsuit, let's do our job. We have got some disagreements. We think—and I think the American people believe, and I know the President agrees—we should raise the minimum wage. You don't. Let's work it out.

We believe—and the President believes, the American people believe—we need comprehensive immigration reform. Let's take it up and have a vote.

We believe it is time for equal pay for equal work.

What are we afraid of? Why don't we take it up?

Is the judge going to help us decide this, or should we have an out-of-court settlement, which, in our case, would mean we actually have a discussion, a discussion that includes the members of the Republican Party who have different points of view, as opposed to simply the narrowest views from the most gerrymandered of districts. It means we talk to Democrats on the House side of the floor. It means we work with our counterparts in the Senate. It means we do our job.

So, Mr. Speaker, you have got a job to do that can't be done by a judge. You have got a job to do that won't be resolved in a court of law. It will be resolved here in the United States House of Representatives. And the fact that we disagree and the fact that the issues between us are difficult and contentious is no excuse for us to not do our job.

The Republicans represent a lot of Americans, but the Democrats represent at least half of America. And never in the history of this country have we made progress by refusing to legislate.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would remind all Members of an essential rule of decorum in the House. Under clause 1 of rule XVII, Members are to direct their remarks to the Chair and not to other Members in the second person.

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentlewoman from Maryland (Ms. EDWARDS).

Ms. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, just when we think the level of dysfunction by the Republican majority in this House can't get any worse, no, they surprise us and find a way to prove us wrong. They are going to cap off 7 months, Mr. Speaker, of the worst do-nothing Congress in this Nation's history, and Republicans have now decided to chart a dangerous and unprecedented path by suing the President of the United States. The American people have to hear this. Suing the President of the United States, Mr. Speaker. And for what? Because the President is doing his job?

So when House Republicans are not doing their jobs, they choose to sue the President of the United States. And the American people do see this for exactly what it is.

So we move from one political stunt to the next, Mr. Speaker, from shutting down the government—that is what Republicans did—to a lawsuit, and then onward to impeachment. This do-nothing Congress, Mr. Speaker, suing the President of the United States.

We should be working to make college more affordable, to enact comprehensive immigration reform, equal pay for equal work, raise the minimum wage, renew unemployment benefits, improve the Nation's infrastructure. And instead, House Republicans are suing the President.

I thought this was a fringe element, Mr. Speaker, of the House Republican majority, but it is not. It is the majority. But somehow, Republicans in the House of Representatives—you know what? We get it. The Republicans in the House don't like the President. They don't like the President, Mr. Speaker. But they are suing the President of the United States.

Shame, shame, shame.

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO).

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the previous question because defeating it will allow an amendment that provides for consideration of legislation that will, in fact, create jobs, grow the economy, support small businesses, ensure equal pay, and alleviate the financial burdens on working families today.

There are so many things we can and should be doing right now to spur the economy for the American people. We need to help workers. We need to help them find opportunities. We need to achieve higher pay for their hard work.

Instead of considering those many bills, this Republican majority continues to waste this institution's time by pushing a partisan lawsuit against the President. This is the first time in history that a branch of Congress has tried to sue a President. My God, what a legacy you leave.

Americans are tired of partisan dysfunction. They want to see us working to solve their problems, and defeating that previous question will allow us to have a vote today on something very important to American families, and that is equal pay for equal work.

Women in America face overwhelming financial challenges. They are more likely to be poor, make minimum wage, go bankrupt, less likely to have retirement security. Women still only make 77 cents, on average, for every dollar made by men. That is $11,000 lost wages every single year, and over the course of a career, that adds up to $434,000 lost.

I have introduced the Paycheck Fairness Act in every Congress since 2007. It passed the House twice with bipartisan support. It would ensure that women receive equal pay for equal work.

A famous American once said, and I quote: ''Mind you, I believe in marriage and children and home, but I'm not one of the kind that think that God made women to do nothing but to sit at home in the ashes and tend to babies. He made her to be as good as man, and he made her better too . . . If a woman can do the same work that a man can do and do it just as well, she should have the same pay.''

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. I yield the gentlewoman another 30 seconds.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, that was Buffalo Bill Cody, and he said that in 1898, 116 years ago.

Women, Mr. Speaker, are tired of waiting.

Let us not waste our time on the partisan lawsuit against the President. Let us defeat the previous question and today give women a vote on equal pay for equal work.

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute.

I will place into the RECORD an exchange of letters between myself and Chairman SESSIONS and between Ranking Member BRADY and Chairwoman MILLER of the House Administration Committee. This exchange of letters catalogs our repeated requests for an estimate of the projected cost of this partisan enterprise and the identification of accounts that will be cut to pay for it. As you will note, the responses to our letter provide no information about the cost estimate and no indication from where the funds will come.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION,
Washington, DC, July 14, 2014.

Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER BOEHNER: Within the draft resolution to initiate a lawsuit against the President, we learned that you intend to seek authorization to ''employ the services of outside counsel and other experts.'' Such authority clearly falls under the jurisdiction of the Committee on House Administration, and as such, I am writing to express my expectation that Republicans will be open and transparent about the use of taxpayer money in pursuing this highly dubious and partisan lawsuit.

As evidenced by House Republicans' conduct in the $2.3 million failed effort to defend the discriminatory and unconstitutional Defense of Marriage Act in the courts, strong bipartisan oversight is clearly necessary in any plan to hire outside counsel. The Republican majority must not be permitted to use taxpayer dollars as a slush fund to award a no-bid contract to high-priced, politically connected Republican lawyers without any transparency or accountability to the House or the American people.

Our opposition to the deeply partisan basis of your lawsuit in no way diminishes the need for normal oversight of the terms of any contract signed by Republican Leadership obligating the House to pay millions of dollars to private attorneys. Therefore, I expect you will honor regular order through my committee, even with this highly irregular lawsuit.

The American people deserve to know how and where their tax dollars are being spent, and House Administration Committee Democrats insist on regular consultation and transparency in the selection criteria and process, cost, and lobbying connections of any counsel or experts hired in the name of the House.

Sincerely,

ROBERT BRADY,
Ranking Member,
Committee on House Administration.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION,
Washington, DC, July 15, 2014.

Hon. ROBERT A. BRADY,
Cannon House Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR RANKING MEMBER BRADY, I write in response to your July 14th letter to the Speaker of United States House of Representatives expressing concerns about the draft resolution to initiate lawsuit against the President. As always, the Committee, and Republicans, will be open and transparent about the use of taxpayer money. I will, however, note that there is no higher use of taxpayer funds than protecting and defending the United States Constitution which both you and I took an oath to uphold and defend.

All appropriate and applicable procurement procedures will be followed in the award of any contract for outside counsel for a lawsuit. Regardless of your partisan political feelings on the lawsuit, I am sure that you would agree that the United States House of Representatives, as an institution, deserves full and zealous advocacy in the defense of its prerogatives as a co-equal branch of our government and in defense of the Constitution.

Rest assured that I will not unilaterally ignore or rewrite laws passed by Congress.

Sincerely,

CANDICE S. MILLER,
Chairman, Committee on House Administration.

COMMITTEE ON RULES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, July 17, 2014.

Hon. PETE SESSIONS,
Chairman, House Committee on Rules, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN, We understand that the Committee on Rules will meet in the coming weeks to consider amendments to the proposed resolution authorizing the Speaker of the House to sue the President of the United States.

Before that meeting is scheduled, the Members of our Committee must have the answers to two important questions:

1) What is the anticipated cost of the lawsuit against the President?

The draft resolution places no limit on the amount of taxpayer funds the Speaker may dedicate to his lawsuit against the President. The American people have a right to know—before the House votes to initiate such a lawsuit—how much money will be allocated to this exercise.

We do not expect you to provide a detailed budget for the lawsuit, and we understand that unforeseen variables will influence the ultimate cost. But there is no reason to assume that the House of Representatives cannot do what every American family must do—use its best judgment to estimate future expenditures. The President's Office of Management and Budget must provide such estimates every day. We do not see why the House of Representatives should be exempt from the ordinary budget discipline of estimating the cost of its own activities. We request that you provide to the Committee, in advance of our markup, your best estimate of the anticipated cost of the lawsuit to the American taxpayers.

2) Which accounts will be cut in order to pay for the lawsuit against the President?

The draft resolution authorizes the Speaker to hire outside lawyers to assist him in his suit against the President. Yet the resolution does not provide any new resources. Therefore, funding for the lawsuit must be transferred from other Legislative Branch accounts.

Before the Members of the House cast their vote on this resolution, they should know which of their legitimate legislative activities will be curtailed in order to divert funds to this entirely partisan enterprise. We request that you provide the Committee, before the markup, your best estimate of the legislative branch accounts that will be reduced to cover the anticipated cost of the lawsuit.

We have learned in too many cases what happens when the House fails to disclose the anticipated cost of such activities in advance. The American public only learned, after the fact, that the House had wasted $2.3 million on its misguided intervention in the Defense of Marriage Act litigation. Another example is the resolution to launch yet another investigation of the Benghazi matter. When the Rules Committee considered this partisan legislation, we asked repeatedly—and in vain—for a cost estimate. We learned after the vote that the House plans to spend as much as $3.3 million on this duplicative and wasteful effort this year alone—more than the budgets of the House Committee on Veterans Affairs and the House Committee on Ethics.

Mr. Chairman, it is essential that the anticipated cost of the Speaker's lawsuit against our President be disclosed to the American people before we vote on the resolution authorizing it We are making this request so far in advance because we want to ensure there is ample time to make the assessments necessary for a fully informed estimate. No meeting should be scheduled on the draft resolution until the answers to these questions have been made public.

Sincerely,

LOUISE M. SLAUGHTER,
Ranking Member.
JAMES P. MCGOVERN,
Member of Congress.
ALCEE L. HASTINGS,
Member of Congress.
JARED POLIS,
Member of Congress.

COMMITTEE ON RULES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, July 23, 2014.

Hon. LOUISE SLAUGHTER,
Ranking Minority Member, Committee on Rules, Longworth House Office Building, Washington, DC.
Hon. ALCEE L. HASTINGS,
Rayburn House Office Building,
Washington, DC.
Hon. JAMES MCGOVERN,
Cannon House Office Building,
Washington, DC.
Hon. JARED POLIS,
Longworth House Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MRS. SLAUGHTER AND MESSRS. MCGOVERN, HASTINGS, AND POLIS: Thank you for your letter dated July 17, 2014, outlining your questions regarding H. Res. 676, which authorizes House litigation. Specifically, you asked to be provided with information regarding the anticipated cost of a lawsuit against the President as well as which accounts would supply such funding. As demonstrated by our nearly five hour hearing last week, it is my intent to conduct this process in a thoughtful and transparent process.

In regard to your first question, it is too early in the process to calculate an exact dollar amount that will be spent on all elements of the litigation process. H. Res. 676 authorizes the Speaker to initiate litigation and authorizes the Office of General Counsel to retain outside counsel or experts, if needed. The resolution does not require either action, nor does it authorize or appropriate any new funding. Decisions regarding legal action and whether to retain outside experts would occur after passage of H. Res. 676.

However, in the Defense of Marriage Act litigation referenced in your letter, the House of Representatives defended that law in court in close to two-dozen cases across the country. After consultation with the interested parties, I fully expect potential legal action brought under this resolution to be far narrower in scope than that case, which suggests that total litigation costs should be lower as well.

It is also important to note that I anticipate that all contracts surrounding any litigation authorized by this resolution will go through the approval process previously used by the House Administration Committee for Office of General Counsel initiated contracts. Funds spent on outside counsel have been and would continue to be included in the quarterly Statements of Disbursements, which are publically available.

I can more clearly answer your second question. I do not anticipate that any new funds would need to be appropriated in this fiscal year. Funds spent on such litigation would come from the account of the Office of General Counsel, which falls under House accounts. If those previously existing funds were found to be insufficient, the appropriate House officers, in coordination with the Appropriations Committee, could then transfer funds from other House accounts with anticipated savings.

While I am confident that any use of taxpayer money will go through an open and transparent process, we must ensure that the House of Representatives has the flexibility necessary to hire the most qualified experts available to defend the Constitution. A lawsuit against the President for failing to fulfill his constitutional duty to faithfully execute the law is a small price to pay for defending the separation of powers and the American people.

Sincerely,

PETE SESSIONS,
Chairman, House Committee on Rules.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION,
Washington, DC, July 29, 2014.

Hon. PETE SESSIONS,
Chairman, The Committee on Rules,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Yesterday the Committee on Rules filed a report to accompany the resolution (H. Res. 676) authorizing the Speaker, on behalf of the House, to initiate or intervene in certain litigation against the President of the United States or other federal officials. The Committee on House Administration (CHA) received an additional referral of the resolution due to its implications for the operations of the House, especially the potentially enormous depletion of appropriations intended for other purposes.

As you know, a number of provisions in this resolution—particularly those concerning the hiring of outside counsel and consultants, and the spending of money on their hiring—are in the jurisdiction of the Committee on House Administration, where I serve as Ranking Minority Member. Our Committee has held no hearings, meetings or markups of this resolution.

Yesterday, with the concurrence of our chairman, Representative Miller of Michigan, the Speaker discharged the House Administration Committee from further consideration of the resolution. This occurred despite the fact that all three House Administration Democrats last week formally invoked the extraordinary Rule XI procedure calling for a special committee meeting to consider the legislation. So we now confront a situation in which CHA, the ''money committee'' on this subject due to our jurisdiction over House accounts and officers, will not be heard.

I also now that the Speaker has not provided this Committee with a good-faith estimate of how much this lawsuit or lawsuits could cost taxpayers.

In my view, this mad rush to confront the President in court represents yet another ill-conceived, ill-considered action pursued merely for political purposes. It will cost the American people millions and inevitably deplete the legislative resources otherwise available to support the work of all Members of this House. In light of the haste we have already witnessed in this process, I urge you to allow consideration of amendments on the floor, and also to permit a motion to recommit with or without instructions so that we may either have the opportunity to return H. Res. 676 to the House Administration Committee for substantive review or offer instructions proposing changes relevant to our Committee's concerns.

Respectfully,

ROBERT A. BRADY,
Ranking Member,
Committee on House Administration.

COMMITTEE ON RULES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, July 30, 2014.

Hon. ROBERT A. BRADY,
Ranking Minority Member, Committee on House Administration, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. BRADY: Thank you for your letter dated July 29, 2014, discussing your concerns with provisions in H. Res. 676 that fall under the jurisdiction of the Committee on House Administration, and requests regarding floor consideration of the measure. Unfortunately, my office did not receive your letter until roughly 15 minutes before the start of the Rules Committee meeting to provide for floor consideration of the resolution.

The provision that you specifically reference authorizes the Speaker to initiate litigation and authorizes the Office of General Counsel to retain outside counsel or experts, if needed. The resolution does not require either action, nor does it authorize or appropriate any new funding. As I stated in my letter dated July 23, 2014 to the minority members of the Rules Committee, I do not anticipate that any new funds would need to be appropriated for this fiscal year. It should also be recognized that this is a limited, targeted measure that seeks to address an important constitutional issue.

You also expressed concerns with the process, but the Committee on House Administration was discharged from further consideration of the measure pursuant to an agreement between Chairman Miller and myself, which has been the standard practice used by both Democratic and Republican majorities. Our exchange of letters can be found in the committee report accompanying H. Res. 676.

While I appreciate your requests for specific elements in the rule, I feel that the Committee adopted an appropriate rule for consideration of this important measure. H. Res. 676 is a critical first step in an effort to defend the Constitution and compel the President to faithfully execute the laws passed by Congress.

Sincerely,

PETE SESSIONS,
Chairman, House Committee on Rules.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, if people are supposed to think that this is really a genuine concern by the House of Representatives and not a partisan gimmick, then why didn't the majority consult with Democrats or the Senate beforehand and say: We want to do this on behalf of Congress. Will you talk with us about participating?

That idea of joint participation is long gone from here, and I regret to say that.

But that didn't happen. It was cooked up in some meeting where we probably discussed how to win back the Senate, or whether to impeach the President, or how the campaign fundraising is going and so forth.

You are not fooling anyone. This is about politics and the elections, and you know it and I know it and, polling shows it, all the people in the country know it.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI).

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congresswoman SLAUGHTER, our ranking member on the Rules Committee, for the time and also, more importantly, for her great leadership in so many ways. In so many ways, it has been about her advocacy for the priorities of the American people.

So today we have on the floor of the House legislation that is a serious matter about suing the President of the United States instead of doing the people's business, which is what Ms. SLAUGHTER and others have advocated for, whether it is bringing good-paying jobs home, creating jobs by building the infrastructure of America, reducing the cost of higher education for families, investing in our children, raising the minimum wage, passing legislation to have equal pay for equal work, everything that would increase the financial stability of America's families. Instead, we are wasting the taxpayers' time and money on the floor of the House on a matter that is serious but is a waste of time.

There are those who have said that this initiative to sue the President of the United States is about a step toward impeachment. Others who say, no, it is instead of impeachment.

I told the Speaker that I had a similar situation years ago—not similar in terms of the subject, because I think there is no basis for this and no standing in this House on the subject of suing the President, but similar in that there were calls by some to impeach President Bush when we took the majority and people were very unhappy about the Iraq war and the false claims made to draw the American people into support of that war effort, which proved to be untrue. It wasn't about people in your caucus clamoring for suing the President. It was about hundreds of thousands of people in the streets objecting to the war in Iraq and the false basis on which we went in.

But when I became Speaker, and people clamored for the impeachment of the President, I said what I advised the Speaker to say right now: Impeachment is off the table. If this isn't about impeachment, that simple sentence will be a clear one: Impeachment is off the table.

Why hasn't the Speaker said that? Why are there those in your caucus who won't deny that that is a possible end in sight for this ill-fated legislation that you bring to the floor?

We are going to adjourn tomorrow for 5 weeks, leaving unfinished business here. We need to solve problems for the American people, to create opportunities for them, but that kind of legislation is nowhere in sight, whether it is job creation, reducing the cost of higher education, equal pay for equal work, raising the minimum wage, some of which I already mentioned.

We have precious few hours remaining to act on the priorities of the American people and finish the ''can't wait'' business before the Congress. So much needs to be done: the humanitarian situation at the border, which

provides an opportunity for us to do the right thing; the highway trust fund, to deal with it appropriately and give it the proper amount of time instead of rushing it through. But once again, Republicans are putting the special interests and the howls of impeachment-hungry extremists before the needs of the Nation.

□ 1345

The lawsuit is only the latest proof of House Republicans' contempt and disregard for the priorities of the American people. It is yet another Republican effort to pander to the most radical rightwing voters at taxpayers' expense: $2.3 million spent defending DOMA, a doomed case; more than $3 million on the select committee to exploit Benghazi—by the way, something that had been investigated again and again at the very admission of leaders on the Republican side. Why are we doing this? And then this, which we don't have a pricetag on that they will reveal to us.

Again, why would you sue somebody unless you want to prove something? And why would you go down that path unless you wanted to do something about it?

But the fact is, Republicans in Congress have no standing in this suit. Most constitutional scholars have admitted or do admit that. Even the Republicans' expert witnesses have in the past said you don't have standing on it.

Middle class families don't have time for a Republican partisan grudge match with the President. They know that this is a funny thing because—well, funny in the one strange interpretation of the word ''funny.'' But a couple of weeks ago on the steps of the Capitol, House Democrats were there to launch our middle class jump-start about some of the issues I raised—job creation here in the U.S., affordability of college, early childhood education, all of those things, equal pay for equal work, raise the minimum wage. We were doing that on the steps of the Capitol. And in the Capitol buildings, the Republicans were launching their lawsuit against the President. What could be more different in terms of addressing the needs of the American people?

We made the point that this was all happening on the same day. But the fact is, that difference of focusing on progress and job creation and process and do nothing is what we live through here every single day. And today is another one of those days on the floor of the House.

So let us recognize what this is. Serious, serious, on a path to nowhere, or maybe, amongst some of your ranks, a path to impeachment. But if we just want to talk about the lawsuit, it behooves the Speaker of the House to say, Impeachment is off the table. I hope we can hear that soon, and then we will see what the merits of this case are. It has no standing. It has no merits. It has a political basis. And let the American people judge it for what it is.

If you don't want to hear people use the word ''impeachment,'' as your people have done, then tell them, Impeachment is off the table. That is what I had to do. That is what this Speaker should do.

Mr. NUGENT. I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL).

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I thank the managers of this legislation.

Unemployment. The deficit. Outsourcing. Higher education. Immigration. Tax reform. Gun control. Medicare. Social Security. Transportation. A continuing resolution. Ukraine, Syria, Nigeria, Libya, Israel, Gaza, Iran.

Instead of talking about any one of these, what are we spending one of the last 14 scheduled voting days before the election to discuss? We are talking about suing the President for implementing a policy that the majority supports. Go figure. What a colossal waste of time. What a colossal waste of taxpayer money.

We know why the majority is focusing on this instead of trying to solve the country's problems. It is because they have no solutions. We haven't heard any, unless you are keeping them in a secret black box.

Their only goal is to indulge the partisan impulses within your own party, 57 percent of whom want to impeach President Obama. The House of Representatives is apparently taking its marching orders from Sarah Palin. Good for us.

The fact of the matter is that the American people are tired of the relentless partisanship that has led the Congress to having a lower approval rating than head lice.

Our constituents want us to solve problems. That is one of the reasons we get paid. Our colleagues in the Senate today are voting on legislation I put forward to end tax breaks. We can't even get a hearing on this side of the building. These are commonsense solutions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. I yield the gentleman an additional 20 seconds.

Mr. PASCRELL. I want to conclude by reading something, Mr. Speaker. And if you don't know where this came from, that is part of the problem:

Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.
Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us,
Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us;
Facing the rising sun of our new day begun,
Let us march on till victory is won.

Your problem is, most of you don't even know where it came from.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair again would remind all Members of the House of an essential rule of decorum in the House. Under clause 1 of rule XVII, Members are to direct their remarks to the Chair and not to others in the second person.

Mr. NUGENT. I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to ask: Why did the majority shut off all amendments to this resolution? And more importantly, why have they even blocked a traditional motion to recommit? That is something that we generally always give to the minority on both sides of the aisle, a motion to recommit.

Now, I think the reason is—you know, being somewhat cynical, and I will admit to that after what we have been through here—but the cynic would say that they don't want us to have a motion to recommit because our side might bring up a motion, which it would be our privilege to do, that might put the Republican Members on record on impeachment. Now, I don't know that. We got no answer as to why we were not given the privilege of a motion to recommit.

But there is one thing we do know. We know that this lawsuit is going to cost unknown millions and will be an unconscionable waste. We know that that cost is going to come out of programs that have already suffered grievous cuts over the last few years and on which people oftentimes depend for their very lives.

We know that it is pretty partisan because the Democrats were never consulted at any point on this issue, and we know that it is flawed because experts have told us that there is no way in the world that the House of Representatives has any standing on this issue and that a good Federal judge will send it back to us almost immediately.

We know it is a distraction, and we know that what it distracts us from are the serious, serious issues that all of us hear about every day from our own constituencies.

Do you think anybody ever calls me up and says: Why don't we impeach the President or go after the President because it is raining today and it surely is his fault? No, we don't hear that.

I hear about, I am having a hard time getting a new job. I need help to pay for my child's education. I hear a lot of times, my daughter's unemployment benefits have run out. She is facing eviction. I don't know what I am going to do. I hear from people who talk about the children who have come to this country—many of them unaccompanied, by themselves—in an absolute inhumane wave of human suffering that we need to pay some attention to.

I know that out there today, we have had floods in my part of the country in upstate New York that have devastated entire water projects and sewer projects, and something needs to be done. But we won't do that.

So, Mr. Speaker, I am going to urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' to defeat the previous question and please vote ''no'' on the rule. This is one of the

most important issues that we have ever faced during our time in Congress.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, we have heard a lot here today. A lot of it, I don't know exactly where they are coming from. But we have heard a lot of things today.

Democrats would like to believe—or would like the American people to believe, or go to that narrative—that Congress hasn't done its job. Well, you have to remember that the House of Representatives is one-half of that. The Senate is the other half.

Now, if you think about it, we have sent 40 jobs bills over to the Senate, where they are gathering dust on Leader REID's desk. We have passed seven of the appropriations bills here in the House. The Senate, zero. We have passed important tax legislation to ensure our economy continues to grow and that companies continue to hire.

We will be voting today on a veterans package to help our veterans. And tomorrow, for the second time, we are going to consider a bill as it relates to the highway trust fund.

So perhaps the Republicans in the House are getting the job done with support of Members on the other side of the aisle. How many bipartisan bills are sitting there in the Senate just languishing away because there is a decision made just not to move anything forward from the House? That is unfortunate because that hurts the American people.

Mr. Speaker, we hear a lot of things that are supposedly what we want to do. But here is what I believe we are trying to do today. It is about defense of the Constitution. It is pure and simple. It is about the protection that is given by the Constitution to the two houses of the legislative branch and to the President of the United States and the executive branch and to the judiciary, and that separation of powers is within the Constitution. That is what we are fighting for.

Forget about all this other stuff that has been thrown up as a smokescreen. We are fighting to defend the Constitution.

And people say, well, you know, it could cost money. Well, thank goodness. Thank God that our Founding Fathers didn't say, well, you know what? It is a reach too far. It will cost too much. It could cost our lives. They didn't make that decision. What they said was, it is important for the future of this country that we live by the Constitution, that we design a Constitution that will endure into the future.

And, Mr. Speaker, I would suggest to you that this Constitution has endured and has provided the guidance for this country to move forward every day. It is not by happenstance. It is by the fact that we are supposed to live by and defend the Constitution.

Mr. Speaker, when I was a deputy sheriff, if we just said, You know what, I don't agree with the free speech portion of the Constitution, we would have stopped free speech. I had to defend people, stand there and put my body in front of people who were opposed to what the people behind me were saying that was repugnant to us and to most Americans. But I had to put my safety at risk for their free speech. And you know, I could have said, You know what, I don't agree with that. That is just part of the Constitution. Let's not worry about free speech. But we didn't do that. We didn't rewrite the law. We didn't rewrite it.

You know, yesterday or the day before—I am not sure which day it was—but in the Rules Committee, we heard an impassioned description from the gentleman from Florida (Mr. WEBSTER), who was the speaker of the house in Florida, who was sued by the Governor in regards to the implementation of law. And guess what? That body won.

And thank goodness that the house won in the Supreme Court of Florida and that they just didn't say, You know what, you don't have standing. So forget about that.

A lot of people are trying to presuppose what the Supreme Court is going to say or do. I would suggest to you that I am willing to go along with whatever the Supreme Court says. Now, I may not like it. But I am willing to go along with it because I do believe they are the ultimate arbitrators as to what is constitutional and what isn't.

□ 1400

It is amazing that this document that we are talking about, that there is a question about it, that there is a question about the separation of powers.

I would like to read a quote from then-Senator Barack Obama:

> We have got a government that was designed by the Founders with checks and balances. You don't want a President that is too powerful, a Congress that is too powerful, or a Court that is too powerful. Everybody has got their own role. Congress' job is to pass legislation.
>
> The President can veto it or sign it, but what George Bush has been doing as part of his effort to accumulate more power in the Presidency, he has been saying, well, I can basically change what Congress passed by attaching a letter that says I don't agree with this part or that, I'm going to choose to interpret it this way or that way.
>
> It is not part of his power, but it is part of the whole theory of George Bush that he can make laws as he goes along. I disagree with that.

Once again, quoting then-Senator Obama, Senator Obama says:

> I taught the Constitution for 10 years. I believe in the Constitution, and I will obey the Constitution of the United States.

Now, I don't know what happened on the trip from the Capitol down to 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, how that changed, but I guess the Presidency can change your view of the world. It may not be an accurate view of the world, but it can change it.

I think what then-Senator Obama said rang true then and rings true today. It is about the separation of power, and let me tell you something, my friends on the other side of the aisle should be standing there with us because, for too long, this House has now become irrelevant. Congress in general is becoming irrelevant.

When I got elected just over 4 years ago, I came up here with a purpose. I came up here with a belief in the Constitution and that there is separation of powers between the executive branch, the legislative branch, and the judicial branch, but now, I hate to say it, in my 4 years, I have become disenchanted with the fact that this House for way too long has just had a ''cooperate and graduate'' kind of attitude, and I don't think we should do that.

That is why, today, the buck stops here. We have got to make a stand in regards to is the Constitution relevant, is this House relevant. If not, we should just all go home. There is no reason to be here.

I have three sons that serve their country and that have put their lives on the line for this country, not by their own choice—I mean, they serve their country at their choice—but when they go off into war, it is at the direction of the President.

It is a direction to protect this country, and they do so willingly. They raised their hand to say they are going to support and defend the Constitution. I raised it as a police officer outside of Chicago, I raised it as a deputy sheriff, I raised it as sheriff, and I raised it here when I got sworn in as a Member of this body.

I take that seriously, and I take it seriously when anybody thinks they can trample on the Constitution. I take it seriously when anybody thinks that they are above where we need to be.

This legislation is about empowering the Speaker of the House, if he so deems it, to sue the President. I happen to agree with that. Mr. Speaker, we can talk all day—at least I could—in regards to why it is important that this House protect its prerogative in regards to passing legislation and reminding the executive branch as to what their duties are.

Mr. Speaker, this isn't about Democrats and Republicans. Let me tell you something, I wasn't here before this. I got here 4 years ago. I don't care if it is a Republican or Democrat or Independent or whatever. I believe in this institution. I believe in the Constitution of this country, and I believe we should do everything in our power to defend it no matter who is trying to usurp it.

So I encourage my colleagues for the last time to support this rule, to support this institution, and to support this Constitution. It is about are we really serious about the checks and balances that our Founding Fathers so rightfully created.

The material previously referred to by Ms. SLAUGHTER is as follows:

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 694 OFFERED BY MRS. SLAUGHTER OF NEW YORK

Strike all after the resolved clause and insert:

That immediately upon adoption of this resolution the Speaker shall, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the Bring Jobs Home Act (H.R. 851). The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions. If the Committee of the Whole rises and reports that it has come to no resolution on the bill, then on the next legislative day the House shall, immediately after the third daily order of business under clause 1 of rule XIV, resolve into the Committee of the Whole for further consideration of the bill.

SEC. 2. Immediately upon disposition of H.R. 851, the Speaker shall, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the Paycheck Fairness Act (H.R. 377). The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions. If the Committee of the Whole rises and reports that it has come to no resolution on the bill, then on the next legislative day the House shall, immediately after the third daily order of business under clause 1 of rule XIV, resolve into the Committee of the Whole for further consideration of the bill.

SEC. 3. Immediately upon disposition of H.R. 377 the Speaker shall, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the Fair Minimum Wage Act of 2013 (H.R. 1010). The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions. If the Committee of the Whole rises and reports that it has come to no resolution on the bill, then on the next legislative day the House shall, immediately after the third daily order of business under clause 1 of rule XIV, resolve into the Committee of the Whole for further consideration of the bill.

SEC. 4. Immediately upon disposition of H.R. 1010 the Speaker shall, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the Bank on Students Emergency Loan Refinancing Act (H.R. 4582). The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions. If the Committee of the Whole rises and reports that it has come to no resolution on the bill, then on the next legislative day the House shall, immediately after the third daily order of business under clause 1 of rule XIV, resolve into the Committee of the Whole for further consideration of the bill.

SEC. 5. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H.R. 851, H.R. 377, H.R. 1010, or H.R. 4582.

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

This vote, the vote on whether to order the previous question on a special rule, is not merely a procedural vote. A vote against ordering the previous question is a vote against the Republican majority agenda and a vote to allow the Democratic minority to offer an alternative plan. It is a vote about what the House should be debating.

Mr. Clarence Cannon's Precedents of the House of Representatives (VI, 308–311), describes the vote on the previous question on the rule as ''a motion to direct or control the consideration of the subject before the House being made by the Member in charge.'' To defeat the previous question is to give the opposition a chance to decide the subject before the House. Cannon cites the Speaker's ruling of January 13, 1920, to the effect that ''the refusal of the House to sustain the demand for the previous question passes the control of the resolution to the opposition'' in order to offer an amendment. On March 15, 1909, a member of the majority party offered a rule resolution. The House defeated the previous question and a member of the opposition rose to a parliamentary inquiry, asking who was entitled to recognition. Speaker Joseph G. Cannon (R-Illinois) said: ''The previous question having been refused, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Fitzgerald, who had asked the gentleman to yield to him for an amendment, is entitled to the first recognition.''

The Republican majority may say ''the vote on the previous question is simply a vote on whether to proceed to an immediate vote on adopting the resolution . . . [and] has no substantive legislative or policy implications whatsoever.'' But that is not what they have always said. Listen to the Republican Leadership Manual on the Legislative Process in the United States House of Representatives, (6th edition, page 135). Here's how the Republicans describe the previous question vote in their own manual: ''Although it is generally not possible to amend the rule because the majority Member controlling the time will not yield for the purpose of offering an amendment, the same result may be achieved by voting down the previous question on the rule . . . When the motion for the previous question is defeated, control of the time passes to the Member who led the opposition to ordering the previous question. That Member, because he then controls the time, may offer an amendment to the rule, or yield for the purpose of amendment.''

In Deschler's Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives, the subchapter titled ''Amending Special Rules'' states: ''a refusal to order the previous question on such a rule [a special rule reported from the Committee on Rules] opens the resolution to amendment and further debate.'' (Chapter 21, section 21.2) Section 21.3 continues: ''Upon rejection of the motion for the previous question on a resolution reported from the Committee on Rules, control shifts to the Member leading the opposition to the previous question, who may offer a proper amendment or motion and who controls the time for debate thereon.''

Clearly, the vote on the previous question on a rule does have substantive policy implications. It is one of the only available tools for those who oppose the Republican majority's agenda and allows those with alternative views the opportunity to offer an alternative plan.

Mr. NUGENT. With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, on that, I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON). Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

EXTENSION OF AFGHAN SPECIAL IMMIGRANT PROGRAM

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill

(H.R. 5195) to provide additional visas for the Afghan Special Immigrant Visa Program, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5195

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

SECTION 1. EXTENSION OF AFGHAN SPECIAL IMMIGRANT PROGRAM.

Section 602(b)(3) of the Afghan Allies Protection Act of 2009 (8 U.S.C. 1101 note) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(E) SPECIAL RULE FOR END OF CALENDAR YEAR 2014.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—During the period beginning on the date of the enactment of this subparagraph and ending on December 31, 2014, an additional 1,000 principal aliens may be provided special immigrant status under this section. For purposes of status provided under this subparagraph—

''(I) the period during which an alien must have been employed in accordance with paragraph (2)(A)(ii) must terminate on or before December 31, 2014;

''(II) the principal alien seeking special immigrant status under this subparagraph shall apply to the Chief of Mission in accordance with paragraph (2)(D) not later than December 31, 2014; and

''(III) the authority to provide such status shall terminate on December 31, 2014.

''(ii) CONSTRUCTION.—Clause (i) shall not be construed to affect the authority, numerical limitations, or terms for provision of status, under subparagraph (D).''.

SEC. 2. TEMPORARY FEE INCREASE FOR CERTAIN CONSULAR SERVICES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of State, not later than January 1, 2015, shall increase the fee or surcharge authorized under section 140(a) of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 1994 and 1995 (Public Law 103–236; 8 U.S.C. 1351 note) by $1.00 for processing machine-readable nonimmigrant visas and machine-readable combined border crossing identification cards and nonimmigrant visas.

(b) DEPOSIT OF AMOUNTS.—Notwithstanding section 140(a)(2) of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 1994 and 1995 (Public Law 103–236; 8 U.S.C. 1351 note), the additional amount collected pursuant the fee increase authorized under subsection (a) shall be deposited in the general fund of the Treasury.

(c) SUNSET PROVISION.—The fee increase authorized under subsection (a) shall terminate on the date that is 5.5 years after the first date on which such increased fee is collected.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HOLDING) and the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LOFGREN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on H.R. 5195, currently under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from North Carolina?

There was no objection.

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 5195 makes available through the end of calendar year 2014 1,000 visas for the Special Immigrant Visa program created by the Afghan Allies Protection Act of 2009. The 1,000 visas are in addition to 3,000 that Congress already allocated for fiscal year 2014.

The main eligibility requirement, Mr. Speaker, to receive a Special Immigrant Visa under this program is that the Afghan principal applicant must have worked for or on behalf of the U.S. Government for at least 1 year in Afghanistan.

The State Department has indicated that it will issue all 3,000 of their originally allocated visas by the beginning of August, and the Department currently has around 300 approved applications simply waiting for additional visas to be allocated. That number will rise as State continues to process applications over the next few months.

We must remember that simply because a visa cap is reached does not mean that Congress must automatically allocate additional visas. In fact, Congress rarely does so in immigration programs.

I understand that proponents of this legislation claim that individuals waiting on a visa are in harm's way due to their work for the United States Government and the drawdown of U.S. forces in the region, but as with any immigration program, Mr. Speaker, we must also be cognizant of our duty to ensure the safety and security of the United States by making sure that anyone issued a visa is not a threat to our public safety or national security.

So when there are calls for this program to be extended once again before the balance of fiscal year 2015, the Judiciary Committee will be conducting oversight over the program. Such oversight will allow us to make educated decisions on how many, if any, special immigrant visas should be allocated for fiscal year 15.

I look forward to that oversight and urge my colleagues to support this bill that we have under consideration. I reserve the balance of my time.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC, July 29, 2014.

Hon. BOB GOODLATTE,
Chairman, House Committee on the Judiciary, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your consultation with the Foreign Affairs Committee on H.R. 5195, a bill to provide additional visas for the Afghan Special Immigrant Visa Program, which involves the legislative jurisdiction of the Committee on Foreign Affairs under House Rule X. As a result of those consultations, I agree that the Foreign Affairs Committee may be discharged from further consideration of that bill, so that it may proceed expeditiously to the House floor.

I am writing to confirm our mutual understanding that, by forgoing consideration of H.R. 5195, the Foreign Affairs Committee does not waive jurisdiction over the subject matter contained in this, or any other, legislation. Our Committee also reserves the right to seek an appropriate number of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving this bill, and would appreciate your support for any such request.

I ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included in the Congressional Record during floor consideration of H.R. 5195.

Sincerely,

EDWARD R. ROYCE,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY,
Washington, DC, July 30, 2014.

Hon. ED ROYCE,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN ROYCE, Thank you for your letter regarding H.R. 5195, a bill to provide additional visas for the Afghan Special Immigrant Visa Program

It is my understanding that the Committee on Foreign Affairs has Rule X jurisdiction over portions of H.R. 5195. I am, therefore, most appreciative of your decision to forego consideration of the bill so that it may move expeditiously to the House floor. I acknowledge that although you are waiving formal consideration of the bill, the Committee on Foreign Affairs is in no way waiving its jurisdiction over the subject matter contained in the bill. In addition, if a conference is necessary on this legislation, I will support any request that your committee be represented therein.

Finally, I am pleased to include your letter and this reply letter memorializing our mutual understanding in the Congressional Record during floor consideration of H.R. 5195.

Sincerely,

BOB GOODLATTE,
Chairman.

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 5195 accomplishes the important goal of allowing these additional 1,000 Afghan Special Immigrant Visas to be issued before the end of the calendar year.

As has been mentioned, this program was established in 2009 to protect Afghan nationals who were placed in grave danger because they were employed by or assisted the United States Government. Having benefited greatly from their faithful service, Members on both sides of the aisle recognized that we owed a debt of gratitude. We owed these people and their family members the opportunity to live safely and freely.

The Afghan Special Immigrant Visa program has not been without its problems. Many of us have come together over the years to complain that the process for issuing the visas was too slow and cumbersome.

Mr. Speaker, from the start of the program through fiscal year 2012, only 1,051 of the 8,500 visas authorized by statute had actually been issued to deserving Afghan nationals. In October of 2012, The Washington Post reported that more than 5,000 Afghan Special Immigrant Visa applications were sitting in a backlog waiting to be adjudicated.

Secretary Kerry recently stated that because of ''unconscionably long processing times for applicants, some deserving people were simply falling through the cracks.''

Now, recently, the program has undergone major improvements. In this fiscal year alone, the State Department has issued more Afghan Special Immigrant Visas than in all previous years combined. The process is now moving swiftly enough that we are coming right up against the cap of 3,000 visas that we set earlier this year in the approps act.

That is where this bill comes in. By making these visas available to Afghan nationals who are facing danger precisely because they provided service to our country, to America, this bill will help ensure that we stand by our commitment to protect those who helped to protect us.

I think it is worth noting that keeping our commitment to these people—the large majority of whom acted as our translators in the field—is not merely a good in and of itself. It is important that the United States stands by its commitment here because we ultimately have to work collaboratively with people all over the globe.

We must ensure that the message we send through our actions is that we honor those who take great personal risks to assist our men and women serving overseas and we do not forget what they do.

Mr. Speaker, I support today's bill. I hope to work with my colleagues to support future extensions of this program, if necessary. I urge my colleagues to also support this important measure, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, with pleasure I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. KINZINGER), a champion on this issue.

Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Chairman GOODLATTE for helping to bring this to the floor very quickly, also to the Majority Leader-elect KEVIN MCCARTHY for his hard work and also to my good friend on the other side of the aisle, Representative BLUMENAUER, who has had a passion for this program since even before I got here.

Mr. Speaker, at a time when we just get debating a lot of tough things, it is great to see times when Republicans and Democrats can come together and do things for those that fight hard on behalf of our country and on behalf of theirs.

The Special Immigrant Visa program was designed to provide safe refuge to the countless brave Afghan men and women who willingly put their lives on the line and served shoulder to shoulder with our servicemembers in Operation Enduring Freedom.

This program is critical to our national security and to our servicemembers and veterans in any future engagement that will likely come at some point in the future.

The SIV programs provide lifesaving protections to those who served in U.S. missions and now are in danger as a result at the end of that service. The Taliban are hunting these people down as we speak here today.

Because it is in our national security interest to keep these promises and protect our allies and simply because it is the right thing to do, I want you to think about for a second: In a time of war, what can American soldiers and American marines, airmen, and sailors do in order to communicate with the local population and to get them on our side versus a very tough and determined enemy? Of course, the basic thing to that is to be able to speak to the local population.

So you think about, in many cases, these young men and women—these translators that, in some cases, wouldn't even put on anything to obscure their face and would stand side by side with American soldiers against Taliban in very tough areas, many of them, now as America withdraws its mission from Afghanistan and winds down its mission, now find themselves under threat every day.

Whether we agree or we disagree with the war in Afghanistan and anything like that, the reality of it is this: we all can agree that those that were willing to stand by us and to stand against this very, very bad enemy well deserve to come here.

□ 1415

We of course want to ensure that we are going through the proper process, and I want to commend the State Department for recently improving their ability to process these applicants and to do so correctly and safely. But I also would remind folks that when we talk about the United States of America and who do we want here, people who are willing to stand shoulder to shoulder with our soldiers and defend our cause and defend their cause are the ones we would like to see in the United States of America enjoying their freedom as well.

I mentioned earlier the threats that these people live under. It is estimated that multiple people are being killed every day who engaged in this kind of effort on behalf of the United States. So I want to commend everybody in this body for standing together to say that we need to stand with those who stood with us.

Recently there was a very interesting news special that talked about the reality of what was going on, and it interviewed a lot of these translators. Something that struck me the most was somebody who had been denied a visa, or at least it had taken a very long time to get, but he still had faith.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. HOLDING. I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman.

Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois. He stood up and said that he had faith that he was going to make it to the United States of America because the United States of America came to his country to help them, and he knows that the United States of America will do the right thing. It is inspiring to see that kind of belief in our country that we have, but to see it shared by people in war-torn areas.

So again to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, thank you. Representative BLUMENAUER, thank you for your friendship and your hard work.

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. MORAN).

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend from California for yielding me the time to add my voice to this bill which addresses an issue of national security and affirms our moral commitment to those who have risked their lives on our behalf.

I especially want to give a shout-out to Mr. BLUMENAUER and Mr. KINZINGER for their diligence in getting this measure to the floor.

During our war in Afghanistan, our forces have been assisted ably and loyally by some Afghan nationals who have been essential to the mission and the lives of our military, especially Afghan interpreters. Now that we are leaving Afghanistan, these brave partners and their families face a mortal threat from the Taliban. They are relying on us to uphold our commitment to return their loyalty—and now that time has come—by allowing them to relocate to the United States.

This Special Immigrant Visa category recognizes the extraordinary debt we owe these partners. As Ms. LOFGREN mentioned, for a number of years, that category suffered from administrative neglect, and the visa process was hardly functional. In the past year, though, important improvements have been made to the processing system and many more of our Afghan allies are being admitted to the United States.

Among them is Janis Shinwari, who served a translator alongside U.S. troops and saved the life of U.S. Army Captain Matt Zeller, with whom he now has a lifelong bond. Janis is now a member of my staff in my district office in Alexandria, Virginia. He continues to hear the desperate stories of his fellow translators who are in great peril and desperately seek to leave Afghanistan. Unfortunately, there are no visas left for the many deserving Afghans who are still in this administrative limbo. In fact, State estimates that we will hit the statutory cap on visas this summer with thousands of applications still outstanding.

The 1,000 visas authorized under this emergency measure are necessary. This bill is critical, but it does not represent the end of our responsibility on this issue.

I look forward to continuing to work with my colleagues to ensure that an appropriate number of visas are authorized for 2015. We have to stand by our friends and ensure that those who

have the courage to work with us in future conflicts know that they will not be abandoned.

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, it is with pleasure that I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON).

Mr. COTTON. Mr. Speaker, I strongly support the Emergency Afghan Allies Extension Act, which would add 1,000 new visas for Afghans who served American troops.

This program was designed to provide safe refuge to the many Afghans who put their lives on the line and served with our troops in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. I served personally with several Afghans who literally bled for us and who still aspire to immigrate to America in conformity with our laws—exactly the kind of immigrants which we welcome.

This program is also critical to our national security and to our troops who, in the future, will again serve around the world and need support from local nationals. If we don't stand with these brave Afghans now, how will our troops in the future get the support they need?

Indeed, many Afghans who served with American forces are now hunted by the Taliban and other terrorist groups. Adding a thousand visas this year may be the difference between life and death for some of these brave Afghans, particularly as America withdraws our troops from that country.

Friends, colleagues, I urge you to support this bill because it is in our national security interests to keep our promises and protect our allies, and it is the right thing to do.

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER), the author of this bill, who has been a tremendous advocate to make sure that America does the right thing.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentlewoman's courtesy and her leadership in working with us on this challenging problem.

Mr. Speaker, in a way this represents an amazing, positive development. I have been working in this area for 10 years, dealing with the plight of the foreign nationals that too often America was at risk of leaving behind. But in the course of our work, what has been celebrated here is that actually the challenge today is the result of the administration listening to Congress and improving a system that was fatally flawed—there is no polite way around it—but they have worked hard to improve it. As a result, the visas we have granted have expired. They are gone now. There are no more to be issued. These additional 1,000 visas are critical to be able to get us through this gap.

It is, Mr. Speaker, I think, testimony to the fact that people here in Congress can cross party lines, can work together cooperatively on problems where we are focused. I appreciate the kind words of my friend, Congressman KINZINGER. We wouldn't be where we are right now without him, his focus and his commitment.

I should probably talk about his staff, Michael Essington and Zach Hunter.

There are a list of people who are heroes in this fight that I hope we can spend a moment or two acknowledging because we did get cooperation from Majority Leader MCCARTHY, his security adviser, Emily Murry.

Chairman GOODLATTE, who has returned to this on numerous occasions, we wouldn't be here without him.

Leader CANTOR and his staff, particularly Robert Story Karem, who helped us navigate a similar crisis for the Iraq program last fall.

Our whip, STENY HOYER, and his policy members, Daniel Silverberg and Tom Mahr, were there. At times when there is a lot going on, there is a lot of controversy, there are competing interests, but they kept their eye on the ball to move this forward.

We have got some critical people in the outside world, the NGOs, particularly the Iraqi Refugee Assistance Project, and their gurus, Becca Heller and Katie Reisner, who helped provide the details, the push.

And I have to admit that there is a champion in my office, my legislative director, Michael Harold, who is as responsible as any one single person who just would not give up, late nights, early mornings, weekends, dealing with things that none of us want to know that happened behind the scenes. But the point is that we are here.

I am hopeful that this signals not just a new era in terms of our being able to get past this, but that we take a comprehensive look at the Afghans and the Iraqis that are left behind because we are facing additional deadlines, and we shouldn't have to go through this on a repeated basis. It takes time that could be better spent more appropriately.

I am confident, at the end, we will do the right thing, but we shouldn't go down to the deadline. We shouldn't create doubt in the minds of people who are waiting desperately, who are trying to evade the tender mercies of the Taliban and al Qaeda, who have long memories and who have hunted these people down. They have captured them and they have killed their siblings. They have tortured them, beheaded them. That is not a fate that they deserve.

I was at the National Airport when Janis Shinwari and Captain Matt Zeller were united, and it is a moment I will never forget. But our moving forward now with this legislation and committing ourselves to the big picture, doing it right on a cooperative basis, means that it will make the difference of life or death for thousands of others that are waiting in this pipeline, and it will make all of us feel better as we conclude this summer session that we are doing it on a note of the sort of thing that we should do, how we should do it, and why we should do it.

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Hawaii (Ms. GABBARD), who has herself served our country in the armed services.

Ms. GABBARD. Mr. Speaker, it is a proud moment that we are witnessing here today as we see a bipartisan team of leaders here in Congress who have so passionately been committed to this issue, taking action and finding a solution, not in an ideal way in this crunch time, but nonetheless finding a solution that will change people's lives.

When I first joined the military, one of the first lessons drilled into us as young privates by our drill instructors was the importance of teamwork, that we cannot be successful as individuals and how crucial it is for us to work as members of a team towards that singular mission. One team, one fight.

These Afghan interpreters and their families put their lives on the line right alongside our troops, not carrying arms, not carrying ammunition to defend themselves, but placing their lives in the hands of our servicemembers as they worked together to complete that mission. Through that sacrifice, they became a member of our team. They felt pain with our losses, and they felt victorious in our successes.

The very least that we can do is to take this small step and honor our commitment to our team members by passing H.R. 5195. This is one step towards keeping our promise and just beginning to repay the debt to these Afghan people who have served and sacrificed alongside us.

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY).

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from California for allowing me a chance to share some words today, and I thank her for her leadership on this issue.

To my colleagues Mr. KINZINGER and Mr. BLUMENAUER, thank you for your continued leadership on this issue and many others. It has been through your persistence and perseverance that this day comes, and you deserve quite a bit of gratitude and recognition for your work.

Throughout the war in Afghanistan, U.S. servicemen and -women worked alongside thousands of Afghan partners who were employed as translators, as drivers, as cooks, as NGO staff, cultural advisers, and janitors. These Afghans risked their lives on a daily basis to come to work. They faced the very same violence, attacks, and threats as U.S. troops, but bravely put themselves in harm's way to aid in our shared mission.

As has frequently been the case in the past, when the United States began

to withdraw troops from Afghanistan, Congress created a Special Immigrant Visa program open to foreign nationals who served in critical roles and supported the American war effort. To date, more than 9,000 Afghans have benefited from the Special Immigrant Visa program. I am pleased to hear that the State Department has accelerated the processing time for these special visas in recent months, especially since there are over 6,000 still in the pipeline. However, as a result of this progress, the State Department is quickly running out of visas previously authorized by Congress.

The bill before us today will authorize 1,000 visas for the remainder of 2014 so that the State Department can continue processing applications for Afghan men and women who assumed enormous risks to aid our troops. Most importantly, this bill sends a message that the United States is a loyal partner, that we keep our word and we honor our promises, that we stand with those who stand with us in an ongoing fight for a fairer, freer world.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I have no additional speakers.

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. KINZINGER), and then I am prepared to close.

□ 1430

Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding again.

I won't take much time, except to say it is very inspiring—as I think it is important to note when it happens—to see both sides of the aisle talking about such a very important issue.

I think it is important to note that when we exit the shores of the United States, Americans stand together with those that stood with us.

This is going to be a very important message to our current allies, and, again, something that is important to understand, as we all know, as history repeats itself, that at some point into the future, and we hope it is far out into the future, America will find itself engaged in something similar again where we need the indigenous population to help us to give them freedom and to defeat evil terrorism, or whatever it may be at the time. This is a message that we are sending to future conflicts that we will stand with you.

This is also going to, Mr. Speaker, save the lives of American soldiers, marines, airmen, and sailors in the future, as they have somebody that can help them to communicate with the local population and win the trust.

Again, for everybody involved, I want to just once again say thank you.

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I will just thank all of the people who worked so hard on this, certainly on both sides of the aisle, and, most especially, Mr. BLUMENAUER, who has just been ceaseless in his efforts to make sure that these translators were not left behind and not forgotten.

A note on the future: I am happy to support this bill for 1,000 visas today. However, it is reported that there are 5,000 translators backlogged. Now, we don't know, in that 5,000, some may have been murdered already, some may have given up, or some may have gone elsewhere. We don't know that we are going to need an additional number of visas, but we need to open our hearts in the same spirit of bipartisanship that if we fall short, we are going to have to come together as a country. Because we all know, not only is this the right thing to do morally, but for our troops in the field it is essential.

People have to know in other countries that if they step forward to assist the United States, the United States will honor its promises to them.

That is why this bill is so important, not only for what it does, but what it stands for, and why I urge its adoption.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

In closing, this is an important piece of bipartisan legislation. The Afghans, who benefit by this legislation, put their lives on the line for the United States of America. We owe them a debt of gratitude.

I look forward in the coming Congress to doing oversight to look at the further backlog of Afghans who may be eligible for visas, and look through oversight how this program is being administered and ensure that we are able to fulfill the promises that we have made to Afghans who have helped us in the field.

I encourage my colleagues to vote for this important piece of legislation.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HOLDING) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5195, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

DENOUNCING USE OF CIVILIANS AS HUMAN SHIELDS BY HAMAS AND OTHER TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 107) denouncing the use of civilians as human shields by Hamas and other terrorist organizations in violation of international humanitarian law, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 107

Whereas the term ''human shields'' refers to the use of civilians, prisoners of war, or other noncombatants whose mere presence is designed to protect combatants and objects from attack;

Whereas the use of human shields violates international humanitarian law (also referred to as the Law of War or Law of Armed Conflict);

Whereas Additional Protocol I, Article 50(1) to the Geneva Convention defines ''civilian'' as, ''[a]ny person who does not belong to one of the categories of persons referred to in Article 4(A) (1), (2), (3), and (6) of the Third Convention and in Article 43 of this Protocol. In the case of doubt whether a person is a civilian, that person shall be considered a civilian.'';

Whereas Additional Protocol I, Article 51(7) to the Geneva Convention states, ''[T]he presence or movement of the civilian population or individual civilians shall not be used to render certain points or areas immune from military operations, in particular in attempts to shield military objectives from attacks or to shield, favour or impede military operations. The Parties to the conflict shall not direct the movement of the civilian population or individual civilians in order to attempt to shield military objectives from attacks or to shield military operations.'';

Whereas since June 15, 2014, there have been over 2,000 rockets fired by Hamas and other terrorist organizations from Gaza into Israel;

Whereas Hamas has been using civilian populations as human shields by placing their missile batteries in densely populated areas and near schools, hospitals, and mosques;

Whereas Israel drops leaflets, makes announcements, places phone calls and sends text messages to the Palestinian people in Gaza warning them in advance that an attack is imminent, and goes to extraordinary lengths to target only terrorist actors;

Whereas Hamas has urged the residents of Gaza to ignore the Israeli warnings and to remain in their houses and has encouraged Palestinians to gather on the roofs of their homes to act as human shields;

Whereas on July 23, 2014, the 46-Member UN Human Rights Council passed a resolution to form a commission of inquiry over Israel's operations in Gaza without a single mention of the indiscriminate rocket attacks by Hamas or the use of human shields, with the United States being the lone dissenting vote;

Whereas public reports have cited the role of Iran and Syria in providing material support and training to Hamas and other terrorist groups carrying out rocket and mortar attacks from Gaza;

Whereas throughout the summer of 2006 conflict between the State of Israel and the terrorist organization Hezbollah, Hezbollah forces utilized human shields in violation of international humanitarian law;

Whereas Al-Qaeda, Al-Shabaab, Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and other foreign terrorist organizations typically use innocent civilians as human shields;

Whereas the United States and Israel have cooperated on missile defense projects, including Iron Dome, David's Sling, and the Arrow Anti-Missile System, projects designed to thwart a diverse range of threats, including short-range missiles and rockets fired by non-state actors, such as Hamas;

Whereas the United States has provided $235,000,000 in fiscal year 2014 for Iron Dome research, development, and production;

Whereas, during the most recent rocket attacks from Gaza, Iron Dome has successfully

intercepted dozens of rockets that were launched against Israeli population centers; and

Whereas 5 million Israelis are currently living under the threat of rocket attacks from Gaza: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That Congress—

(1) strongly condemns the use of innocent civilians as human shields;

(2) calls on the international community to recognize and condemn Hamas' breaches of international law through the use of human shields;

(3) places responsibility for the rocket attacks against Israel on Hamas and other terrorist organizations, such as Islamic Jihad;

(4) supports the sovereign right of the Government of Israel to defend its territory and its citizens from Hamas' rocket attacks, kidnapping attempts and the use of tunnels and other means to carry out attacks against Israel;

(5) expresses condolences to the families of the innocent victims on both sides of the conflict;

(6) supports Palestinian civilians who reject Hamas and all forms of terrorism and violence, desiring to live in peace with their Israeli neighbors;

(7) condemns Hamas' repeated refusals to accept a cease-fire with Israel;

(8) supports efforts to permanently demilitarize the Gaza Strip, removing Hamas's means to target Israel, including its use of tunnels, rockets, and other means; and

(9) condemns the United Nations Human Rights Council's biased commission of inquiry into Israel's Gaza operations.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the concurrent resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Let me begin by expressing my appreciation to the chairman and ranking member of the Middle East Subcommittee, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN of Florida, and Mr. DEUTCH of Florida for their good work on this legislation. I am pleased to have worked with Mr. ENGEL and the leadership to ensure that this legislation was scheduled for the floor today for consideration.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation places responsibility for the escalation and violence squarely where it belongs: with the Iranian-backed terrorist group Hamas. Hamas is deliberately targeting Israeli civilians through the use not only of rockets but longer and longer range missiles—2,500 of these so far—aimed at cities—Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, attempting to attack Israeli communities. Remember, these attacks are at civilian populations, they are not at military installations. And Hamas is perpetuating the kidnapping and murder, which started with three Israeli teenagers.

Again and again, we have seen these incursions through these tunnels—32 new tunnels found so far—3 miles into Israeli territory. One of the amazing things, when you go into the tunnels, you see not only how they are used for these attacks, but what they have in reserve in these tunnels: ropes, syringes, tranquilizers, handcuffs, explosives, walls and walls of explosives. These were attempts to inflict mass casualty attacks on the civilian population.

$100 million is approximately what was spent on these tunnels, at the expense, I might add, of the Palestinian people. That is 4,000 trucks of equipment coming in over the border from Israel with cement—which was presumed to be used, hopefully, for schools or hospitals—with cement, with aggregate, with steel, instead used for the construction of these tunnels tunneling under Israel.

Less than 10 years ago, Israel pulled out of Gaza. The Strip was going to flourish without Israel's control. That was what we were told. But it wasn't supposed to be this way. It wasn't supposed to be a situation where Hamas would take resources and plow it into terror day by day.

Today, the Gaza Strip is a terrorist sanctuary on Israel's borders with sanctuaries within this sanctuary. We now know 32 of these are tunnels.

Beyond targeting Israeli civilians with kidnapping and indiscriminate firing of rockets, Hamas shows a callous disregard for the lives of the Palestinians it ostensibly represents. That is the purpose of this initiative here today, to call attention to that fact.

Earlier this month, the Hamas spokesman Sami Abu Zuhri appeared on Al-Aqsa television and encouraged Gaza residents to act as human shields. That is the responsibility they ask as they are hidden down in these tunnels. As they are in these bunkers, they ask their civilian population to go and make of themselves human shields in front of rocket launchers.

The world can't let terrorists embed their forces among the civilian population, using them as human shields, without speaking out. This is a direct violation of international humanitarian law and the law of war, sacrificing the innocent in an effort to protect those engaged in terror from an Israeli response.

Hamas is engaging in a crime of enormous proportions, perpetrated by those who are deliberately hiding among civilians to protect themselves. According to the Geneva Convention, the presence of the civilian population, or individual civilians, shall not be used to render certain points or areas immune from military operations, in particular, in attempts to shield military objectives from attack, or to shield, favor, or impede military operations. That is the Geneva Convention.

A full court press to discredit Israel is on in the United Nations. My question is: Where are the defenders of international law in condemning Hamas' use of human shields? I saw the report. There is no mention in there of the rockets being fired against Israel.

Yes, this is a case where Israel is using missile defense to protect its civilians, and Hamas is using their civilians to protect their missiles. It is a case where we have to recognize Israel's right to defend its people by taking necessary and appropriate force to neutralize the threat posed by Hamas.

Think about the recent discovery that Israeli security sources unearthed, evidence that Hamas was preparing to dispatch 200 terrorists via ten tunnels toward six Israeli communities with a goal of killing and kidnapping scores and scores of Israelis on the Jewish New Year. If that was on our border with Canada, how would we react?

I urge all of my colleagues to support this resolution, which takes a strong stand against Hamas' crimes, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in strong support of H. Con. Res. 107, condemning Hamas' use of human shields in Gaza.

Mr. Speaker, in recent weeks, on our TV screens and computer monitors, in the pages of newspapers and magazines, we have seen the bloody and brutal results of war. We have heard the reports of so many lives lost. No matter where you come from or what you believe, if you don't grieve over every innocent killed, you simply don't have a heart.

What is missing from many of these stories, though, is why these blameless men, women, and children ended up in harm's way. When Israel acts to defend itself, it does everything it can do to warn civilians and minimize loss of life. Israel warns Palestinians ahead of time, going so far as to say specifically where an airstrike is going to occur.

What does Hamas do, on the other hand? It forces Palestinians to stay in their homes, to stay in the line of fire. All the while, Hamas leaders cower in their underground tunnels. Then they have the cynicism to point their cameras at the dead, show the world the outcome of their human shield strategy, and blame Israel. It is despicable and it is shameful.

This resolution sends a clear message. The Palestinian people of Gaza should not have to take this anymore from Hamas.

It also makes clear that we support taking away Hamas' ability to wage terror campaigns.

As Secretary Kerry said on Tuesday:

> Any process to resolve the crisis in Gaza in a lasting and meaningful way must lead to the disarmament of Hamas and all terrorist groups.

Now is the time for the United States to stand firm in our support of Israel. Hamas has Qatar and Turkey, shamefully, to support them, and the rest of

the world has turned a deaf ear to Israel's pleas for security.

The U.N. Human Rights Council, which, frankly, is a joke, even voted to investigate Israel for war crimes, with the United States casting the courageous lone dissenting vote. We know the Human Rights Council typically has a muddled view of Israeli-Palestinian issues. But given the constant barrage of Hamas rockets, launched from civilian population centers, day in and day out, week in and week out, year in and year out, and falling on Israeli civilian population centers, the Council seems especially out of touch.

We ought to mention something that is very important. This war started because Hamas keeps attacking the Israeli civilian population through the years with its missiles—civilians. So for Hamas to now fret over civilian casualties, which is the fault of them in both Gaza and Israel, really just rings hollow.

□ 1445

If Hamas were so concerned about human casualties, why does it target Israeli civilian populations, as it has all these years?

As Israel's security is threatened and its reputation is smeared—frankly, the media hasn't been helpful or even-handed—this moral equivalency between a terrorist group and a democratic country trying to protect its citizens is sometimes sickening.

The United States is the only one true friend that Israel has. We must always stand up for Israel's security, and we must state plainly that Israel is not alone.

I want to thank Representative ROS-LEHTINEN and Representative DEUTCH for their leadership on this issue. They have done very strong work in bringing to light Hamas' deplorable crimes against the Israeli and Palestinian people. I also want to thank Representative STEVE ISRAEL and Representative TOM COLE for sponsoring a similar resolution, which the House passed just a few weeks ago.

I also want to thank Chairman ROYCE, who has worked diligently and hard to bring consensus to our committee, so we can speak with one voice to let the Israeli people know that when it comes to the support of Israel, support is strong and bipartisan from this Congress, and that is the way it should be.

So only when the world rejects Hamas and its tactics and when Hamas can no longer rain terrorist rockets on Israel and send the Palestinian to their deaths will peace between Israelis and Palestinians be possible.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this resolution, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN), chair of the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa and author of this measure.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. I thank my good friend, the chairman of our committee, ED ROYCE of California, as well as the ranking member, ELIOT ENGEL, for their continued efforts in support of human rights and Israel's right to defend herself.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution condemning Hamas' use of human shields in violation of international humanitarian law is an extremely important and timely measure, given the current situation in Israel and Gaza.

I want to first thank my colleague from South Florida, TED DEUTCH, for joining me in introducing this legislation. It was at an official factfinding mission trip that we took to the Middle East earlier this month where Ted and I realized how important this measure was needed.

While we were there, Hamas had already begun to increase the frequency of indiscriminate rocket attacks against Israel. Prime Minister Netanyahu was compelled to respond, but made it clear from the very beginning that the objective was to restore peace and security to the people of Israel and that quiet would be met with quiet, but Hamas would not relent and only increased its attacks.

While Hamas was firing rockets at innocent Israeli civilians, Israel was taking every step imaginable to avoid Palestinian civilian casualties. Hamas' response was to intentionally place the Palestinians in harm's way.

It stores its rockets and weapons underneath the homes of Palestinians and even in at least three schools run by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency, and it uses Palestinian men, women, and children as human shields, in violation of international humanitarian law, by placing its missile batteries in densely-populated areas and near schools, hospitals, and mosques.

Mr. Speaker, the contrast between Israel—a legitimate sovereign state—and Hamas—a terrorist organization—could not be any clearer. Israel values and goes to great lengths to protect human life, while Hamas has no respect for human life and goes to great lengths to sacrifice anyone, including the Palestinian people, in the name of its war against Israel.

Israel has accepted repeated cease-fire offers. Hamas has rejected them all. While Israel seeks to fight terrorism, Hamas is an internationally recognized terror organization that is being supported by countries like Qatar in its war against our true democratic ally, Israel, yet it is Israel that wrongfully faces international condemnation for exercising her right to protect her citizens and defend herself and gets singled out when the world should be condemning Hamas.

Last week, Mr. Speaker, the U.N. Human Rights Council, an institution that has been leading the anti-Israel charge for years now and has since lost any legitimacy that it might have had, passed a resolution to investigate what it calls war crimes and human rights violations by Israel, not Hamas.

There was not even a word about Hamas' attacks against innocent Israeli civilians, nor Hamas' use of Palestinians as human shields. Of the 47 members on the Human Rights Council, you would think that there would be many voices of reason—or some voices of reason—to speak out against this obvious anti-Israel bias, but the United States was the lone voice of dissent against this anti-Israel resolution.

Our so-called European allies lacked the courage of their convictions, and they couldn't even muster the resolve to vote for or against the resolution. Instead, they abstained. This is a disgrace, and it is a shame.

If the United Nations Human Rights Council will not act and use its voice, that is why it is so important for the U.S. House of Representatives to pass this resolution and not only stand up for the Palestinian people who have been made pawns in Hamas' mission to destroy Israel, to their detriment, but for Israel in the face of this biased anti-Israel agenda.

We must be the counterbalance, Mr. Speaker. We must send a message to the world that we will continue to stand alongside Israel and that we will condemn Hamas and its use of human shields. I urge my colleagues to support this resolution to stand up for our ally, Israel, and to stand up for human rights and American ideals and principles.

I thank the chairman, Mr. ROYCE, and the ranking member, Mr. ENGEL, as well as my South Florida colleague, Mr. DEUTCH, for their help.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DEUTCH), my good friend and colleague, the ranking member of the Middle East Subcommittee and co-author of this resolution.

Mr. DEUTCH. I thank Chairman ROYCE and Ranking Member ENGEL and especially Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN for her partnership in this effort to call the world's attention to Hamas' use of innocent civilians as human shields. I also thank Casey Kustin of my staff, Eddy Acevedo of Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN's staff, and the committee staff as well, for bringing this important resolution to the floor.

Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN and I were in Israel the night that the world learned the tragic fate of the three Israeli teens: Eyal, Gilad, and Naftali. We mourned with the families and tens of thousands of others at their joint funeral, and we were there just days later when 16-year-old Mohammed Abu Khdeir was brutally and tragically murdered.

In the wake of these heartbreaking deaths, violence escalated when Hamas began indiscriminately launching rockets at Israel, with the sole purpose of causing terror and death. Israel responded.

Every civilian death is tragic. We continue to mourn the loss of innocent lives on both sides of this conflict, but we cannot forget how this started, and we cannot forget who is responsible.

It is Hamas that has chosen to launch 2,600 rockets at civilians. It is Hamas that hides rockets and rocket launchers in UNRA schools, in mosques, and even in hospitals, using the Palestinian people as cover for their weapon stockpiles and their rocket launchers.

It is Hamas that chose to spend millions of dollars digging tunnels into Israel to launch terrorist attacks and fortifying underground bunkers for its terror commanders, instead of investing, so that the people of Gaza have a chance at a prosperous future.

It is Hamas that is responsible for the miserable condition of the Palestinians in Gaza, even before this military engagement started.

As former President Clinton said last week:

> Hamas was perfectly well aware of what would happen if they started raining rockets in Israel. They fired a thousand of them, and they have a strategy designed to force Israel to kill their own civilians, so that the rest of the world will condemn them.

Mr. Speaker, while Israel warns the residents of Gaza of incoming attacks via text messages, phone calls, and leaflets, Hamas' spokesmen go on television to urge people to stay in their homes to act as human shields. This is a direct violation of the Geneva Convention. Let me be clear: the use of civilians as shields to protect military objectives is a violation of international law.

It is time for responsible nations to condemn this abhorrent behavior and condemn the use of innocent civilians as human shields.

Passing House Concurrent Resolution 107 won't stop Hamas from putting the lives of its citizens at risk as human shields, but it will make clear that the U.S. House condemns the terrorists who wants to destroy and murder Israelis—the terrorists who violate international law by using human shields.

I ask my colleagues to please support this resolution.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

It has been said many times, but I think we should say it again: Israel uses its missiles to protect its citizens, and Hamas uses its citizens to protect its missiles. That says it all. That is just a disgrace, and it is a fact.

The United States must back Israel in its quest for security. Any cease-fire that is put forth must contain the total disarming of Hamas and the total destruction of those death tunnels that Hamas has been building to try to kill Israeli civilians. That concrete was allowed to be trucked in, under the eyes of Israel, because they were told that the concrete would be used to build schools and infrastructure. Instead, the concrete was used to build tunnels to kill Israelis. This really cannot be tolerated at all.

I would also say again that the media reporting of what is really going on in Gaza has been less than stellar. There are atrocities in Syria, but that seems to be yesterday's story. So while every death in Gaza and in Israel is something over which we grieve, there are more deaths in Syria every single day in that bloody civil war than there have been in Gaza, yet you hear no mention of it on the news. All you do is have cameras focused on Gaza.

War is hell. Nobody wants war, but a terrorist organization like Hamas must be told that terrorism cannot prevail.

Israel's fight is not with the Palestinian people. It is with Hamas, a terrorist organization that denies Israel's very right to exist and that wants to kill as many Israelis and Jews around the world and destroy the State of Israel. That is why the United States and the European Union have designated Hamas as a terrorist organization.

We need to put that in perspective. A terrorist organization that uses its own people as human shields is not to ever be taken seriously, nor has it the right to lecture anybody about the sanctity of human life.

In closing, let me say again that Israel has the right to self-defense. Hamas' use of human shields demonstrates just how much they devalue human life. The Palestinian people deserve better than Hamas. The Israeli people deserve better.

I want to again thank my friend, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, and Mr. DEUTCH, for their hard work on this issue. I want to thank my friend, Chairman ROYCE, for his leadership on so many issues, but on this issue as well.

Democrats and Republicans agree that we stand by our ally, Israel, and we condemn the terrorist organization Hamas, which uses its own people as human shields.

I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 1500

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOHO). He is a member of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs.

Mr. YOHO. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate it.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Con. Res. 107.

This resolution denounces the cowardly act of using civilians—women and children—as human shields by Hamas and any other terrorist organization, which is in violation of international humanitarian law.

As a member of the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa, I was proud to have worked with Congresswoman ROS-LEHTINEN, Chairman ROYCE, and Ranking Member ENGEL. It is my hope that this resolution sends a very clear message to Hamas that their abhorrent practice of using civilians as human shields must stop.

Hamas has continued to fire rockets indiscriminately into Israel from residential areas within Gaza, as well as having continued to store munitions near schools and hospitals.

Mr. Speaker, what kind of human does this kind of thing? It is a coward. It is a person who does not value human life.

Since June of 2014, over 2,000 rockets have been fired at Israel. In response to the repeated rocket attacks, the United States and Israel have worked together on missile defense projects, such as the Iron Dome. The Iron Dome is an effective missile defense system. It has proven its worth time after time, intercepting dozens of Hamas rockets bound for densely-populated areas within Israel.

This resolution must pass in order to assure our Israeli allies of our commitment to them, as well as to send a very clear message to Hamas that their use of human shields must stop.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I was in Haifa, Israel, in August of 2006 during the second Lebanon war, during the war between Hezbollah and Israel. While I was there, I was in Haifa. Rockets were raining down. For 30 days, rockets rained down on that city. Air sirens were blaring during the day. It looked like a ghost town. It was very debilitating, as you can imagine.

What amazed me was the targeting of the civilian areas of that town and the targeting of the hospitals—the deliberate targeting of civilians. That was the goal. At one point, we had to go into a bunker when rockets were fired close to where we were.

The one takeaway I had was that out of that came the Iron Dome. In a few short years, that system, the Iron Dome, which they were working on, went from the drawing board to deployment and battle, proving its mettle, and it proved its ability to shield Israelis in the south from the Hamas rocket threat more recently. Congress, I think, can be proud of our role here in backing the Iron Dome, which is recognized as part of this resolution.

There is another part of this resolution, Mr. Speaker. I have to tell you that Israel has more than the right to defend itself; it has the duty to protect its citizens. I saw what happened in Haifa—over 600 people in that one trauma hospital I was in.

It is exercising that responsibility right now to protect its people because, time and again, day after day, these rockets continue to be fired from these rocket launchers in Hamas-held territory.

No country would stand for the Hamas terror organization's rockets and tunnels. Remember, these tunnels come 3 miles into the border, 3 miles under Israel—one of them right outside an Israeli kindergarten. That is Hamas.

Of course, Hamas' whole reason for being, for any of you who have read its charter, is to attack Israel and to attack Jews. This nihilistic terrorist organization works to kill the maximum number of Israeli innocents while using its own population as human shields. Yes, that is a double war crime.

Since the last conflict, Hamas has improved on all aspects of its operation, courtesy of Iran. In the same

way Iran supplied Hezbollah, Iran supplies Hamas, and this could not have been done without the longer-range missiles—the M–302s—that Iran has now transferred into the inventory of Hamas, so that Jerusalem and Tel Aviv can be targets.

Earlier this month, my committee held a hearing that exposed Iran as the primary backer of Hamas through weapons, through funding, through missiles. Imagine the increase in material support to Hamas from Iran if that government—if the Ayatollah regime—is granted further sanctions relief as part of nuclear negotiations.

I ask all Members to join me in condemning Hamas on its despicable use of human shields and to continue to stand with Israel to face down the many shared threats that we face.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, I rise with a heavy heart as death and violence once again rips the Middle East. Innocent civilians find themselves again hostage in a war that none of them sought. The rockets continue to rain down in Israel and civilians in Gaza find it harder and harder to find refuge. And there is no end in sight despite the ongoing work of peacemakers.

The most pressing need at the moment is an immediate ceasefire that ends the rocket fire, allows humanitarian aid to reach those in need, and lays the foundation for efforts to address Israel's long term security needs. I am disappointed by the absence of any language in this resolution supporting international efforts to bring about an immediate ceasefire. Additionally, no one has come forward today to argue how this legislation brings us any closer to a peaceful resolution in the region or an end to the violence, terror, and fear being experienced in Israel and Gaza.

Over 1,000 Palestinians have been killed so far, many, but not all of them civilians. Over 50 Israelis, including 3 civilians and two Israeli-American soldiers, have been killed so far. The key concern for me is the qualifier—so far. A key question at this volatile moment is how to end the violence. This resolution is absolutely silent on that point.

I strongly believe that we need to work for an immediate ceasefire to prevent further death and destruction in both Israel and Gaza. I commend the U.S. for continuing to seek an immediate ceasefire which I fully support. Despite the gallant attempts of the Secretary of State and the U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki Moon and others, an agreement remains elusive and the violence continues.

The resolution rightly condemns Hamas, a terrorist organization that has shown time and again its disregard for innocent human life. The only party that seems to benefit from further chaos and loss of life is Hamas, which continues to lob rockets at innocent Israelis. The barrage of rockets must stop. Hamas has no regard for the lives it puts in danger. Its despicable tactics have been thoroughly denounced by the international community including the U.N. Secretary General who recently noted that "the United Nations position is clear: We condemn strongly the rocket attacks. These must stop immediately. We condemn the use of civilians—schools, hospital and other civilian facilities—for military purposes. No country would accept rockets raining down on its territory—and all countries and parties have an international obligation to protect civilians."

The resolution recognizes, as President Obama has, that Israel has a right to defend itself from relentless rocket attacks. The current rocket count is well over 1,000 and growing every day. Israel does not need authorization from the U.S. House of Representatives to act to stop the rocket fire by Hamas.

I have been to Sderot. I talked with Israelis living in the shadows of the rockets, including one woman whose relative was killed by a rocket from Gaza in a previous conflict. And I remember her fervent desire to live at peace with her neighbors.

I would point out that the resolution rightly recognizes that innocent civilians on both sides have suffered. According to the U.N., nearly 10% of the population of Gaza are seeking shelter at U.N. facilities, some of which have been attacked. The U.S. has recently announced it would provide $47 million to help meet immediate humanitarian needs in Gaza amid deteriorating conditions.

However, I remain concerned that this resolution does not press for an immediate ceasefire by all parties or urge or express support for efforts by the U.S. and international community to push for that peace. That is the best way to support innocent civilians on both sides—ending the violence that threatens them. You can't force peace on those who don't want it, but we must make every effort to offer a path out of misery and suffering and fear.

As President Obama has said, "Israel has a right to defend itself against rocket and tunnel attacks from Hamas." He also stated, "I've also said, however, that we have serious concerns about the rising number of Palestinian civilian deaths and the loss of Israeli lives. And that is why it now has to be our focus and the focus of the international community to bring about a ceasefire that ends the fighting and that can stop the deaths of innocent civilians, both in Gaza and in Israel."

As a Congress, we should join with the State Department, the U.N. Security Council, and others in urging all parties to redouble efforts to protect civilians, to find a way to end the violence and ensure peace and security for all, and to then move to find a long-term resolution that meets Israel's security needs and the rights of civilians to live in peace. This cycle of violence cannot continue indefinitely.

Innocent Israeli and Palestinian civilians cannot afford another three weeks of rocket fire and further bloodshed. We must continue to push for a ceasefire and to help find a long term solution that will allow Israelis and Palestinians to live in peace, side by side. What is needed now is de-escalation of violence and escalation of diplomatic efforts.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 107, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 3230, PAY OUR GUARD AND RESERVE ACT

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the conference report on the bill (H.R. 3230) making continuing appropriations during a government shutdown to provide pay and allowances to members of the reserve components of the Armed Forces who perform inactive-duty training during such period.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

(For conference report and statement, see proceedings of the House of July 28, 2014, at page H6953.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER) and the gentleman from Maine (Mr. MICHAUD) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today in support of the conference report to accompany H.R. 3230, the Veterans' Access to Care through Choice, Accountability, and Transparency Act of 2014.

General Omar Bradley, the former administrator of what is now the Department of Veterans Affairs, once said of our work, "We are dealing with veterans, not procedures—with their problems, not ours."

We have come face-to-face with the problems our veterans routinely encounter, and they are considerable to say the least. As every American now knows, congressional oversight and whistleblower revelations have exposed widespread corruption and systemic delays in access and failures of accountability across our Nation's second largest bureaucracy.

Thousands of veterans across this country have been left to wait—some for years; some in pain; and, most disturbingly, some in caskets that are draped with American flags; some while chronic or fatal conditions worsened until little hope was left—for the health care they earned through their honorable service to our Nation. Meanwhile, poor-performing VA leaders and employees continued to receive large bonuses, subject to little accountability for their many inadequacies.

There is no doubt, Mr. Speaker, that the Department of Veterans Affairs, as we know it today, is in crisis, and as a result, our veterans are suffering. The conference report we are considering this afternoon is the first step to alleviating their pain and for paving the

way for the failing VA health care system to experience much-needed structural and cultural reform.

To immediately improve access to care for veteran patients, the conference report would require the VA to authorize non-VA care to any eligible veteran who is unable to secure a timely appointment at a VA facility or who resides more than 40 miles from the nearest VA medical facility, with certain exceptions.

Eligible veterans would include those who are enrolled in the VA health care system as of August 1 of 2014 or who are newly-discharged combat veterans.

It would further require the VA to issue a veterans choice card to eligible veterans to facilitate care provided by non-VA providers and provide $10 billion for the newly-established veterans choice fund to cover the costs of access to non-VA care under this bill.

To lead the way for true reform in the long term, the conference report would require a comprehensive assessment of VA care by an expert independent entity or entities and would establish a congressional commission on care, which would be charged with setting the future course for access to and quality care throughout the entire VA health care system.

To improve the VA's internal capacity to provide timely and high-quality care to our veterans, this report would also provide the Department with $5 billion to hire physicians and other clinical staff and would provide for certain critical physical infrastructure improvements.

The conference report would also extend the VA's rural health care-focused project, ARCH—a pilot program—for an additional 2 years. It would extend the pilot program for an additional 3 years to provide rehabilitation, quality of life, and community integration services to veterans with traumatic brain injury.

It would authorize 27 medical facility leases across 18 States and Puerto Rico and make certain improvements to care provided to veterans who have experienced military sexual trauma and others.

To advance genuine accountability for incompetent or corrupt senior managers, the conference report would reduce funding for bonuses available to VA employees by $40 million each year through fiscal year 2024, and it would authorize the Secretary to fire or demote Senior Executive Service employees and title 38 SES equivalent employees for poor performance or misconduct. Poor-performing employees who are disciplined under this authority would be provided an expedited and limited appeal process, but would be prohibited from receiving their pay, bonuses, or benefits during the appeal process.

This provision will give the Secretary the tools he needs to expeditiously hold senior managers accountable for the types of willful misconduct and possibly criminal negligence we have seen during our investigations.

The conference report would also require public colleges to provide instate tuition to veterans and eligible dependents for the school to remain eligible to receive GI Bill education payments.

This provision closely mirrors the bill that I offered, H.R. 357, the GI Bill Tuition Fairness Act, which passed the House earlier this year. The men and women who served this Nation did not just defend the citizens of their home States; they defended the entire United States of America.

The conference report would also include approximately $5 billion in offsets with additional incidental offsets expected to accrue over time as a result of increased third-party collections for nonservice-connected conditions and reductions in Medicare payments as a result of the increased utilization of the newly-created choice program.

Mr. Speaker, the bill before us is one that I am proud of, but more importantly, it is one that I believe our Nation's veterans can be proud of. It is not a blank check for a broken system, but it is an important first step down a long road toward true transformation.

However, our work is far from over. We all know that congressional oversight was crucial to bringing the failures at the VA to light, and it will increase in the days and weeks and months ahead after the passage of this bill.

The passage of this conference report will increase access to care and improve accountability within a desperately broken bureaucracy. However, the reform that is necessary to reforming the agency will require dedication for years to come, and I would ask all of my colleagues to join me in beginning that effort today.

I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1515

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the conference report to H.R. 3230, the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014.

I would like to thank Chairman MILLER, Senator SANDERS, Senator BURR, and the other members of the conference committee for working so diligently on this legislation.

Even when it looked like an agreement would not be possible to achieve a compromise and bring it to the House floor today, at the end of the day, we all worked together to make sure our national commitment to veterans is there. This compromise agreement can serve as a model on how Congress should look at serious problems facing our country and how to address them.

It has been a long road getting here. The House Veterans' Affairs Committee, under Chairman MILLER's leadership, has held over a dozen oversight hearings in the past couple of months alone. We have heard from veterans, their families, VA employees, and veterans service organizations about what is and what isn't working within the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The measure before us today isn't a long-term solution to all of the VA's problems, but it is an appropriate and well-crafted response to the immediate problems of veterans not being able to access quality health care in a timely fashion.

This bill also takes important steps to begin to address the systemic problems within the Department of Veterans Affairs that have led to this crisis: too few doctors, inadequate infrastructure, and a management culture that is asleep at the wheel. It holds those whom the Nation has entrusted with our veterans' lives and well-being responsible for the outcomes.

For the 12 years that I have been on the Veterans' Affairs Committee, I have fought to ensure that our veterans, especially those who are living in rural areas, have access to quality health care. I fought for the needs of veterans returning from the current conflicts, while not forgetting the sacrifices and the needs of veterans from previous conflicts.

One of the successes that you heard from Chairman MILLER earlier I am most proud of is the Project ARCH. The Access Received Closer to Home project expands the opportunity for rural veterans to receive health care without long drives to a VA facility many miles away. I am pleased to see that the conference report extends and expands this important program. It is critical for the thousands of veterans who live in districts like mine. Many veterans in my district would be forced to make a nearly 600-mile round trip drive to the nearest VA facility if it weren't for ARCH.

Another important aspect of this bill not only deals with Senior Executive Service, but also the title 38 employees, which covers about 80,000 within the VA. It sets metrics and outcomes and accountability for those employees.

This bill also will address the immediate problem of long waiting times for health care, while beginning to strengthen the VA, so we are not facing the same crisis next year or the year after.

But I would also like to remind my colleagues that this bill is only the first step. After 12 years on the House Veterans' Affairs Committee, I am more convinced than ever that we must begin to talk about the innovative solutions that will truly modernize the Department and better meet the needs of current and future veterans.

Far too often, the good intentions underlying the laws that we passed are stymied by an organizational structure that has originated back in the seventies and eighties. Far too often, the good intentions of the Department of Veterans' Affairs employees meet the wall of bureaucratic indifference. Far too often, our veterans ask for help and there is no one there at the other end to answer for that help.

This is totally unacceptable, and it is why I believe we must begin the work of radically restructuring the Department of Veterans' Affairs. We must restructure it to better assist our veterans, to better live up to the promises we have made to them. We need to look at the fundamental business model, the processes, the organization, the technology, the data and information and the workforce capabilities.

Our work today is to pass this conference report and get it to the President's desk as quickly as possible so that we can fix the current crisis. The work for tomorrow is the work that I ask each and every one of my colleagues to continue working on: to make sure that the Department of Veterans Affairs evolves to a new, more veteran-centered Department of Veterans Affairs.

It is going to take a lot of work and a lot of oversight, as you heard the chairman mention earlier. Once again, I would encourage my colleagues to pass this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. LAMBORN), a member of the conference committee.

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Chairman JEFF MILLER for his continued leadership as we work to provide our veterans with the care and benefits that they have earned.

Keeping the promises that we have made to our veterans and their families is of utmost importance to me and all Americans. This piece of legislation is a major step in the process of restoring veteran trust in the VA.

This bill will expand access to non-VA care, making wait times shorter and increase convenience. Although this will ensure veterans who are currently on a waiting list will get the timely care they deserve, much more needs to be done.

I am especially pleased that an independent congressional committee on care will be formed to look at the VA from the ground up. For lasting change to take place, the corrupt culture shown by some in the VA must be purged. It must be replaced with an ethos that puts the veteran first.

By authorizing the Secretary of the VA to fire senior employees that are guilty of poor performance or misconduct, this bill ensures that newly confirmed Secretary McDonald will have more tools to hold individuals accountable for their actions. However, granting this authority will mean nothing if it isn't combined with the leadership required to always do the right things for our veterans. Through his words and actions, Secretary McDonald must make it clear from day one that individuals will be held accountable, whistleblowers will be protected, and anyone responsible for poor performance, negligence, or preventable deaths, even, will be held accountable.

It has been an honor to serve with the chairman during this conference committee.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the VA conference report.

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentlewoman from Nevada (Ms. TITUS).

Ms. TITUS. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend for yielding.

I thank Mr. MICHAUD and Chairman MILLER for their leadership on this important bill.

As a member of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee, I have been working with my colleagues to ensure that veterans have access to the highest quality care in a timely fashion. This legislation before us takes important steps towards that goal.

I am especially pleased that the compromise includes three of my bills, which ensure that: one, all victims of sexual assault in the military, including those in the National Guard, have access to the care they need; two, that spouses of those who have died in service to our country get education benefits; and, three, more residencies are going to be funded at VA hospitals in areas of the country that are underserved by doctors in private practice.

Our committee, I know, will continue to work in a bipartisan fashion with the new Secretary to ensure that all veterans have access to the benefits and care that they have so bravely earned.

Today, we are acting on behalf of a grateful Nation to provide our country's heroes the care they need and restore their trust in the VA. So I urge my colleagues to support this conference report to the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROE), a veteran, a physician, and also a member of the conference committee.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to stand before this body in support of the conference report, the first major step in providing timely, high-quality health care to the veterans who so selflessly served this great Nation. As a physician, veteran, and member of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, it was an honor to have served on the conference committee.

Mr. Speaker, a corrosive culture has been allowed to exist within the Veterans Affairs bureaucracy for far too long and to the detriment of our veterans. The most important thing this bill does is give the veterans who are experiencing long wait times or live more than 40 miles from the nearest VA facility a choice. These veterans will now be able to obtain a veterans choice card, which will allow them to seek care in the private sector. Only by forcing the VA to compete will we achieve the cultural change that is required in how they serve veterans.

I have met with many physicians in recent weeks, and the desire to help our veterans is stronger than ever. Hospitals and physicians, alike, are ready and willing to care for veterans, helping to address a crisis created by VA mismanagement.

Moving forward, this report creates a process by which we can make significant strides toward accountability, by giving the VA Secretary the ability to fire senior employees who fail to do their jobs and ensuring that there will be swift, harsh penalties for knowingly misreporting or falsifying information.

This agreement will also improve educational benefits for veterans and their dependents.

As the founder and cochair of the House Invisible Wounds Caucus along with my friend TIM WALZ, I am pleased this report includes a provision to extend an important pilot program intended to help veterans with traumatic brain injuries for 3 more years.

The negotiations were tough, but I know the final product will have a very positive impact on the lives of our veterans, and I would like to thank the House and Senate VA committee staffs for all their late nights and hard work they put into this toward this worthy goal.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud the chairmen, MILLER and SANDERS, for their leadership throughout this process, along with Ranking Member MICHAUD and Senator BURR.

I urge all of my colleagues to support this report.

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Arizona (Mrs. KIRKPATRICK).

Mrs. KIRKPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to support H.R. 3230.

As a member of the conference committee, I pushed for negotiations on this bill to continue because veterans have waited too long for the care they deserve.

This bill reflects the comprehensive, meaningful reforms that passed the Senate and that I introduced as the companion bill in the House. This bill ensures that rural veterans who live too far from a veterans' medical facility and veterans who have waited too long for an appointment can see a provider closer to home.

For the tribal veterans in my district, this bill strengthens the relationship between the Veterans Administration and the Indian Health Services.

This bill also ensures that the Veterans Administration can quickly hire more doctors, nurses, and medical professionals, and this bill gives the Veterans Administration Secretary the authority to hold VA employees accountable.

Our veterans deserve world-class health care and a VA that puts veterans first. I believe this bill provides the foundation to do just that. Again, I urge all my colleagues to vote for this bill so it can be signed into law without delay.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr.

BENISHEK), a former physician within the VA system.

Mr. BENISHEK. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the conference report to the Veterans Access to Care Act.

As a doctor who served at the VA hospital in Iron Mountain, Michigan, for 20 years, I have seen firsthand how Washington bureaucracy can keep doctors and nurses from taking care of veterans. On its most basic level, this is the sacred mission of the VA, and the VA has failed.

Today we take an important step toward reversing that failure. Most urgently, our bill will allow veterans suffering long waits for care the option to be seen by a local doctor at a private hospital. I believe every veteran should have a choice as to where they receive care, and this bill moves us closer to that goal.

But this triage measure is not the long-term solution. That is why our bill directs the VA to tap the best health care minds that we have in this country to go step by step through the system and write us a blueprint for a lean, smart, 21st century VA.

Our bill is not perfect, and the problems at the VA will not be solved overnight. However, this landmark effort is the best chance we have had in years to make fundamental changes to the way the VA operates.

Make no mistake, our true test comes next. We must continue to keep the pressure on the VA long after the headlines have faded and the worst employees have been fired, because our veterans will still be there and they will still deserve to be at the top of our priority list.

As the father of a veteran myself, I am committed to refusing to let this issue go. We will demand results, and we will demand swift and full implementation of this legislation. Anything short of that is not worthy of our veterans and is unacceptable.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the conference report.

□ 1530

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes and 35 seconds to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. BROWN).

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, as the most senior member of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee, I strongly believe that the VA provides the best care for our Nation's servicemembers returning from protecting the freedoms we most hold dear, and I am committed to VA continuing their critical mission of serving our veterans.

VA has served the special needs of our returning veterans for over 75 years and has expertise in their unique health care needs, including prosthetics, traumatic brain injury, posttraumatic stress disorder, and a host of other veteran-specific injuries. My focus continues to be on ensuring that the VA retains the unique responsibility for the health care our veterans receive, regardless of the provider.

The bill includes critical language that I discussed with Senator BERNIE SANDERS of Vermont to ensure the VA has the final authority over the care that the veterans receive, whether at the VA or at non-VA providers. We need to continue to work with our veteran stakeholders to ensure the VA has all the resources it needs to provide superior health care to our veterans.

I am looking forward to working with the new VA Secretary. And I want to thank the past Secretaries. I have worked with past Secretaries from Jesse Brown to the present one.

I know a lot of people will say that we have given the VA everything they need. But of course many of us don't have institutional memory.

I remember the first time the VA got the real budget they wanted in 2009 under President Barack Obama, when we had a Democratic House and a Democratic Senate. So a lot of us talk the talk, walk the walk, but don't really roll the roll.

So we have got to make sure as we move forward that we don't just talk about providing service, but that we really provide service and we ensure that the veterans have the service that the first President, George Washington, promised the veterans.

And I do want to thank our chairperson, Mr. MILLER of Florida, for his leadership and the way he has conducted our meetings, and also our ranking member.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield 1 minute and 35 seconds to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. COFFMAN), a United States veteran and another member of the conference committee.

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I want to start by thanking Chairman MILLER for his dedicated work on behalf of our veterans.

As a Marine Corps combat veteran and chairman of the House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, I have spent the past year working side-by-side with the members of my subcommittee and with Chairman MILLER to investigate and uncover the largest scandal in the history of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

I am proud that Republicans and Democrats were able to put aside their partisan differences to focus on supporting our Nation's warriors with choice, accountability, and greater transparency. These reforms will allow veterans to vote with their feet if they cannot get an appointment within a reasonable timeframe at a VA facility.

I am also proud that we were able to include much-needed reforms on the treatment of victims of sexual assault in the military. The scourge of sexual assault in the military and the corruption of covered-up waiting lists at VA hospitals are shameful acts, and we must work together to confront them head on.

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, how much time do I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Maine has 10 minutes remaining. The gentleman from Florida has 6½ minutes remaining.

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER).

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for yielding. I congratulate Mr. MILLER, the chairman of the committee, and Mr. MICHAUD, the ranking member, for working together to get this done.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is the result of a bipartisan agreement. And while I have some serious concerns about a number of provisions of which I will speak, I am supporting it because it assigns resources to help cut down the waiting times for veterans to get the care they need and that we owe them. That must be our number one goal.

I remain deeply outraged, as so many of us are, by what transpired in Phoenix and at other VA facilities, where our wounded warriors were made to wait weeks, months to get an appointment and receive treatment, including for serious postdeployment mental health issues. That is not acceptable. This is more than unacceptable, however. It is unconscionable.

I think there is wide agreement on both sides of the aisle that any VA personnel who facilitated this wrongdoing or undermined veterans' health care must be held accountable.

However, Mr. Speaker, I am concerned with provisions in this bill regarding the removal of senior executive personnel. While this bill does improve on the House version by adding a 21-day period for appeals, it still undermines civil service protections that had been in place for decades to ensure a merit service, not a politicized, patronage service.

There are already strict rules in place that facilitate the swift removal of SES officials who do not perform their jobs responsibly, as there should be.

Those protections strike the right balance between giving agencies the authority to remove personnel without trampling on the due process rights of SES employees, who need to do their job without fear of political reprisal or arbitrary removal.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, this bill addresses major challenges at the VA. It provides resources to ensure that our veterans can access health care at private facilities if they face a very long wait or live in rural areas far from VA doctors.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. MICHAUD. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman.

And it makes health care services more available and accessible to veterans through additional resources for medical and other VA personnel.

This, of course, is not a perfect bill. But then again, I don't think I have ever voted for a perfect bill. But this is a good bill that moves in the right direction.

Again, I congratulate Mr. MILLER and Mr. MICHAUD on their work on this very important piece of legislation.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Indiana (Mrs. WALORSKI), another member of our conference committee and an outstanding member of the full committee.

Mrs. WALORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I would like to say to Chairman MILLER and Ranking Member MICHAUD, on behalf of the 54,000 veterans in my district and the 20 million around the country, thank you. And to every conferee that has served on this conference committee, thank you. This is a huge step forward today, and I am grateful to have been a part of this process. The need for this legislation and for our conference committee to have worked together was great, and it has been an incredible experience.

Let's not forget, in the past decade, nearly 1,000 veterans have died as a result of substandard treatment from the Department of Veterans Affairs, and many more cases are under investigation. Mr. Speaker, 50,000 new patients have waited at least 90 days for their first appointment at VA hospitals. VA staff have admitted to falsifying medical appointment dates to fit within the agency's wait time performance goal of 14 days. All these facts have been simply appalling. All of us in Congress have constituents who have been directly impacted by this scandal.

The need for the legislation is so timely today. I just came from the World War II Memorial, and I thanked a veteran from the Chicagoland-Indiana area. I shook his hand, looked him in the eye, and thanked him for serving our Nation. He stood up out of his wheelchair, looked me in the eye, and said: ''Thank you for fighting for us.'' It just simply shows how important this is. This is an opportunity, as legislators, to take the first steps toward real change at the VA.

So today we stand together to help our Nation's heroes. We owe it to our veterans to provide them with nothing but the best. However, echoing the chairman's comments, simply providing a financial boost to an agency that has repeatedly demonstrated awful management practices will not solve the problem.

In the coming weeks and months, we must continue to stand together to ensure additional improvements are made to the VA. I urge my colleagues to vote in support of this bill.

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlemen very much on behalf of the State that has one of the largest populations of veterans, including those in my congressional district. I would like to say thank you.

To Ranking Member MICHAUD and Chairman MILLER, thank you for allowing me to sit in on a hearing. Thank you to the conferees. Thank you for understanding that, when our soldiers put on the uniform, have any of us ever had them question why? And therefore, we should never question why are we giving the best service that we can give to our veterans.

I am grateful for the $5 billion that allows this temporary flexibility, that if you cannot get service, you are, in fact, able to go to civilian doctors.

The professionals that are going to be added with primary and specialty doctors are the TMI, housing, PTSD, sexual assault. All of these are making a difference.

In the name of the World War II veteran that I saw in Normandy, by the name of Curtis, a veteran in my district who had an appointment in 2013 and never heard back from the veterans hospital, in his name, I believe that this is the most important opportunity. We should vote for this and be able to provide our veterans with the promise we have made to them: You serve, and we will serve you.

God bless America.

Mr. Speaker, as a senior member of the Judiciary and Homeland Security Committees, I rise in strong support of the Conference Report to H.R. 3230, ''Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014.''

We must remember that freedom is not free and pause to recognize the valor and self-sacrifice of our nation's veterans.

We also need to keep our promises to the nation's more than 2 million troops and reservists and 23 million veterans.

I support the Conference Report for 6 principle reasons. The legislation before us:

1. Expands access to health care for veterans;
2. Addresses the shortage of health professionals in the VA;
3. Ensures access to care for rural veterans;
4. Provides funding to establish 27 new VA clinics;
5. Expands access to education for veterans and their families; and
6. Extends a community-based housing program for veterans.

Specifically, the conference report provides that the bulk of the funding in this agreement—$10 billion in emergency funding—be used to expand access to non-VA health care options for veterans who have been left waiting for more than 30 days for an appointment or live more than 40 miles from the nearest VA facility.

Additionally, the bill provides $5 billion to VA to hire more primary and specialty care physicians and other medical staff and includes incentives to attract more doctors, nurses and other medical personnel to the VA, and to increase medical education opportunities to attract doctors in the future.

Third, the bill extends the ARCH (Access Received Closer to Home) pilot program for two years. The ARCH program expands VA's ability to serve veterans who live far from VA facilities in Northern Maine; Farmville, Virginia; Pratt, Kansas; Flagstaff, Arizona; and Billings, Montana.

Fourth, the bill expands VA authority to provide counseling, care and other services to veterans and certain other non-veteran service members who have experienced military sexual trauma during active or inactive duty training (including members of the National Guard and Reserves). The legislation also requires the VA and DOD to conduct an annual assessment focused on the transition and continuum of care from DOD to VA for those who have experiences military sexual trauma.

Fifth, the conference report includes $1.5 billion to lease 27 new VA clinics, including a new research facility in my home city of Houston, Texas, bringing care closer to where veterans live and increasing access to specialty care services.

Sixth, the Conference Report permits veterans who are eligible for education benefits under the Post 9–11 New GI Bill to qualify for in-state tuition and it expands the Marine Gunnery Sergeant John David Fry Scholarship to include spouses of members of the Air Force who die in the line duty while serving in active duty.

Finally, the Conference Report gives the VA Secretary the authority to immediately fire or demote senior executives based on poor job performance or misconduct but includes an expedited appeals process for terminated employees to prevent political firings and protect whistleblowers from retaliation.

Mr. Speaker, my state of Texas and Houston appreciates the service and sacrifices of veterans and takes care of them.

The Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center, for example, located in Houston, Texas serves the 32,477 veterans and is the primary healthcare provider for almost 130,000 veterans in southeast Texas.

Veterans from around the country are referred to the DeBakey VA Medical Center for specialized diagnostic care, radiation therapy, surgery, and medical treatment including cardiovascular surgery, gastrointestinal endoscopy, nuclear medicine, ophthalmology, and treatment of spinal cord injury and diseases.

DeBakey VA Medical Center provides vital healthcare services to Veterans in the Houston area and through the nation.

I am proud to support the Conference Report since veterans from Houston and surrounding regions will benefit with the establishment of a new facility that will extend access to specialty care services.

Mr. Speaker, in addition to long wait times at VA facilities, many veterans face a number of other challenges, including homelessness, coping with PTSD, and finding suitable employment in the civilian job market.

To address these problems, earlier this year I was successful in passing amendments to this year's Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Act and the Defense Appropriations Act providing additional funding and resources targeted to helping homeless veterans secure housing and treating veterans suffering from PTSD in underserved urban and rural areas.

I also introduced H.R. 4110, the ''Transitioning Heroes Act of 2014,'' which provides strong tax incentives for employers to hire, retain, and employ veterans in positions that take maximum advantage of their skills and experience.

Mr. Speaker, our men and women in the military have fulfilled a commitment to this nation and to each other that we should imitate in our actions to work to provide for veterans now that their military service has ended.

That is why as Members of Congress we need to make sure our veterans receive the best medical care that modern medicine has to offer to them and their families.

That is why I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the Conference Report to H.R. 3230, "Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014."

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS), the vice chairman of the full committee and a member of the conference committee.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Today I rise in support of the VA conference report on H.R. 3230. The Veterans Access, Choice and Accountability Act of 2014 is a positive first step toward reforming the VA, which provides, among other things, relief to veterans who have waited excessively to receive the health care they have earned at a level of quality they deserve, Mr. Speaker.

This bill also includes real accountability provisions, allowing the VA Secretary to fire or demote Senior Executive Service employees for lack of performance and management negligence.

This reform package is focused around ensuring the veteran has timely access to quality care and includes language to authorize 27 major medical facility leases, including one in Pasco County, Florida, in my congressional district.

The veterans in my area will soon have the ability to seek treatments at a consolidated clinic, thanks to Chairman MILLER, as opposed to having to travel between the main clinic and four other satellite facilities.

Authorizing these leases will improve the timeliness for veterans to receive care in Pasco County and in 17 other States throughout the Nation, as well as Puerto Rico.

Passage of this bill is the beginning, not the end. Obviously much work needs to be done. However, immediate action needs to be taken to get veterans off waiting lists and ensure they receive care within the VA health system or in the private sector, if they so choose. The veteran should have the choice. We need to get this done for our veterans.

I urge passage of the bill.

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO).

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the conference report. I want to thank Chairman MILLER for the gracious way that he has conducted the committee hearings, and I thank Ranking Member MICHAUD for his hard work.

Principally, I am very pleased that this conference report also includes 1,500 funded graduate medical school education slots at veterans facilities around this country. It was a good thing that we approved access to non-VA care for those servicemembers, those veterans who have been on waiting lists for far too long. But that would not be satisfactory to those areas of the country that are experiencing physician shortages. This is a huge, huge accomplishment for a Congress that is so partisan to approve these 1,500 funded GMEs.

I urge all my colleagues to support the conference report.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. HUELSKAMP).

Mr. HUELSKAMP. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for his work on this bill.

As a member of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, I want to take a moment to share a little about what this bill means for my Kansas veterans.

Since coming to Congress, I have heard dozens of stories from Kansas veterans about their troubles with the VA. They have shared about how they are required to travel hundreds of miles for simple medical tests or to renew their prescriptions, all the while, driving past dozens of local hospitals and other health care providers with the ability and desire to meet their needs locally. Many Kansas veterans drive halfway across the State or to Colorado, Nebraska, or even Texas to get their simplest health care needs met.

In fact, just yesterday, my office had to step in to help a 94-year-old World War II veteran. The nearest VA hospital was 240 miles away. He just had a recent serious surgery, and they said, you have to come into the hospital to renew your prescriptions.

□ 1545

Thankfully, I was able to contact the VA and ensure this veteran could get his care in his local community, but as I tell folks in Kansas, you shouldn't have to call your Congressman to get the care you deserve.

With this bill, hundreds of rural Kansas veterans will be able to use their new veteran choice card or Project ARCH, call their local doctor, and get their health care needs met. Just like Medicare or TRICARE, veterans should have the choice to schedule their own appointments, pick their own doctors in their own communities.

When our veterans come back from serving and defending our country and return to communities across the United States, most of them don't ask for much, but I want our veterans to know that I believe you deserve the best, not just the mediocre, scandal-plagued culture we have seen at the current VA.

This bill is just plain common sense. It is a big first step towards giving veterans real choice and real accountability. As this law is implemented, I remain committed to continuing to ask the hard questions and working to return the VA to its true mission, to serve our veterans.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Maine has 5½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Florida has 2 minutes remaining.

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. RAHALL).

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I commend Chairman MILLER and Ranking Member MICHAUD for bringing this Veterans' Access to Care Through Choice, Accountability, and Transparency Act to us today.

In medically-underserved communities, where health care staffing shortages have caused delays in appointments, this conference agreement will help provide critical investments so that the VA can begin hiring the doctors it needs to serve our veterans.

It will help to reduce the backlog in VA construction and maintenance projects. It will help to ensure that veterans unable to get a medical appointment at a VA facility will be able to get the care they need from a non-VA provider.

This legislation can do a lot of good, but it is only a first step. The bill must be implemented, regulations issued, and scarce moneys allocated to ensure that veterans get the care that this legislation promises.

We must not lose sight of the rural, underserved areas in our Nation like in southern West Virginia, where veterans are elderly and travel is costly and burdensome. We must not lose sight of the need for medical facilities and health providers in those areas.

I urge the VA to remember rural veterans as it implements this bill, and I certainly aim to help to ensure that it does so. Again, I commend the chairman and ranking member for bringing this legislation to us today.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. TERRY), someone who always has veterans first in his mind.

Mr. TERRY. Mr. Speaker, this bill is a necessary repair for our vets' damage that was caused by VA workers who were willing to allow veterans to die by denying them care, ostensibly to receive a bonus.

Leave no doubt that this is a patch and that the VA requires a complete overhaul. For example, 7 years ago, the VA hospital in Omaha was deemed to be in such poor condition it needed to be replaced ASAP. It was put on the official list, and in those 7 years since, the project has actually fallen down the list, as few projects have been completed.

The VA is just not able to manage major projects. The entire Nebraska delegation wrote then-Secretary Shinseki over a year ago to meet and discuss the lack of progress and possible alternatives, but he refused to meet with our delegation, even after repeated requests.

This is evidence of total dysfunction of this VA in Washington, D.C. My hope is that the new VA Secretary will be more accommodating to listen to the Nebraska delegation whose sole goal is simply to help our veterans receive the appropriate care in a building that meets at least today's standards.

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. BARBER).

Mr. BARBER. Mr. Speaker, I am proud and honored to rise today in support of the Veterans' Access to Care Through Choice, Accountability, and Transparency Act of 2014 and to commend Representative MILLER and Representative MICHAUD for their leadership in getting this bill to us and this conference committee report to us today.

As the son of a veteran of World War II, Korea, and Vietnam, I say it is long overdue that Congress took action to provide the quality of care that our veterans have earned. I am here today to fight for veterans in southern Arizona, of which I represent 85,000, and veterans all across this Nation.

I have been pushing for better access to health care for our veterans since I came to Congress a little over 2 years ago. This has become even more urgent given the tragedy, the disgraceful behavior that we have uncovered in Phoenix and potentially across veterans centers in our Nation. To play games with our veterans to get bonuses is despicable, and this bill, I hope, will move us in a direction of correcting those terrible actions.

One of the first bills I introduced was the veterans' access to health care bill to ensure that veterans could get health care they need in their communities, and this bill, I am glad to say, includes that provision. I commend the leader, the chairman, and the ranking member for their work, and I urge all my colleagues to vote ''yes'' for this important bill for our veterans.

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GALLEGO).

Mr. GALLEGO. Mr. Speaker, I, too, rise in support of the conference committee report, asking all of our fellow members to support it, and I congratulate the chairman with whom I had a rather spirited conversation on this floor, as well as the ranking member on accomplishing the first step, I think, and it is the first step, but it is a significant step.

I am particularly proud that two of the provisions that I came to this floor to argue for—that being additional facilities, including an expansion of the facility in San Antonio, as well as additional support personnel, medical personnel, and health care personnel—are included in this bill.

This bill includes so much more: a graduate medical education component and, in addition, educational opportunities for spouses and families. This is an incredible first step.

I, again, want to underscore my thanks to the chairman, to the ranking member, to the members of the conference committee, and this is a great first step at putting us in the right direction towards finally treating our veterans with the respect that they not only deserve, but they have earned over the period of their service.

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, how much time is remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Maine has 2½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Florida has 1 minute remaining.

Mr. MICHAUD. I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. PETERS).

Mr. PETERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to state my support for this agreement, the Veterans' Access to Care through Choice, Accountability, and Transparency Act of 2014, and thank both Chairman MILLER and Ranking Member MICHAUD for their leadership on bringing this issue to a resolution.

Last week, I offered a motion to instruct as a way to spur a bipartisan solution and to ensure that vets on the GI Bill could pay lower instate college tuition. I am happy that that provision has been included.

Enacting the measures offered in this plan will go a long way toward improving veterans health care though, as everyone noted, there is much more work to be done. The more than 200,000 veterans who live in San Diego County deserve access to the medical care and benefits America has promised them and they have earned.

It is my hope that our action today will give new hope to the many vets who felt despair and disappointment at the way they have been treated by the VA after all they have sacrificed. Today, we send a bipartisan message to them: America keeps its promises to our veterans.

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I am ready to close.

Mr. Speaker, I would urge my colleagues to support the conference report to H.R. 3230. This is a very important bill. It is a bill that we have worked long and hard over the last several months. It is one that took into consideration a lot of the concerns that Members from both sides and both bodies had, and we came together with this bill.

I do want to thank Chairman MILLER for his hard work and dedication to our veterans and their families. We would not be here today if it wasn't his determination in having strong oversight hearings over the last couple of months within our committee.

I also want to thank staffs on both sides, the majority and minority staff. I know they have put in thousands of hours for oversight hearings to work on this conference report to get us where we are today. We could not have done it without our dedicated staffs on both sides of the aisle going through this document and making sure that every Member's concerns were addressed in this document.

With that, I want to once again thank the chairman for your hard work on this effort and look forward to the vote on this. I encourage all my colleagues to support this bill.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I, too, would like to say thank you to the ranking member of the full House committee, Mr. MICHAUD, for his tenacity in what he has done to move this conference report along.

I also want to say thank you to the ranking member, Mr. BURR, in the Senate and to Senator SANDERS because, as we continue to negotiate through, there never was a willingness to quit by either side.

I am grateful to the 24 other conference committee members who worked with us, with their input, their ideas, and their willingness to embrace this compromise. It was brought forth by diligent, focused effort and a willingness on all sides to put aside differences of opinion and ideology and focus not on our disagreements, but how best we can all help our veterans.

While not perfect, this is an example of all the good work we can accomplish when we work together, and remember, it is the veteran who is sacred, not the VA.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, at this time, there is no Federal agency more deserving of our attention than the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. The VA has served generations of heroes who have sacrificed on behalf of our country and we have an obligation to take care of them when they come home.

Without a doubt, the American people expect and veterans deserve the best service possible and I firmly believe that it is a duty of all of us in Congress to ensure that no one betrays the sacred trust owed to our Veterans.

The failure and mismanagement of care for our veterans that has come to light through the IG's investigation over the past two months must never be repeated, and I trust that this bill will go far to help reverse the failures, and ensure better future treatment of veterans at the VA.

I think this conference report contains provisions that will help provide timely care to veterans, hold the management of the Department of Veterans Affairs accountable, uphold the integrity of the department, and improve education benefits for veterans and their dependants—representing a major step in the right direction in meeting those obligations.

Specific measures to do so include; providing $5 billion to the VA to hire additional physicians and other medical staff, authorizing a system for the VA to fire or demote management level employees for poor performance or misconduct, and increasing access to non-VA care for those veterans in dire need.

Yesterday, we were greeted with the good news of the Senate confirmation of the new VA Secretary, Robert McDonald. While the Senate acted swiftly on the confirmation of McDonald, I was disappointed to see that the Senate Appropriations Committee Chairwoman was unable to bring the FY 2015 MilCon/VA Appropriations bill to floor due to objections from the Senate Minority. If we truly wanted to get the ball rolling to make the VA better the Senate Minority should allow the bill to come to the floor.

Nevertheless, I also have full expectation that with the passage of this conference report it is going to be important that this Congress hold Secretary McDonald and his subordinates fully accountable moving forward.

Many in Congress are concerned about the cost of this bill. One way to help pay the cost of improved health care for veterans would be to improve third party collections.

Section 201 of the bill authorizes an independent assessment of a number of VA activities. Among other provisions, the assessment would report on ways to increase funds owed to the VA by third parties.

Over the past dozen years, the GAO and the VA/OIG have issued more than a dozen reports outlining the problems with third party reimbursement. I hope that the assessment team will not reinvent the wheel.

We already know that the VA has increased its billings for these services, but its collection rate has decreased or has remained stagnant. As a result, in FY13 alone, the VA failed to collect more than $3 billion in billings. Between FY07 and FY13, the VA left nearly $23 billion on the table.

The assessment should include specific directives for the improvement of the entire billings and collections process—from initial billing to denied claims to appeals of denied claims. The private sector seeks to maximize reimbursement. The VA should do no less.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the conference report on H.R. 3230.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on questions previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

Ordering the previous question on House Resolution 694;

Adopting House Resolution 694, if ordered;

Suspending the rules and adopting the conference report on H.R. 3230.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H. RES. 676, AUTHORIZATION TO INITIATE LITIGATION FOR ACTIONS BY THE PRESIDENT; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 935, REDUCING REGULATORY BURDENS ACT OF 2013; AND PROVIDING FOR PROCEEDINGS DURING THE PERIOD FROM AUGUST 1, 2014, THROUGH SEPTEMBER 5, 2014

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on adoption of the resolution (H. Res. 694) providing for consideration of the resolution (H. Res. 676) providing for authority to initiate litigation for actions by the President or other executive branch officials inconsistent with their duties under the Constitution of the United States; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 935) to amend the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act and the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to clarify Congressional intent regarding the regulation of the use of pesticides in or near navigable waters, and for other purposes; and providing for proceedings during the period from August 1, 2014, through September 5, 2014, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 227, nays 195, not voting 10, as follows:

[Roll No. 465]

YEAS—227

Aderholt
Amash
Amodei
Bachmann
Bachus
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bentivolio
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Broun (GA)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Cassidy
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coble
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Conaway
Cook
Cotton
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Daines
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
Diaz-Balart
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gardner
Gerlach
Gibbs
Gibson
Gingrey (GA)
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Grimm
Guthrie
Hall
Hanna
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (WA)
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Issa
Jenkins
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Lankford
Latham
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McAllister
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Petri
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Posey
Price (GA)
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Royce
Runyan
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schock
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southerland
Stewart
Stivers
Stockman
Stutzman
Terry
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walorski
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IN)

NAYS—195

Barber
Barrow (GA)
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera (CA)
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Enyart
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Garcia
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hastings (FL)
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Holt
Honda
Horsford
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maffei
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McIntyre
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Michaud
Miller, George
Moore
Moran
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Negrete McLeod
Nolan
O'Rourke
Owens
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor (AZ)
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters (CA)
Peters (MI)
Peterson
Pingree (ME)
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rahall
Rangel
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Schwartz
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Titus
Tonko
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Waxman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—10

Clay
Cleaver
DesJarlais
Garrett
Gosar
Hanabusa
McKeon
Nunnelee
Pompeo
Sires

□ 1623

Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Ms. KUSTER, Messrs. RICHMOND and LANGEVIN changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

So the previous question was ordered.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

MOMENT OF SILENCE IN REMEMBRANCE OF MEMBERS OF ARMED FORCES AND THEIR FAMILIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WENSTRUP). The Chair would ask all present to rise for the purpose of a moment of silence.

The Chair asks that the House now observe a moment of silence in remembrance of our brave men and women in uniform who have given their lives in the service of our Nation in Iraq and Afghanistan and their families and all who serve in our Armed Forces and their families.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HULTGREN). Without objection, 5-minute voting will continue.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 227, nays 196, not voting 9, as follows:

[Roll No. 466]

YEAS—227

Aderholt
Amash
Amodei
Bachmann
Bachus
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bentivolio
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Broun (GA)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Cassidy
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coble
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Conaway
Cook
Cotton
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Daines
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
Diaz-Balart
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gardner
Garrett
Gerlach
Gibbs
Gibson
Gingrey (GA)
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Grimm
Guthrie
Hall
Hanna
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (WA)
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Issa
Jenkins
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jordan
Joyce
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Lankford
Latham
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McAllister
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Petri
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Posey
Price (GA)
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Royce
Runyan
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schock
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southerland
Stewart
Stivers
Stockman
Stutzman
Terry
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walorski
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IN)

NAYS—196

Barber
Barrow (GA)
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera (CA)
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Enyart
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Garcia
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hastings (FL)
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Holt
Honda
Horsford
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maffei
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McIntyre
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Michaud
Miller, George
Moore
Moran
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Negrete McLeod
Nolan
O'Rourke
Owens
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor (AZ)
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters (CA)
Peters (MI)
Peterson
Pingree (ME)
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rahall
Rangel
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Schwartz
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Titus
Tonko
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Waxman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—9

Clay
Cleaver
Davis, Rodney
DesJarlais
Hanabusa
Hurt
Nunnelee
Pompeo
Sires

□ 1633

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. HURT. Mr. Speaker, I was not present for rollcall vote No. 466, a recorded vote on H. Res. 694. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 466 I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 3230, PAY OUR GUARD AND RESERVE ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HASTINGS of Washington). The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to the conference report to the bill (H.R. 3230) making continuing appropriations during a government shutdown to provide pay and allowances to members of the reserve components of the Armed Forces who perform inactive-duty training during such period, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the conference report.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 420, nays 5, not voting 7, as follows:

[Roll No. 467]

YEAS—420

Aderholt
Amash
Amodei
Bachmann
Bachus
Barber
Barletta
Barr
Barrow (GA)
Barton
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Benishek
Bentivolio
Bera (CA)
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boustany
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Braley (IA)
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Broun (GA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Burgess
Bustos
Butterfield
Byrne
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Carter
Cartwright
Cassidy
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Chu
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clawson (FL)
Clyburn
Coble
Coffman
Cohen
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Conaway
Connolly
Conyers
Cook
Cooper
Costa
Cotton
Courtney
Cramer
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Daines
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
Davis, Rodney
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle
Duckworth
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Edwards
Ellison
Ellmers
Engel
Enyart
Eshoo
Esty
Farenthold
Farr
Fattah
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foster
Foxx

Frankel (FL)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Garcia
Gardner
Garrett
Gerlach
Gibbs
Gibson
Gingrey (GA)
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Grijalva
Grimm
Guthrie
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hall
Hanna
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Heck (NV)
Heck (WA)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Holding
Holt
Honda
Horsford
Hoyer
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huffman
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Israel
Issa
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Jenkins
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jordan
Joyce
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kirkpatrick
Kline
Kuster
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Lankford
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
Latta
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren
Long
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lummis
Lynch
Maffei
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Marchant
Marino
Massie
Matheson
Matsui
McAllister
McCarthy (CA)
McCarthy (NY)
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McIntyre
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
Meadows
Meehan
Meeks
Meng
Messer
Mica
Michaud
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Moore
Moran
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Negrete McLeod
Neugebauer
Noem
Nolan
Nugent
Nunes
O'Rourke
Olson
Owens
Palazzo
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor (AZ)
Paulsen
Payne
Pearce
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Perry
Peters (CA)
Peters (MI)
Peterson
Petri
Pingree (ME)
Pittenger
Pitts
Pocan
Poe (TX)
Polis
Posey
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rahall
Rangel
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Richmond
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruiz
Runyan
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schock
Schrader
Schwartz
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Slaughter
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Southerland
Speier
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Terry
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tierney
Tipton
Titus
Tonko
Tsongas
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walorski
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Waxman
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Welch
Wenstrup
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yarmuth
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IN)

NAYS—5

Crawford
Jones
Kingston
Sanford
Stockman

NOT VOTING—7

Clay
Cleaver
DesJarlais
Hanabusa
Nunnelee
Pompeo
Sires

□ 1640

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the conference report was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

DIRECTING THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO MAKE CERTAIN CORRECTIONS IN THE ENROLLMENT OF THE BILL H.R. 3230

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I send to the desk a concurrent resolution and ask unanimous consent for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 111

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That, in the enrollment of the bill H.R. 3230, the Clerk of the House of Representatives shall make the following corrections:

(1) In section 101(a)(1)(B)(i), insert before the period at the end the following: ", including any physician furnishing services under such program".

(2) In section 101(d)(3)(A), insert after "1395cc(a))" the following: "and participation agreements under section 1842(h) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1395u(h))".

(3) In section 101(d)(3)(B)(i), strike "provider of service" and insert "provider of services".

(4) In section 101(d)(3)(B)(i), insert before the semicolon the following: "and any physician or other supplier who has entered into a participation agreement under section 1842(h) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1395u(h))".

The concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material on the concurrent resolution just adopted.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

□ 1645

AUTHORIZATION TO INITIATE LITIGATION FOR ACTIONS BY THE PRESIDENT

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 694, I call up the resolution (H. Res. 676) providing for authority to initiate litigation for actions by the President or other executive branch officials inconsistent with their duties under the Constitution of the United States, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 694, the amendment recommended by the Committee on Rules printed in the resolution is adopted, and the resolution, as amended, is considered read.

The text of the resolution, as amended, is as follows:

H. RES. 676

Resolved, That the Speaker is authorized to initiate or intervene in one or more civil actions on behalf of the House of Representatives in a Federal court of competent jurisdiction to seek any appropriate relief regarding the failure of the President, the head of any department or agency, or any other officer or employee of the executive branch, to act in a manner consistent with that official's duties under the Constitution and laws of the United States with respect to implementation of any provision of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, title I or subtitle B of title II of the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010, including any amendment made by such provision, or any other related provision of law, including a failure to implement any such provision.

SEC. 2. The Speaker shall notify the House of Representatives of a decision to initiate or intervene in any civil action pursuant to this resolution.

SEC. 3. *(a) The Office* [The Office] of the General Counsel of the House of Representatives, at the direction of the Speaker, shall represent the House in any civil action initiated, or in which the House intervenes, pursuant to this resolution, and may employ the services of outside counsel and other experts for this purpose.

(b) The chair of the Committee on House Administration shall cause to be printed in the Congressional Record a statement setting forth the aggregate amounts expended by the Office of General Counsel on outside counsel and other experts pursuant to subsection (a) on a quarterly basis. Such statement shall be submitted for printing not more than 30 days after the expiration of each such period.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS) and the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the consideration of H. Res. 676.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today to discuss the unwarranted, ongoing shift of power in favor of the executive branch.

Under President Obama, the executive branch has increasingly gone beyond the constraints of the Constitution. In fact, in a number of instances, the President's actions have gone beyond his article II powers to enforce the law and have infringed upon the article I powers of Congress to write the law.

We are here today because, at the beginning of this Congress, every Member of this body took an oath of office in which we swore to ''support and defend the Constitution of the United States.'' At the beginning of each Presidential term, the President takes an oath to ''faithfully execute the Office of the President of the United States and . . . to the best of my ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States.'' While these oaths are slightly different, the object of both oaths is the same. The President and Members of Congress have an obligation to follow and defend the Constitution.

The text of the Constitution that we have sworn to defend provides separate powers for each branch of the Federal Government. Article I puts the power to legislate—that is, to write the law—in the hands of Congress. Article II, on the other hand, requires that the President ''take care that the laws be faithfully executed.'' The difference is important. The Founders knew that giving one branch the power to both write and execute the law would be a direct threat to the liberties of the American people. They separated these powers between the branches in order to ensure that no one particular person, whether it be the President or a Member of Congress, could trample upon the rights of the people.

My fear is that our Nation is currently facing the exact threat that the Constitution is designed to avoid. Branches of government have always attempted to exert their influence on the other branches, but the President has gone too far. Rather than faithfully executing the law as the Constitution requires, I believe that the President has selectively enforced the law in some instances, ignored the law in other instances and, in a few cases, unilaterally attempted to change the law altogether.

These actions have tilted the power away from the legislature and toward the Executive. They have also undermined the rule of law, which provides the predictability necessary to govern a functioning and fair society. By and large, this country is founded upon the rule of law, and this tilts that balance. By circumventing Congress, the President's actions have marginalized the role that the American people play in creating the laws that govern them. Specifically, the President has waived work requirements for welfare recipients, unilaterally changed immigration laws, released the Gitmo Five without properly notifying Congress, which is the law, and ignored the statutory requirements of the Affordable Care Act.

We have chosen to bring this legislation forth today to sue the President over his selective implementation of the Affordable Care Act because it is the option most likely to clear the legal hurdles necessary to succeed and to restore the balance between the branches intended by the Founders. This administration has effectively rewritten the law without following the constitutional process.

When the executive branch goes beyond the constraints of the Constitution and infringes upon the powers of the legislative branch, it is important that the remaining branch of government—the judiciary—play its role in rebalancing this important separation of powers. After all, the constitutional limits on government power are meaningless unless judges engage with the Constitution and enforce those limits.

My friends in the minority do not seem to believe that the judiciary is up to its role in rebalancing the separation of powers. I disagree. Yesterday, at the Rules Committee, Members of the minority argued that this lawsuit is frivolous and a waste of time. They argued that if this litigation were to go forward that it would lead to countless lawsuits between the branches of government.

What my friends in the minority might fail to tell you—but I will today on the floor—is that they were for suing the President before they were against it. Eight years ago, in 2006, some Members of the minority, including the ranking member of the Rules Committee—the gentlewoman from New York—were plaintiffs in a lawsuit filed by congressional Democrats against then sitting President George W. Bush.

That is right. Eight years ago, my friends across the aisle filed a lawsuit against the President, brought by Members of one half of the Congress. The Democratic ranking member of the Judiciary Committee, the gentleman from Michigan, who is also a plaintiff, argued that he was alarmed by the erosion of our constitutional form of government and by a President who shrugged about the law. After consulting with some of the foremost constitutional experts in the Nation, he said he had determined that there was one group of people who was injured by the President's lack of respect for checks and balances—the House of Representatives.

I want to echo one line that he argued at the time regarding the separation of powers:

> If a President does not need one House of Congress to pass the law, what is next?

Perhaps this makes sense.

Mr. Speaker, I submit for the RECORD an editorial from The Huffington Post, on April 26, 2006, by the ranking member of the Judiciary Committee, the gentleman from Michigan. It is entitled, ''Taking the President to Court,'' in which he made a compelling argument as to why Members of the House could, in fact, have standing to sue the President.

[From The Huffington Post, July 30, 2014]

TAKING THE PRESIDENT TO COURT

As some of you may be aware, according to the President and Congressional Republicans, a bill does not have to pass both the Senate and the House to become a law. Forget your sixth grade civics lesson, forget the book they give you when you visit Congress—''How Our Laws Are Made,'' and forget Schoolhouse Rock. These are checks and balances, Republican-style.

As the Washington Post reported last month, as the Republican budget bill struggled to make its way through Congress at the end of last year and beginning of this year (the bill cuts critical programs such as student loans and Medicaid funding), the House and Senate passed different versions of it. House Republicans did not want to make Republicans in marginal districts vote on the bill again, so they simply certified that the Senate bill was the same as the House bill and sent it to the President. The President, despite warnings that the bill did not represent the consensus of the House and Senate, simply shrugged and signed the bill anyway. Now, the Administration is implementing it as though it was the law of the land.

Several public interest groups have sought to stop some parts of the bill from being implemented, under the theory that the bill is unconstitutional. However, getting into the weeds a bit, they have lacked the ability to stop the entire bill. To seek this recourse, the person bringing the suit must have what is called ''standing,'' that is they must show they were injured or deprived of some right. Because the budget bill covers so many areas of the law, it is difficult for one person to show they were harmed by the entire bill. Thus, many of these groups have only sought to stop part of it.

After consulting with some of the foremost constitutional experts in the nation, I determined that one group of people are injured by the entire bill: Members of the House. We were deprived of our right to vote on a bill that is now being treated as the law of the land.

So, I am going to court. With many of my Democratic Colleagues (list appended at the bottom of this diary), I plan to file suit tomorrow in federal district court in Detroit against the President, members of the Cabinet and other federal officers seeking to have a simple truth confirmed: a bill not passed by the House and Senate is not a law, even if the President signs it. As such, the Budget bill cannot be treated as the law of the land.

As many of you know, I have become increasingly alarmed at the erosion of our constitutional form of government. Whether through the Patriot Act, the Presidents Secret Domestic Spying program, or election irregularities and disenfranchisement, our fundamental freedoms are being taken away. Nothing to me is more stark than this, however. If a President does not need one House of Congress to pass a law, what's next?

The following is a list of co-plaintiffs on this lawsuit. I would note that I did not invite every Member of the House to join in the suit, and I am certain many, many more Members would have joined if asked. However, this was not possible for various arcane legal reasons.

The other plaintiffs include Rep. John Dingell, Ranking Member on the Energy and

Commerce Committee; Rep. Charles B. Rangel, Ranking Member on the Ways and Means Committee; Rep. George Miller, Ranking Member on the Education and Workforce Committee; Rep. James L. Oberstar, Ranking Member on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee; Rep. Barney Frank, Ranking Member on the Financial Services Committee; Rep. Collin C. Peterson, Ranking Member on the Agriculture Committee; Rep. Bennie Thompson, Ranking Member on the Homeland Security Committee; Rep. Louise M. Slaughter, Ranking Member on the Rules Committee; Rep. Fortney ''Pete'' Stark, Ranking Member on the Ways and Means Health Subcommittee; Rep. Sherrod Brown, Representing Ohio's 13th District.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, the litigation considered by this resolution is a lot different and is a lot stronger than litigation filed by my friends on the other side against a previous President. The majority of these lawsuits was brought by a small group of legislators or individual Members. Today, the House as an institution will vote to authorize the suit, which gives this case, I believe, a far better chance in court than previous attempts.

My friends in the minority at the Rules Committee yesterday claimed that this is all about politics, but the Republican members of this committee repeatedly insisted that we disagreed. The issue is not about partisan politics. It is not about Republicans and Democrats. This lawsuit is about the legislative branch's standing up for the laws that have been passed and signed into law by the legislative branch and signed by the Executive of this great Nation. Republicans are motivated to stand up for the Constitution, the separation of powers, and the rule of law.

Any person who believes in our system of government should be worried about the President's executive overreach. This President, as well as future Presidents—from either party—must not be allowed to ignore the Constitution and to circumvent Congress.

Both Republicans and Democrats have stood up for the legislative branch in the past. In fact, there have been 44 lawsuits filed in the last 75 years in which legislators sought standing in Federal court. Of the 41 filed by plaintiffs from a single party, nearly 70 percent were brought by Democrats, representing the body.

I submit for the RECORD an editorial by Kimberley Strassel, from The Wall Street Journal, dated July 17, 2014, that further explains why the Democrats were suing the President before they were against it, and I call on my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to stand up for Congress and to defend our Constitution against the executive branch.

[From The Potomac Watch, July 17, 2014]

THE BOEHNER-BASHERS' TRACK RECORD

(By Kimberley A. Strassel)

In the tiny House Rules Committee room in Congress on Wednesday, New York Democrat Louise Slaughter let roll her grievances against House Republicans' lawsuit against Barack Obama. It took a lot of coffee.

The suit, which sues the president for unilaterally changing a core provision of ObamaCare, is a ''political stunt,'' declared Ms. Slaughter. Republicans have ''timed'' it to ''peak . . . right as the midterm elections are happening,'' said the ranking Rules member. Having failed to stop ObamaCare, they have chosen to ''run to the judicial branch.'' And, she lectured, a ''lawsuit against the president brought by half of the Congress'' is ''certainly'' not the ''correct way to resolve'' a ''political dispute.'' As for the legal merits, well! Ms. Slaughter feted her witness, lawyer Walter Dellinger, praising his work on Raines v. Byrd , a 1997 case in which the Supreme Court found members of Congress do not have automatic standing to sue. The courts, she insisted, had no business settling such disputes. A lawsuit against the president, she declared, ''is preposterous.''

About the only thing Ms. Slaughter didn't do in five hours was offer House Speaker John Boehner her litigation notes. For it seems to have slipped Ms. Slaughter's mind—and the press's attention—that a mere eight years ago she was a plaintiff in a lawsuit filed by congressional Democrats against George W. Bush. The year was 2006, just as Democrats were, uh, peaking in their campaign to take back the House.

Democrats were sore that they'd lost a fight over a budget bill that made cuts to Medicaid and student loans. They dredged up a technical mistake—a tiny difference between the House and Senate version of the bill. Michigan Democrat John Conyers, ranking member of the House Judiciary Committee, decided to (how did Ms. Slaughter put it?) file a lawsuit against the president brought by half of the Congress. He was joined as a plaintiff by nearly every other then-ranking Democratic member and titan in the House—Charles Rangel, John Dingell, George Miller, Collin Peterson, Bennie Thompson, Barney Frank, Pete Stark, James Oberstar and Ms. Slaughter herself.

In an April 2006 Huffington Post piece titled ''Taking the President to Court,'' Mr. Conyers explained that he was ''alarmed by the erosion of our constitutional form of government,'' and by a president who ''shrugged'' about ''the law.'' After ''consulting with some of the foremost constitutional experts in the nation,'' he had determined that there was ''one group of people'' who were ''injured'' by Mr. Bush's lack of respect for ''checks and balances'': Congress. So he was ''going''—or as Ms. Slaughter might put it, ''running''—''to court.''

The plaintiffs—including Ms. Slaughter—meanwhile filed briefs explaining why Raines v. Byrd (her Dellinger special) should be no bar to granting them standing. They chided the defendants for omitting ''any mention'' of Coleman v. Miller, a 1939 case in which the Supreme Court did grant standing to members of a legislature to sue. By Wednesday, it was Ms. Slaughter who was omitting any mention that any such decision ever existed.

Then again, there was so much that escaped Democrats' minds at that hearing. Not one of those present, for instance, recalled that only two years ago, four of their House colleagues filed suit against Vice President *Joe Biden* (in his capacity as head of the Senate) challenging as unconstitutional the filibuster. Or that Democratic legislators also filed lawsuits claiming standing in 2011, and in 2007, and in 2006, and in 2002 and in 2001 and . . . It was left to Florida International University law professor Elizabeth Price Foley, another witness, to remind Democrats that in fact no fewer than 44 lawsuits in which legislators sought standing had been filed in federal court since Coleman v. Miller. Of the 41 filed by plaintiffs with unified political affiliation, nearly 70 percent were brought by Democrats. At least 20 of those came since 2000. The GOP might thank Ms. Slaughter for the idea.

Save one crucial difference. It was also left to Ms. Foley to explain that the reason most of these prior cases had failed is because most were, in fact—again, in Ms. Slaughter's words—''political stunts.'' The majority, including the Slaughter case, were brought by ad hoc groups of legislators, sore over a lost political battle, complaining to courts. The judiciary wasn't much impressed.

By contrast—and by far the more notable aspect of the five long hours of the hearing—is the care the Boehner team is putting into its own suit. While Democrats used Wednesday to score political points, Republicans used it to grill their expert witnesses on case law and constitutional questions. Mr. Boehner's decisions to have the House as a whole vote to authorize the suit, and to narrowly tailor it around a specific presidential transgression (and one that no private litigant would ever have standing to protest), are designed to make this a far different and better breed of a court case.

It's precisely because Democrats know how good a point Republicans have about Obama unilateralism that they are already working to dismiss the suit as ''political.'' And to do that, Ms. Slaughter must have us forget that up until, oh, two weeks ago, Democrats were all about asking the courts to vindicate Congress's prerogatives. How times change.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, through this lawsuit, the United States House of Representatives will take a critical and crucial step in reining in the President and in defending the Constitution so that it will endure for yet another generation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1700

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, across the country, conservative thinkers and legal scholars are discrediting this lawsuit against the President. They are exposing it for what it is: a political stunt timed to peak in November as Americans are heading to the polls for the midterm elections.

For example, Harvard Law Professor and Former Assistant Attorney General under President George W. Bush Jack Goldsmith wrote: ''the lawsuit will almost certainly fail, and should fail for lack of congressional standing.''

Even Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia, joined by Chief Justice Roberts and Justice Thomas, wrote that the Framers of the Constitution emphatically rejected a ''system in which Congress and the Executive can pop immediately into court, in their institutional capacity, whenever the President . . . implements a law in a manner that is not to Congress' liking.''

Conservative writer and former Justice Department official Andrew C. McCarthy wrote recently that this lawsuit is ''a classic case of assuming the pose of meaningful action while in reality doing nothing.''

Heavens to Betsy, how much more do we have to hear that this is not going to work?

A recent poll by CNN found that 57 percent of Americans oppose the lawsuit. Yes, the majority of the American

people recognize it for what it is: political theater. They recognize this lawsuit is not only a distraction from the real problems that plague our Nation, but that it is designed to appease radical Republicans clamoring for impeachment.

The Rules Committee, of which I am ranking member, was the only committee to consider this lawsuit. Under regular order, the House Administration Committee would have also held hearings and a markup because they are the ''money'' committee that handles the House's internal accounts, but they were not given the chance to do so.

Over the past 3 weeks, the Rules Committee heard testimony from constitutional scholars who debated the merits of the lawsuit and offered several amendments. The minority on our committee offered nearly a dozen amendments aimed at bringing some transparency and accountability to this process, and they were all voted down along party lines.

Democrats offered an amendment that would have required that this political stunt be funded from the Benghazi Select Committee's budget, another political stunt. After the 14 investigations of the Benghazi tragedy, they have allocated $3.3 million to continue to chase after a nonexistent scandal.

We offered an amendment that would have ensured that any law firms contracted for this lawsuit were not also lobbyists trying to influence us at the same time that they represented us in court, a clear conflict of interest.

We even offered an amendment that would have required disclosure of which programs and budgets in the Federal budget will be reduced to pay for the lawsuit. Would the funds come from the Veterans' Affairs Committee, the House Armed Services Committee? We don't know, because the majority has refused to tell us.

Before they vote today, Members of this House deserve to know exactly which legislative branch functions will be curtailed to pay for this folly. Otherwise, how can we cast an informed vote?

We focused our amendments on cost because of how important cost is. It is not, as has been stated here, an imaginary concern. Republicans have wasted hundreds of billions of dollars in this month alone passing over $700 billion, with a B, of unpaid-for tax extenders on this House floor. Republicans took $24 billion out of the economy when they shut down the government to deny health care to millions. And, according to CBS News, the majority has wasted over $79 million on the more than 50 votes for the House floor to dismantle, to undermine, and to repeal the Affordable Care Act.

Where in the world does it stop?

When Republicans defended the discriminatory Defense of Marriage Act and employed outside counsel in a similar lawsuit—with the fate that we believe this will have—they cost the American taxpayers $2.3 million. We learned later that their lawyers charged $520 an hour—an hour, and at that rate, they would have been paid $1 million a year for a 40-hour workweek.

So what will this lawsuit cost, Mr. Speaker? That is what we want to know. The minority requested this information. The majority replied: ''A lawsuit is a small price to pay.''

We could be spending money on our crumbling infrastructure, investing in our education system, making it easier for our children to go to college, even building some high-speed rail—we are about the only country left in the world that doesn't have any—or addressing climate change. We just had a terrible flood in my district and next door, where they have lost sewer systems, water systems. We could be doing so many other things than simply throwing this money away.

The idea of fiscal responsibility, of fiscal tightness, absolutely is decimated in just what I have said already at this time, the money wasted here, with nothing for it, when the needs are so great and the population cries out for relief. But instead of investing in our country, the majority insists on bringing a lawsuit that, if it is successful, will do the opposite of everything they have been trying to accomplish since 2010.

Yes, after years of rallying against the Affordable Care Act, not one of them would vote for it as it passed the House, voting to derail it, working against it—pay attention here—they are suing the President for not implementing it fast enough. And if that makes no sense to you, you are not alone. We don't understand it either.

Not only is this logic upside-down and inside out, it is directly against the feelings of members of their own party. A recent poll from the Commonwealth Fund found that 77 percent of people were pleased with their new coverage. Republicans themselves have a 74 percent satisfaction rate with the new plans that they have bought.

Now before us, we have a lawsuit that has been ridiculed and railed against by conservative thinkers and progressives alike. It is a deplorable waste of taxpayer funds and would go against everything the Republicans have been working for for 4 years. The Republicans that I worked with in this Congress when I first came here would not even think of this.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE), the chairman of the Judiciary Committee.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas, the chairman of the Rules Committee, for his leadership on this issue.

Without enforcement of the law, there cannot be accountability under a law, and political accountability is essential to a functioning democracy. We in the House of Representatives who face reelection every 2 years under the Constitution are perhaps reminded of that more often than others. And while there is at least one political branch willing to enforce the law, we will not fail to act through whatever means of which we can successfully avail ourselves.

When the President fails to perform his constitutional duty that he take care that the laws be faithfully executed, the Congress has appropriations and other powers over the President. But none of those powers can be exercised if a Senate controlled by the President's own political party refuses to exercise them. Nor would the exercise of those powers solve the problem at hand, because they would not actually require the President to faithfully execute the laws.

And, of course, the most powerful and always available means of solving the problem at hand is to vote out of office supporters of the President's abuses of power. In the meantime, however, the need to pursue the establishment of clear principles of political accountability is of the essence.

Earlier this year, I joined with Representative GOWDY to introduce H.R. 4138, the ENFORCE the Law Act, to put a procedure in place for Congress to initiate litigation against the executive branch for failure to faithfully execute the laws. But while that legislation passed the House with bipartisan support, the Senate has failed to even consider it, so today we consider a resolution to authorize litigation by the House to restore political accountability and enforce the rule of law.

Although the case law on standing may be murky, one thing is absolutely clear: the Supreme Court has never closed the door to the standing of the House as an institution.

As President Lincoln said: ''Let reverence for the laws be . . . enforced in courts of justice.''

It is the courts' duty, too, to uphold reverence for the law, and it is the specific duty of the courts to call fouls when the lines of constitutional authority under the separation of powers established by the Constitution have been breached.

A lawsuit by the House of Representatives would grant no additional powers to the judicial branch over legislation. Indeed, what a statute says or doesn't say would remain unaffected. But it would be the appropriate task of the Federal courts to determine whether or not, whatever a statute says, a President can ignore or alter it under the Constitution.

The stakes of inaction are high. The lawsuit will challenge the President's failure to enforce key provisions of the law that has come to bear his name in the popular mind and was largely drafted in the White House. What provisions of ObamaCare have been enforced have not proved popular, and

what provisions the President has refused to enforce have been delayed until after the next Federal elections.

How convenient for the President, yet how devastating to accountability in our Republic.

Imagine the future if this new unconstitutional power of the President is left to stand. Presidents today and in the future would be able to treat the entire United States Code as mere guidelines and pick and choose among its provisions which to enforce and which to ignore. The current President has even created entirely new categories of businesses to apply his unilaterally imposed exemptions.

In that future, if a bill the President signed into law was later considered to be bad policy and potentially harmful to the President's political party if enforced, accountability for signing that policy into law could be avoided by simply delaying enforcement until a more politically opportune time, if at all. No longer would Presidential candidates running for reelection have to stand on their records, because their records could be edited at will.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman an additional minute.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Sign one bill into law, enforce another version of it in practice. Rinse and repeat until the accumulation of power in the Presidency is complete.

We should all support this resolution today, as it aims to unite two-thirds of the Federal Government in delivering a simple message: Congress writes the laws and the President enforces them. Our own constitutionally required oath to support the Constitution of the United States requires no less.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), the Democratic whip.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlelady for yielding, and I rise in opposition to the bill that is before us.

It is somewhat ironic that the Republicans want to sue the President for not enforcing a law that they want to repeal. How ironic. But it is, frankly, a demonstration of their frustration that they have been unable politically to attain the objective that they seek. They therefore repair to the wasting of time by this Congress and the wasting of the taxpayers' money on a hypocritical and partisan attack against the President, one that is meant to distract from the pressing issues of the day, like fixing our broken immigration system, raising the minimum wage, or restoring emergency unemployment insurance for those seeking jobs.

While the majority of Americans oppose this lawsuit gimmick, House Republicans continue to move ahead with it instead of acting on those policies and other critical legislation which the majority of the American public do support: Make It In America jobs bills, Export-Import Bank reauthorization, terrorism risk insurance, Voting Rights Amendment Act, continuing resolutions and appropriations bills. All of these the American people want to see us do.

But in polls, they show they don't want us to be doing this. They think it is frivolous. They think it is without merit. They think it should not be done.

All the bills that I referenced they think ought to be done. How sad it is that we come here and do things the American public thinks are a waste of time while not doing things Americans think are very important.

I tell my friend from Texas, and he is my friend, none other than Justice Antonin Scalia has made the point that the judiciary traditionally does not hear cases of political disagreement between the other two branches.

□ 1715

In fact, in United States v. Windsor, Justice Scalia said, a ''system in which Congress and the Executive can pop immediately into court, in their institutional capacity, whenever the President implements a law in a manner that is not to Congress' liking.'' Scalia felt that was not justified.

We believe this legislation is not justified. We further believe that the American people do not believe this legislation is justified. We do believe that the base of the Republican Party that tried to defeat President Obama in 2012, voted against him in 2008, and disagreed with him on the issues thinks this is what is available to them.

It is wrong. It is a waste of time. It is a waste of money. It is a distraction from the issues that are so important to our people. This lawsuit is nothing more than a partisan bill to rally the Republican base, and for some, it doesn't go far enough.

Under President Clinton, Republicans' playbook was shut down and then impeach. Under President Obama, Republicans said that if the Affordable Care Act were not repealed—not that they would sue him. They said they would shut down the government if they didn't get their way. They didn't get their way, and they shut down the government.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. I yield the gentleman an additional 1 minute.

Mr. HOYER. They threatened to shut down the government, and they shut down the government. And the American people said, that is not what we want done.

Again, they come to this floor because they cannot achieve, through their political process, the ends they seek. They have voted over 50 times to repeal or undermine the Affordable Care Act. They do not want it implemented. Now they want to sue the President because he is not implementing it fully, and now they are suing and refusing to say that impeachment is off the table.

In fact, their newly elected whip, the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. SCALISE) declined the opportunity to rule out impeachment on four separate occasions last weekend.

My friends, instead of wasting time and money on the lawsuit and what might follow, Congress ought to do what our constituents sent us here to do: create jobs, grow the middle class, invest in an economy where all of our people can work hard, and make it in America.

Reject this waste of time. Vote ''no'' on this unjustified, impractical, losing proposition for the suit against the President of the United States.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, we just heard a lot of revisionist history.

But I will answer the question. And the answer is that years back, we did impeach William Jefferson Clinton because he lied to an FBI agent. He lied to a Federal grand jury, and he violated a Federal law, which was a felony. Oh, by the way, that led to impeachment for a felony while in office, a sitting President.

In this instance, the President of the United States is not faithfully executing the laws of the country, and that is an entirely different process. So for the gentleman to suggest that this is going to lead to that is simply not true.

I will tell you that William Jefferson Clinton violated the Federal law as a felony, and we believe our President, now Barack Obama, is not faithfully executing the laws. And anybody could figure that out who serves as a Member of Congress.

I would now like to yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. DUNCAN), a member of the Foreign Affairs, Homeland Security, and Natural Resources Committees.

Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I would just remind my colleague from Maryland who just spoke that, in my humble opinion, HARRY REID shut down the government.

Mr. Speaker, let me explain for everybody watching at home across America what the separation of powers doctrine means. I know this is obvious for most Americans because we study it in school. But since our constitutional scholar President doesn't seem to get it, it apparently needs to be explained again.

Our Constitution says that we, the legislative branch—this branch—we write the laws. The President executes the laws. And the courts settle any dispute we may have. Got it? We write the laws. The President executes the laws. The court settles the disputes.

Our Constitution does not say that the President gets to write his own laws. Our Founders knew that was a bad idea. They had seen kings wield that kind of power, and they knew they didn't want that for the new Nation. They understood that too much power in the hands of any one person or any one group of people would inevitably lead to tyranny.

As Christian men of the day, they understood that since the Garden of Eden, man is fallen, and that fallen men, once they have a taste of power, they will always lust for more. They knew that ''Power corrupts; absolute power corrupts absolutely.''

So in their understanding of fallen man, the remedy was a system of checks and balances, and clearly delineated, but separate, powers divided among three equal branches of government. We write the laws. The President executes them. It should be simple, right?

Mr. Speaker, we are here today because the President has failed us in two directions. He has failed to execute the laws we have written, and he has rewritten the laws on his own. I believe that is a breach of his oath of office to uphold the laws.

So we are gathered here, as the first branch, the legislative branch, the branch that is closest to the people, to seek the judicial branch's help in reining in the power of an out-of-control executive branch, plain and simple. We are here specifically to bring legal action against the President of the United States to stop him from unilaterally rewriting the so-called Affordable Care Act.

By the way, that is really a misnomer. There is nothing ''affordable'' about the Affordable Care Act, and the American people know it. But really, that is a discussion for another day.

From the individual mandate to the business mandate to the waivers for Big Labor to the HHS regulations that were struck down by the Supreme Court, to the decision just last week to exempt the U.S. territories—how many people is that, 4 million people?—exempt 4 million more people from the law known as ObamaCare with just the action of the President's pen, time and time and time again, we have seen this President rewrite the law.

But rewriting ObamaCare isn't only one of the ways this President has abused his power. Look at the mess on the southern border right now, a mess of the President's own making, thanks to his decision not to enforce the immigration law and his attempt to attempt to rewrite that law through a failed DACA regulation and so-called ''prosecutorial discretion.'' Last week, I sent the President 21 tweets which laid out the things that he could do to stop this mess at the border that are within the law, within his purview. And still, he continues to operate outside the law.

And it is not just the border and ObamaCare. It is DOMA and the NLRB and an out-of-control EPA trying to backdoor cap-and-trade legislation, a regulatory war on coal, and the waters of the United States—regulation after regulation, administrative action after action with no basis in real, actual bona fide law that this body has passed. This administration has chosen repeatedly to flout laws or to try to rewrite laws without going through the legislative process that our Founders set up for us.

The Constitution, they are laying all over the place. Get a copy. Look at it. Understand the separation of powers.

This Congress must use every power at our disposal to restore balance to our government and uphold the rule of law. We have voted repeatedly to use the power of the purse to cut off funding for unconstitutional activities within this administration. We have voted repeatedly, Mr. Speaker, to overturn bad regulations. We passed the ENFORCE Act, the REINS Act, and I have cosponsored numerous other efforts that repair our broken system of checks and balances in order to stop the overreaches of this administration. We must act today, and we must continue to act until this administration and this President relent and get it right.

I support this resolution to take this President to court.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina. Let's take this President to court because I believe we need to take whatever steps are necessary and in our power to rein in this administration and hold them accountable to the United States Constitution and citizens of the United States of America.

The Founding Fathers gave us this recourse to restore the balance of power and uphold the rule of law. That is why this is so important for the legislative branch to reassert our authority, to make the law so he can enforce the law.

May God continue to bless this body. May God continue to bless the men and women that serve this country. And may God continue to bless the United States of America.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS), the distinguished ranking member of the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. CONYERS. I thank the gentlelady.

Mr. Speaker, Members of the House, as the former chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, I rise in strong opposition to House Resolution 676, which would authorize the Speaker to file suit against the President of the United States for failing to enforce the Affordable Care Act, which has been attacked more than 51 times unsuccessfully in the House.

Now, why do I oppose this seriously flawed measure? One, the fact that it addresses a nonexistent problem. Two, it violates constitutional requirements and fundamental separation of power principles. And three, it diverts Congress from focusing on truly critical matters that require prompt legislative responses.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to include in the RECORD a letter received only today signed by eight constitutional law scholars explaining the reasons why a lawsuit filed pursuant to H. Res. 676 is likely to fail.

JULY 30, 2014.

Hon. JOHN BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER BOEHNER, We write as law professors who specialize in constitutional law and federal courts to express our view that the members of the House of Representatives lack the ability to sue the President of the United States in federal court for his alleged failure to enforce a federal statute, even if an Act of Congress were to authorize such a suit and especially without such legislative authorization. Never in American history has such a suit been allowed. In fact, in many cases, the United States Supreme Court and the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit have held that members of Congress lack standing to sue in federal court. An entire House of Congress is in no stronger a position to sue. Moreover, this is exactly the type of political dispute which courts have found to pose a non-justiciable political question and that should be resolved in the political process rather than by judges.

In Raines v. Byrd, 521 U.S. 811 (1997), members of Congress sued to challenge the constitutionality of the line-item veto. The Court dismissed the case for lack of standing and said that the members of Congress ''have alleged no injury to themselves as individuals, the institutional injury they allege is wholly abstract and widely dispersed, and their attempt to litigate this dispute at this time and in this form is contrary to historical experience . . . . We therefore hold that these individual members of Congress do not have a sufficient 'personal stake' in this dispute and have not alleged a sufficiently concrete injury to have established Article III standing.''

After Raines v. Byrd, it is clear that legislators have standing only if they allege either that they have been singled out for specially unfavorable treatment as opposed to other members of their bodies or that their votes have been denied or nullified. This is consistent with a large body of lower court precedent, primarily from the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, that requires a showing of nullification of a vote as a prerequisite for standing. The Court of Appeals has stated that a member of Congress has standing only if ''the alleged diminution in congressional influence . . . amount[s] to a disenfranchisement, a complete nullification or withdrawal of a voting opportunity.'' Goldwater v. Carter, 617 F.2d 697, 702 (D.C. Cir. 1979), vacated and remanded on other grounds, 444 U.S. 996 (1979); see also Harrington v. Bush, 553 F.2d 190, 213 (D.C. Cir. 1977).

It is just for this reason that the House of Representatives as a body, like its members individually, lacks standing to sue. The claim that the President has not fully enforced provisions of the Affordable Care Act, or other laws, does not amount to a ''disenfranchisement, a complete nullification, or withdrawal of a voting opportunity.'' Congress retains countless mechanisms to ensure enforcement of a law, ranging from use of its spending power to assigning the task to an independent agency.

On many occasions throughout American history, the Supreme Court has seen the need for the federal judiciary to stay out of disputes between the elected branches of government. That is exactly the lesson that the proposed lawsuit would ignore. Thus the suit likely would be dismissed both for want of standing and because it poses a non-justiciable political question. As Justice Scalia pointed out years ago, courts frequently fail

to review actions or inaction by the Executive when a decision involves ''a sensitive and inherently discretionary judgment call, . . . the sort of decision that has traditionally been nonreviewable, . . . [and decisions for which] review would have disruptive practical consequences.'' Webster v. Doe, 486 U.S. 592, 608 (1988) (Scalia, J., dissenting). The question presented here poses the very essence of what the Supreme Court in Baker v. Carr, 369 U.S. 186, 217 (1962), said is a political question because of ''the impossibility of deciding without an initial policy determination of a kind clearly for nonjudicial discretion; or the impossibility of a court's undertaking independent resolution without expressing lack of the respect due coordinate branches of government.'' The idea of a judge telling a President how to exercise his discretion in enforcing a law cuts at the heart of separation of powers and thus presents a question non-justiciable in the courts.

Under long-standing practice and precedents, disputes, such as this one between members of the House of Representatives and the President, must be worked out in the political process, not the courts.

Disclaimer: institutional affiliations are for identification purposes only.

ERWIN CHEMERINSKY,
Dean, University of California, Irvine School of Law;
JANET COOPER ALEXANDER,
Frederick I. Richman Professor of Law, Stanford Law School;
PETER EDELMAN,
Professor of Law, Georgetown University Law Center;
LAWRENCE LESSIG,
Roy L. Furman Professor of Law, Harvard Law School;
BURT NEUBORNE,
Inez Milholland Professor of Civil Liberties, New York University Law School;
KERMIT ROOSEVELT,
Professor of Law, University of Pennsylvania Law School;
SUZANNA SHERRY,
Herman O. Loewenstein Professor of Law, Vanderbilt University Law School;
CHARLES TIEFER,
Professor, University of Baltimore School of Law.

Mr. CONYERS. To begin with, H. Res. 676 seeks to solve a nonexistent problem because the President has, in fact, fully met his obligations to fully execute the laws.

Allowing flexibility in the implementation of a major new program, even where the statute mandates a specific deadline, is neither unusual nor a constitutional violation.

Indeed, in the case of the Affordable Care Act's employer mandate, the administration acted pursuant to statutory authorization granted to it by Congress.

Section 7805(a) of the Internal Revenue Code authorizes the Treasury Secretary to issue any rules necessary for the enforcement of the Code, including the provisions that enforce the employer mandate.

Exercising discretion in implementing a law is the reality of administering sometimes complex programs and is inherent in the President's duty to ''take care'' that he ''faithfully'' execute laws.

This has been especially true with respect to the Affordable Care Act. The President's decision to extend certain compliance dates to help phase-in the Act is not a novel tactic.

Yet, even though not a single court has ever concluded that reasonable delay in implementing a complex law constitutes a violation of the Take Care Clause, the Majority insists there is a constitutional crisis.

In addition, a suit initiated under H. Res. 676 would itself be unconstitutional and would violate separation of powers principles.

This is because such a lawsuit would essentially allow federal courts to second-guess decisions by the Executive Branch in how it chooses to implement a policy.

The federal judiciary, under the political question doctrine, avoids answering such questions precisely because a court is not appropriate forum to resolve issues of complex policy.

Additionally, it is highly unlikely that Congress could satisfy the standing requirements of Article III of the Constitution that must be met in order to enforce the Take Care Clause.

To meet those requirements, a plaintiff—under the Supreme Court's 1997 decision in Raines v. Byrd—must show, among other things, that it suffered a concrete and particularized injury.

Injury amounting only to an alleged violation of a right to have the Government act in accordance with law—which is what this resolution contemplates—is not judicially cognizable for Article III standing purposes.

This is in stark contrast to cases where Congress has sought to protect a fundamental power, like its subpoena authority.

In subpoena enforcement cases, courts have found standing for one House of Congress to sue because a specific legislative prerogative was at stake, constituting a sufficiently concrete injury to Congress to confer Article III standing.

Article III's standing requirements enforce the Constitution's separation-of-powers principles. Congress cannot simply legislate away these constitutional standing requirements.

Finally, H. Res. 676 is obviously just pure political theater that distracts the public from the fact that this Republican-controlled House has failed to address a whole host of critical issues.

These include immigration reform, extending unemployment insurance, enhancing environmental protections, ensuring worker safety, and helping those who are financially struggling.

Coincidentally, H. Res. 676 shares a number with H.R. 676, the ''Expanded and Improved Medicare for All Act,'' which I introduced in February of 2013.

H.R. 676 would create a publicly-financed, privately-delivered health care system that would greatly improve and expand the already existing Medicare program.

My legislation would ensure that all Americans have access, guaranteed by law, to the highest quality and most cost effective health care services regardless of their employment, income or health care status.

Instead of discussing this and other critical matters, today we continue to waste precious resources on a patently unconstitutional measure that would authorize a lawsuit destined to fail.

We owe it to the American people to address real, not imaginary, challenges facing our Nation, including enhancing health care for all Americans.

I would also note that the litigation referred to by the gentleman from Texas that I was involved in eight years ago involved a situation where the House and Senate passed different versions of the same budget bill that was signed by the President. That was brought in our individual capacity as Members, not the House as a whole, and did not involve the use of additional taxpayer funds. The resolution before us today is of course an entirely different matter.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I would like to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY).

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 676, a resolution to authorize the House of Representatives to initiate litigation against the President, or any executive branch employee, for failure to act in accordance with their duties. Specifically, this resolution deals with the President's failure to implement the employer mandate required by his own signature law, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

While the scope of the litigation authorized is narrow, it is symbolic of a much larger problem—the President's continued refusal to faithfully execute the law, choosing, instead, to usurp Congress' exclusive constitutional right to legislate.

Simply because Congress chooses not to be the President's rubberstamp does not bestow upon him the power to circumvent the law. Conversely, when the President decides enforcement of a law might be politically perilous, he can't simply choose to ignore it.

Mr. Speaker, this is not about party politics. This is about the proper role of government, as defined by our Founders. The Federal Government was intentionally designed with three branches, each with their own separate powers and the ability to serve as a check and balance on the other two. Yet, the President—as a former constitutional law professor—refuses to recognize his proper role, defying the law and unilaterally enacting policies, or ignoring the law, at will.

I took an oath to uphold and defend the Constitution as a Member of this institution, and I have taken that oath seriously every single day.

□ 1730

Unfortunately, I believe the President's actions undermine the very same oath that he has twice taken, so I urge my colleagues to join me in this step to uphold the law and protect the balance of power by supporting the resolution.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ).

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening in strong opposition to this resolution that would propose to have the House sue the President of the United States.

With only a few hours left before Congress adjourns for the August district work period, we have a full plate of responsibilities left unfinished. When I go back home to my district, I highly doubt that many constituents will be running up to me to thank me for Congress passing a resolution to sue the President of the United States.

I know what I will hear instead: Why hasn't the House passed comprehensive immigration reform to fix our broken immigration system? Why hasn't Congress raised the minimum wage so people who work full time don't remain in poverty? Why haven't we renewed emergency unemployment insurance for more than 3½ million Americans, including nearly 300,000 veterans?

The only answer I will be able to give them is that Republican leadership in the House cares more about scoring political points against this President than they do about helping America's middle class families.

This is a question of priorities. The American people sent us here to respond to the pressing needs that face our Nation. It should be a given that we would use our time to focus on the most important issues. Instead, we waste time on suing the President of the United States while failing to address commonsense measures to ensure economic security for every American.

Not only does this resolution reflect a very different set of priorities from the majority of Americans, we are yet again wasting millions in taxpayer dollars, just like the $3 million wasted in defending the indefensible and unconstitutional Defense of Marriage Act and billions of dollars wasted by shutting down the government to try to take away Americans' health care benefits.

It is unconscionable that when this do-nothing Republican Congress finally decided to do something, it is suing the President for doing his job when they refuse to do theirs. I wish I could say that this was politics at its worst, but I have heard too many in the Republican majority raise the specter of impeachment not to know better.

Mr. Speaker, I urge opposition to this time- and taxpayer money-wasting resolution and urge Republicans in the majority to join Democrats and address the serious challenges facing our Nation.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I would like to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BOEHNER), the Speaker of the House.

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for yielding. I also want to thank the whole House for its work to address the American peoples' concerns about jobs and our economy. All told, we have sent the Senate now more than 40 jobs bills, almost all of them in a bipartisan way.

From the first day of this Congress, I have said our focus would be on jobs, and it has been, but also on that first day, you may recall that I addressed the House about the importance of our oath of office. I noted that it is the same oath we all take, that it makes no mention of party, it makes no mention of faction or agenda. The oath only refers to the Constitution and our obligation to defend it.

Mr. Speaker, I said that with moments like this in mind. I said that knowing there would be times when we would have to do things we didn't come here to do, we didn't plan to do, and things that require us to consider interests greater than our own interests.

I have to think this is why, on several occasions, members of the minority party have taken a similar step. In 2011, some of them filed litigation against the Vice President. They took similar steps in 2006, 2002, 2001, and so forth.

Because this isn't about Republicans and Democrats—it is about defending the Constitution that we swore an oath to uphold and acting decisively when it may be compromised.

No Member of this body needs to be reminded of what the Constitution states about the President's obligation to faithfully execute the laws of our Nation. No Member needs to be reminded of the bonds of trust that have been frayed, of the damage that has already been done to our economy and to our people.

Are you willing to let any President choose what laws to execute and what laws to change? Are you willing to let anyone tear apart what our Founders have built? Think not only about the specifics of the oath you took, but think about how you took it: as one body, standing together.

That is all I am asking you to do today, to act as one institution defending the Constitution on behalf of the people that we serve.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN), the distinguished ranking member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

(Mr. LEVIN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LEVIN. Well, Republicans today are choosing lawsuits over legislating. They are choosing to sue the President rather than pursuing legislation to support American families.

There is no shortage of legislation awaiting action: immigration reform, a bipartisan Senate bill held up by the Speaker who has just spoken; unemployment insurance, a bipartisan Senate bill has never gotten a vote in this House held up by this Speaker; the employment nondiscrimination bill, the Senate bill not brought up here and held up by the Speaker; paycheck fairness, not brought up; a minimum wage bill, not brought up; Ex-Im, caught in controversy within the Republican conference; a highway bill, another patch, the inability of House Republicans to face up to the need for a long-term highway bill; and a voting rights reform bill sponsored by a senior Republican, held up by the Speaker of this House and the conference of the Republicans.

The Republicans in this House are suing the President because they conjure up that the President did not adopt what Republicans argue is the correct implementation of a law they have tried 50 times to destroy. It is the House Republicans who should be sued, if that were possible, for their abdication of their responsibilities to the people of this Nation.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I would like to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. RICE).

Mr. RICE of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, my favorite piece of art in this Capitol is a picture in the rotunda of our Founding Fathers gathered together to sign the Declaration of Independence, a document that they knew, when they signed it, they were signing their own death warrant if they were caught and tried for treason. They felt that strongly that they wanted to escape the bonds of a monarch and pursue freedom.

Our forefathers fought a Revolution against the greatest military power on Earth to escape the bonds of a monarchy. At the end of that bloody Revolution, the last thing they wanted was another king. They wanted freedom.

To protect that precious freedom, they designed a government of, by, and for the people based on a separation of powers. The legislative branch makes the laws; the executive branch enforces laws.

President Obama has decided that he is not bound by the separation of powers. He has bragged that if Congress will not accept his priorities, he has a pen and a phone, and he will make the laws himself.

He may have a pen, but the people have the Constitution left us by our forefathers. Our forefathers recognized that one man who can both make the laws and enforce the laws is a king, not a President. Thomas Jefferson once said that freedom does not disappear all at once, but is eroded imperceptibly day by day.

The prosperity of our great country sprang from our freedom. Our form of government set forth in the Constitution by our forefathers has protected that very fragile freedom for 200 years.

Mr. Speaker, my friends across the aisle worry about the price of a lawsuit to protect our freedom. Our forefathers paid dearly for that freedom. Many gave all they had, even their lives.

Our freedom is in peril, my friends. We cannot stand by and watch the President shred our Constitution. I stand in support of H. Res. 676.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. SCHIFF).

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to this resolution. The constitutional question raised by this

measure is whether the House has standing to sue the President over what is, in essence, a policy difference. ''Standing'' is a constitutionally-defined status and requires that the plaintiff, among other things, demonstrate a legally recognizable injury. In the case of a suit between branches of government, the House would also have to show that there is no other remedy.

On both of these counts, this lawsuit fails. The House cannot speak for the Senate, which doesn't agree with its position, and therefore cannot represent the legislative branch. Even if it could, neither body has suffered a recognizable injury merely because some Members of the Congress do not like how the President has interpreted a law passed by a different Congress.

Moreover, this Congress has a remedy if it doesn't like the way that the President has implemented the Affordable Care Act: it can change the law. That would be a far better approach, one more consistent with our separation of powers than this expensive and ill-conceived lawsuit.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the House to reject this effort.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER).

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, the Speaker does not have a good record when it comes to wasting taxpayer dollars on frivolous lawsuits. When the Justice Department concluded that the Defense of Marriage Act could not be defended in court, the House wasted $2.3 million trying to defend the indefensible and lost in the Supreme Court.

Now, the Speaker wants to waste more of the taxpayers' money on a meritless lawsuit against the President for not ''taking care that the law be faithfully executed.''

What did the President do? In implementing the Affordable Care Act, which the Republican-led House has voted to repeal 50 times, he postponed implementation of one provision by a year, a provision the Republicans and the House opposed.

Now, they want to waste money to go to court to say the President had no power to postpone this provision for a year, although no one opposed President Bush when he postponed implementation of a provision of the Medicare drug act for a year.

It is well-settled that it is within the discretion of Presidents in implementing a law to postpone implementation of part of it in order to get it done right, but this leads to another absurdity of the case. Let's assume the Republicans get the House to go into court and somehow overcome the standing question—which they will not. What is the remedy they will seek?

By the time it got to court, the provision in question will have already been implemented, so the Republicans want to waste $5 million or $6 million in taxpayers' money to go into court and say, Judge, please order the President to implement what he has already implemented. Totally ridiculous.

So what have we got? We have a Congress that has passed no highway bill, no minimum wage bill, no unemployment extension bill, no pay equity for women bill, no action on campaign finance reform, no action to reduce the burdens of student loans, no action to make sure that women continue to have access to contraceptive services despite the Supreme Court's Hobby Lobby decision, no action on all the emergencies that face the American people, but we are going to waste money and time on a meritless lawsuit that will go nowhere, but will simply serve the single function of diverting attention from all the real problems the House Republicans want to continue to ignore.

This is not a proper use of the taxpayers' money. More wasted money for political purposes. For shame.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask how much time remains on both sides.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas has 4 minutes remaining. The gentlewoman from New York has 8 minutes remaining.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE. I thank the gentlewoman very much, and I rise to oppose H. Res. 676, which is seeking an unconstitutional right to sue the President for doing his duty and following the law.

The underbelly of this resolution would, in essence, put fire in the hearts and minds of Americans when we find out that this legislation is to undermine the President and any of his officers and employees from doing their jobs.

□ 1745

This is a failed attempt to impeach the President. I am willing to say that word because the President has been following the law. The law passed, and it gives him discretion to interpret the Affordable Care Act to make it best work for the American people. As has been stated, if you want to change the law, go to the floor of the House. But in actuality, this resolution smacks against the Constitution which says there are three equal branches of government. Therefore, the Executive has the right to perform his duties.

I ask my colleagues to oppose this resolution for it is, in fact, a veiled attempt for impeachment, and it undermines the law that allows the President to do his job. It is a historical fact that President Bush pushed this Nation into a war that had little to do with apprehending terrorists. We did not seek an impeachment of President Bush because as an Executive, he had his authority. President Obama has the authority.

I would ask my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to, in essence, provide the opportunity for us to do valid things for the American people—improve the minimum wage, paycheck fairness—and stop undermining the authority as indicated in the Constitution that gives equal authority to the three branches of government.

We can pass laws. We have the ability to pass laws, and citizens have the right to go into court on their independent standing. The courts have often said that the Congress has no standing. The House of Representatives has no independent standing, as evidenced by many cases that we have already taken to court and determined that Congress has no standing.

The doctrine of standing is a mix of constitutional requirements, derived from the case or controversy provision in article III, and prudential considerations, which are judicially created and can be modified by Congress.

That dictates on how you gain standing, and I would say the constitutionally based elements require that plaintiffs have suffered a personal injury-in-fact, which is actual, imminent, concrete, and particularized. The injury must be fairly traceable to the defendant's conduct and likely be redressed by the relief requested from the court.

Let me be very clear. We in Congress can make no argument that the President has injured us. We can make no independent argument of that, and so I ask my colleagues to oppose this resolution and do not accept a veiled attempt at impeachment when our President is doing his duty and following the law under the Constitution of the United States of America.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak in opposition to H. Res. 676, providing for authority to initiate litigation for actions by the President or other Executive Branch officials inconsistent with their duties under the constitution of the United States.

We could be doing some very important legislation to help the American people from Texas to the tip of Maine, like Comprehensive Immigration Reform, the Appropriations Border Supplemental, comprehensive tax reform, the Export-Import Bank Reauthorization, or the Voting Rights Act, yet my Republican colleagues insist on wasting valuable time.

The Congressional Black Caucus did a Special Order earlier this week entitled: the GOP's March Towards Impeachment, and that is where we appear to be headed.

But first let me make a distinction between impeachment and a lawsuit initiated by the House, qua House of Representatives, via H. Res. 676.

Article II, Section 4 of the United States Constitution states:

The President, Vice President and all civil Officers of the United States, shall be removed from Office on Impeachment for and Conviction of, Treason, Bribery, or other high Crimes and Misdemeanors.

In any impeachment inquiry, the Members of this branch of government must confront

some preliminary questions to determine whether an impeachment is appropriate in a given situation.

The first of these questions is whether the individual whose conduct is under scrutiny falls within the category of President, Vice President, or ''civil Officers of the United States'' such that he is vulnerable to impeachment.

A preliminary question is whether the conduct involved constitutes ''treason, bribery, or other high crimes or misdemeanors.''

Now Mr. Speaker, whether we get to this point where we are actually considering impeachment of the President is a question that only the GOP majority can answer. It appears that we are heading in that direction—even in the face of doubt from numerous experts as to whether the effort will succeed or not.

Indeed, it is a matter of historical fact that President Bush pushed this nation into a war that had little to do with apprehending the terrorists of September 11, 2001; and weapons of mass destruction, ''WMD's'' have yet to be found.

House Democrats refused to impeach President Bush.

Let me state that again: House Democrats refused to impeach President George W. Bush.

Now I wish to turn to the resolution which the GOP Majority intends to put before this body in a last-ditch effort to stir their base before November.

Former Solicitor General Walter Dellinger testified before the Rules Committee two weeks ago and had this to say about the potential lawsuit:

> The House of Representatives lacks authority to bring such a suit. Because neither the Speaker nor even the House of Representatives has a legal concrete, particular and personal stake in the outcome of the proposed lawsuits, federal courts would have no authority to entertain such actions.
>
> Passage of the proposed resolution does nothing to change that. If federal judges were to undertake to entertain suits brought by the legislature against the President or other federal officers for failing to administer statutes as the House desires, the result would be an unprecedented aggrandizement of the political power of the judiciary.
>
> Such a radical liberalization of the role of unelected judges in matters previously entrusted to the elected branches of government should be rejected.

My colleagues on the other side argue that lawsuits by Congress to force the administration to enforce federal laws will prevent the President from exceeding his constitutional authority,

But the Supreme Court has constantly held that the exercise of executive discretion being taken by President Obama is within the President's powers under the Constitution.

The doctrine of standing is a mix of constitutional requirements, derived from the case or controversy provision in Article III, and prudential considerations, which are judicially created and can be modified by Congress.

The constitutionally based elements require that plaintiffs have suffered a personal injury-in-fact, which is actual, imminent, concrete and particularized. The injury must be fairly traceable to the defendant's conduct and likely to be redressed by the relief requested from the court.

CONSTITUTIONAL REQUIREMENTS

To satisfy the constitutional standing requirements in Article III, the Supreme Court imposes three requirements.

The plaintiff must first allege a personal injury-in-fact, which is actual or imminent, concrete, and particularized.

Second, the injury must be ''fairly traceable to the defendant's allegedly unlawful conduct, and'' third, the injury must be ''likely to be redressed by the requested relief.''

PRUDENTIAL REQUIREMENTS

In addition to the constitutional questions posed by the doctrine of standing, federal courts also follow a well-developed set of prudential principles that are relevant to a standing inquiry.

Similar to the constitutional requirements, these limits are ''founded in concern about the proper—and properly limited—role of the courts in a democratic society,'' but are judicially created.

Unlike their constitutional counterparts, prudential standing requirements ''can be modified or abrogated by Congress.''

If separation-of-powers principles require anything, it is that each branch must respect its constitutional role.

When a court issues a decision interpreting the Constitution or a federal law, the other branches must abide by the decision.

The executive branch's ability to fulfill its obligation to comply with judicial decisions should not be hampered by a civil action by Congress pursuant to this bill as my amendment to H.R. 4138, the ENFORCE ACT made clear.

And Mr. Speaker, a basic respect for separation of powers should inform any discussion of a lawsuit from both a constitutional standpoint and a purely pragmatic one.

In our constitutional democracy, taking care that the laws are executed faithfully is a multifaceted notion.

And it is a well-settled principle that our Constitution imposes restrictions on Congress' legislative authority, so that the faithful execution of the laws may present occasions where the President declines to enforce a congressionally enacted law, or delays such enforcement, because he must enforce the Constitution—which is the law of the land.

This resolution, like the bill we considered in the Judiciary Committee on which I serve and before this body, the H.R. 4138, The ENFORCE Act, has problems with standing, separation of powers, and allows broad powers of discretion incompatible with notions of due process.

The legislation would permit one House of Congress to file a lawsuit seeking declaratory and other relief to compel the President to faithfully execute the law.

These are critical problems. First, Congress is unlikely to be able to satisfy the requirements of Article III standing, which the Supreme Court has held that the party bringing suit have been personally injured by the challenged conduct.

In the wide array of circumstances incident and related to the Affordable Care Act in which the resolution would authorize a House of Congress to sue the president, that House would not have suffered any personal injury sufficient to satisfy Article III's standing requirement in the absence of a complete nullification of any legislator's votes.

Second, the resolution violates separation of powers principles by inappropriately having courts address political questions that are left to the other branches to be decided.

And Mr. Speaker, I thought the Supreme Court had put this notion to rest as far back as Baker v. Carr, a case that hails from 1962. Baker stands for the proposition that courts are not equipped to adjudicate political questions—and that it is impossible to decide such questions without intruding on the ability of agencies to do their job.

Third, the resolution makes one House of Congress a general enforcement body able to direct the entire field of administrative action by bringing cases whenever such House deems a President's action to constitute a policy, of non-enforcement.

This bill attempts to use the notion of separation of powers to justify an unprecedented effort to ensure that the laws are enforced by the President—and I say one of the least creative ideas I have seen in some time.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to deliberate before we are at a bridge too far.

Mr. SESSIONS. I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS).

Mr. LEWIS. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my good friend, the gentlewoman from New York for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution is a waste of time and money. We are sent to Congress to make progress on behalf of the people of this Nation, yet House Republicans spend all of their time and energy fighting this President. Why?

The Republicans need to jump off the bandwagon of political attacks and come together to jump-start the economy. While Americans were unemployed, they did nothing to put them back to work. When people were losing their homes, they did little to protect them from foreclosure. While hunger and poverty are on the rise in this country, they have hardly mentioned the disappearing middle class.

From his first day in office, Republicans in the House, in this House, have never supported this President. Every olive branch he has extended was broken.

But today, Mr. Speaker, they have reached a low, a very low point. This resolution to sue the President just goes a little too far. It is a shame and a disgrace that we are here debating the suing of the President. The American people deserve better. We can do better. We can do much better.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentleman.

Mr. LEWIS. I urge each and every one of my colleagues to have the raw courage—nothing but courage—to oppose this insulting and offensive resolution. It has no place on this floor. Let us get back to the work that we were elected to do.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would advise Members to speak within the time yielded to those Members.

The gentlewoman from New York has 5½ minutes remaining.

Mr. SESSIONS. With the gentlewoman having 5½ minutes left, I will reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. COHEN), the ranking member of the Judiciary Committee on the Constitution and Civil Justice.

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the time.

I find it interesting that this is all about President Obama engaging in an executive overreach. Look at the statistics. During President Obama's first term and comparing him to prior Presidents, President Bush issued 173 executive orders, President Clinton 200, President Reagan 213, and President Obama only 147. And during this part of President Obama's second term, he has thus far issued only 36 executive orders, while President Bush, during his second term, issued 116; Clinton, 164; and Reagan, 168. So I ask you, based on the statistics, is that overreach? No, it is underreach. It is underreach.

MITCH MCCONNELL said upon President Obama's inauguration the job was to see that this man wasn't reelected. Now the job seems to be to see that the attack on the President can be such that the Republicans take the Senate and hopefully set the stage for 2016 of the Presidency. This unquestionably is impeachment lite. It is an attempt to put the President in a situation in a lawsuit that, if successful, which I find hard to believe, would be the foundation for impeachment.

This President has done nothing that is impeachable, nothing that merits this type of action, nothing that merits this type of disrespect. He should be respected as our President and supported, and we should work to create jobs, pass an infrastructure bill, pass a minimum wage bill, and extend unemployment insurance.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I would like to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Lewisville, Texas (Mr. BURGESS), a member of the Rules Committee.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I thank my chairman for yielding me the time.

There are plenty of places in the Affordable Care Act where it is full of drafting errors and stuff that, quite frankly, just wasn't quite ready for prime time, but, Mr. Speaker, there is no ambiguity over this issue.

When the President delayed the institution of the employer mandate on July 2, 2013, it couldn't have been clearer. Let me give you an example. The effective date for the individual mandate as written in law, and this is for the individual mandate:

> The amendments made by this section shall apply to taxable years ending after December 31, 2013.

Pretty clear. ''Shall apply.'' Seems straightforward.

The effective date for the employer mandate, section 1514 of the law, effective date:

> The amendments made by this section shall apply to months beginning after December 31, 2013.

It really does seem straightforward. There is no ambiguity there. I would just ask the question: Is there a list of laws that must be followed and those that may or may not be followed depending upon whatever the will of the President is that day?

I would remind my colleagues the words of Abraham Lincoln:

> The best way to end a bad law is to enforce it strictly.

We should do the same.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire how much time I have?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from New York has 3½ minutes remaining.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. CLYBURN).

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlelady for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, we in this body are called upon to represent the wishes of the American people. The last national election, President Obama was reelected by the American people by an overwhelming majority. What we find today are the people who opposed his reelection, the people who for years now have been wishing upon him failure, are attempting to do with this lawsuit what they could not do at the polling places.

Rather than address the problems of the American people, repair our crumbling infrastructure, getting affordability for our young people to attend colleges and universities and other postsecondary education, here we are trying to find a way to discover some peg upon which to hang an impeachment resolution. That is what this is all about.

I would hope that we would hurry up and return dignity to this body and stop these charades that are inflaming the American people in a way that they are undeserving of.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to advise the gentlewoman that I have no additional speakers except myself to close, so I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to close, and I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, we are about to bring to a close this sorry spectacle of legislative malpractice. It really saddens me to think that we have arrived at this point in this legislative year when we are about to go home for 5 weeks of legislative work in the district when we should be here on the floor taking care of the very many issues that people have talked about all day.

But most importantly, this lawsuit goes against everything that the majority has been working for for the last 4 years. They have tried over 50 times, spending $79 million, to repeal the Affordable Care Act. And no one, frankly, listening to this is now going to believe that there is this great change of heart and they are so broken up that it wasn't implemented in time and by the book that you are going to try to sue the President of the United States. I don't think even to kids watching Sesame Street that would make any sense. In fact, the strongest arguments about it really come from the majority's own party. It is sadly a partisan political election year stunt, and it has no place in this House.

As I said earlier today, when I first came here, the bipartisanship was so wonderful and strong that the New York delegation, all of us, stood together on issue after issue. I miss that terribly and long for it to come back.

In the meantime, I ask my colleagues to vote against this disgraceful resolution.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, our system of government is in a bad place when one branch of government is compelled to sue another branch of government for failing to play its proper constitutional role. We shouldn't be in that situation, but we are. The President should have fulfilled his oath to faithfully execute the laws as written by Congress and signed by this President. Unfortunately, this lawsuit is necessary because the President has not implemented the law as passed and chose to pick and choose how he would have the law affect the American citizens.

This resolution will help guarantee that the legislation passed by Congress and signed by the President is faithfully executed according to the rule of law and not according to the whim of one person, that being the President of the United States. Also, no President should be allowed to pick and choose which laws matter and which ones do not.

It is unfortunate that some Members of Congress believe this body should be irrelevant. It is unfortunate that they believe any President should be able to enforce the law or not enforce the law as that President chooses.

The American people elect their Member of Congress. They live under the laws that are written. They make their plans and follow through based upon what the laws are, and they live under these rules of law, and they need to be able to count on them. When Members of Congress believe the laws that we pass no longer matter, they are also saying that the beliefs of the American people do not matter.

□ 1800

When we allow the President to singlehandedly determine what the law is, the Constitution, our separation of powers, and the American people become irrelevant. That is why the President's system of unilateral governance cannot stand. It must be stopped. Even if it takes a lawsuit to do so, that is what we think the Federal judiciary is there to do: to resolve differences based upon the law. If the President's goal was to goad the House into defending the Constitution and the role of the

government, he certainly had succeeded when he said: Why not just sue me?

Our Constitution must be defended and the role of the American people in the lawmaking process must be understood and guaranteed. This resolution is an important step in doing that.

I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this resolution.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I submit an exchange of letters between Chairman of the Committee on House Administration, CANDICE MILLER, and myself regarding the Committee on House Administration's jurisdictional interests in this resolution as well as Chairman MILLER'S desire to waive House Administration's consideration of H. Res. 676. These letters were also included in House Report 113-561, which was filed on July 28, 2014.

JULY 24, 2014.

Hon. PETE SESSIONS;
Chairman, The Committee on Rules, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN SESSIONS: On July 24, 2014, the Committee on Rules ordered reported H. Res. 676, a resolution providing for authority to initiate litigation for actions by the President or other executive branch officials inconsistent with their duties under the Constitution of the United States. As you know, the Committee on House Administration was granted an additional referral upon the bill's introduction pursuant to the Committee's jurisdiction under rule X of the Rules of the House of Representatives over the allowance and expenses of administrative officers of the House.

Because of your willingness to consult with my committee regarding this matter, I will waive consideration of the bill by the Committee on House Administration. By agreeing to waive its consideration of the bill, the Committee on House Administration does not waive its jurisdiction over H. Res. 676.

I request that you include this letter and your response as part of your committee's report on the bill and the Congressional Record during consideration of the legislation on the House floor.

Thank you for your attention to these matters.

Sincerely,

CANDICE S. MILLER,
Chairman, Committee on House Administration.

JULY 24, 2014.

Hon. CANDICE S. MILLER
Chairman, Committee on House Administration, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN MILLER: Thank you for your letter regarding H. Res. 676, resolution providing for authority to initiate litigation for actions by the President or other executive branch officials inconsistent with their duties under the Constitution of the United States, which the Committee on Rules ordered reported on July 24, 2014.

I acknowledge your committee's jurisdictional interest in this legislation and appreciate your cooperation in moving the bill to the House floor expeditiously. I agree that your decision to forego further action on the bill will not prejudice the Committee on House Administration with respect to its jurisdictional prerogatives on this or similar legislation.

I will include a copy of your letter and this response in the Committee's report on the bill and the Congressional Record when the House considers the legislation.

Sincerely,

PETE SESSIONS,
Chairman, House Committee on Rules.

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, today on the House Floor, the Republican leadership is taking a dangerous and unprecedented action by bringing up H. Res 676, a bill to move forward with a lawsuit against President Barack Obama.

Beyond a doubt, the move to sue the President is yet another example of the failed leadership of the Republican Party. If the Republicans had acted on critical issues to move our country forward instead of wasting time and taxpayer money by taking over 50 senseless votes to repeal the Affordable Care Act or shutting down the Federal government, the President would not have needed to use Executive authority in the first place.

With fewer than 150 bills enacted into law to date, the 113th Congress is on course to be the least productive in our nation's history. Undeniably, this Republican led Congress is the worst, and least productive, in our nation's history.

Instead of spending time passing partisan bills that attack working Americans, weaken environmental protections and retreat on education and job training opportunities, this Congress should be working to create jobs and strengthen the middle class, not wasting taxpayer dollars on yet another political stunt.

Congress should instead be focusing on the issues that matter: creating jobs, fixing our broken immigration system, restoring unemployment insurance for 3 million Americans, and raising the minimum wage to help workers and their families to have access to opportunities. Along with my Democratic colleagues, I strongly urge House Republicans to work with Democrats to help create jobs and opportunities for the American people, not engage in political tricks.

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the unprecedented Republican plan to sue the President of the United States.

At a time when Congress should be focusing on strengthening the middle class and expanding opportunities for all Americans, our Republican colleagues in the House accuse the President of unconstitutionally abusing his executive power by delaying the requirement in the Affordable Care Act that larger companies provide health insurance to their employees.

At a time when student debt exceeds credit card debt in our country, when mothers are the primary breadwinner yet receive unequal pay, and when job creation is stagnating, our Republican colleagues have proposed a baseless, shameful lawsuit that further erodes the public's confidence in the United States Congress and a functioning American democracy.

The lawsuit is fundamentally flawed in several ways:

First, Republicans argue that the President acted outside of his authority with respect to implementing the ACA.

Claims that the President is ignoring the law are unmerited. Records show that the President is using the same flexibility that presidents of both parties have long utilized to phase in new programs and policies and ensure that statutes are implemented in workable, sensible ways, minimizing disruption to individuals, families and businesses.

Everything we do in Congress bears the mark of humanity. No law is perfect and occasionally, presidents must make reasonable, short-term accommodations to reality.

Second, the courts are not the appropriate place to work out political disagreements between one half of one House of Congress and the Administration.

The Affordable Care Act was passed by the House and the Senate and signed into law by the President. I understand that many House Republicans hate the law; they've made that abundantly clear in the more than 50 times they have voted to repeal it.

After unsuccessfully attempting to repeal the law through regular order, House Republicans, grasping at straws, have opted to give away the mighty powers of the legislative branch to the judicial branch. If Congress starts relying on judges to check executive power, instead of the tools the Constitution grants us, this body will transfer enormous authority to the judicial branch.

And to add insult to injury, the entire cost of this political misadventure will be paid for by the taxpayers.

Repeated attempts to maintain regular order regarding cost transparency have been rebuffed.

Ranking Member SLAUGHTER of the Rules Committee sent a letter to Chairman SESSIONS, asking for a cost estimate of the lawsuit. No useful information has been provided.

Ranking Member BRADY of the House Administration Committee sent a letter to Speaker BOEHNER asking for regular order and transparency with the use of taxpayer money. No useful information has been provided.

Amendment after amendment was offered by the Minority Members of the Rules Committee to provide transparency to the expenditures which would come out of legislative branch funds. All were voted down on party lines.

This lawsuit is further proof of House Republicans' contempt and disregard for the priorities of the American people—an effort to pander to the most extreme, rightwing voters at taxpayer expense and our nation's well-being.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to H. Res. 676. This legislation, which authorizes a lawsuit that the Republican Party plans to bring against President Obama, is a waste of time and a waste of money.

Congress has two days before the August recess and instead of bringing up unemployment insurance, the Bring Jobs Home Act, the Fair Minimum Wage Act, the Paycheck Fairness Act, the Bank on Students Emergency Loan Refinancing Act, the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, universal pre-K legislation reauthorization of the America COMPETES Act, reauthorization of the Export Import Bank reauthorization of the Terrorism Risk Insurance Act, legislation addressing global climate change, legislation to fund the federal government after September 30th of this year, gun control, comprehensive immigration reform, or any number of other issues that have stalled in the House since the Republicans took control in 2010, this is what the Republican majority has chosen to pass.

The proposed lawsuit has dubious legal standing and no evident merit at all. Every administration has used the executive authority delegated to it by the Constitution and by the Congress, in the implementation and execution of our nation's laws. In fact, Supreme

Court Justice Antonin Scalia said "The framers of the Constitution emphatically rejected a system in which Congress and the Executive can pop immediately into court, in their institutional capacity, whenever the President . . . implements a law in a manner that is not to Congress's liking."

I hope that the American people will see this action for what it is—a stunt—an attempt to placate a radical wing of the Republican Party. The majority should be embarrassed to use Congressional time for this rather than for real, pressing issues.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the 3.5 million Americans who have lost their unemployment benefits over the past seven months and the one million Dreamers whose aspirations continue to be tragically denied and in strong opposition to the Majority's endless parade of political stunts, now best highlighted by the present legislation, H. Res. 676, a resolution giving one chamber of Congress the authority to sue the President.

As the American people's elected representatives, we have a duty to debate and vote on pressing legislation, such as long-term unemployment insurance and comprehensive immigration reform.

Instead, the Majority is wasting the American people's time and precious tax dollars on this political stunt that will inevitably fail. Any first-year law student would be able to tell the Majority that our chamber would lack standing before any court under the U.S. Constitution because there's simply no injury.

Just nine days ago, Judge William Griesbach agreed, dismissing a suit brought before the Eastern District Court of Wisconsin by Senator RON JOHNSON against the U.S. Office of Personnel Management over its implementation of the Affordable Care Act because the Senator lacked standing.

To quote Judge Griesbach, "Under our constitutional design, in the absence of a concrete injury to a party that can be redressed by the courts, disputes between the executive and legislative branches over the exercise of their respective powers are to be resolved through the political process, not by decisions issued by federal judges."

One of our nation's most noted jurists, Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia agrees. He wrote last year in his opinion in United States v. Windsor, regarding the dangers of resolving a political question before a court, that the framers of the Constitution unequivocally rejected a "system in which Congress and the Executive can pop immediately into court, in their institutional capacity, whenever the President . . . implements a law in a manner that is not to Congress's liking."

Our Constitution provides the Executive wide discretion in the implementation of federal law. In 2006, then-President George W. Bush extended the deadline and waived penalties for certain seniors who failed to sign up in time for the new Medicare prescription drug program.

At that time, or in the following year when control of this chamber changed hands, neither Democrats nor Republicans contemplated suing President Bush over his use of executive discretion.

If the Majority is dissatisfied with current federal law, it should use its authority granted under Article I to amend it.

Otherwise, the Majority should do what every elected official under our present government has done since 1788—go before the American people and openly debate the merits of their agenda—which today includes the unashamed denial of millions of Americans essential unemployment benefits or the million young persons raise in our country the opportunity to become Americans.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to House Resolution 694, the previous question is ordered on the resolution, as amended.

The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 225, nays 201, not voting 6, as follows:

[Roll No. 468]

YEAS—225

Aderholt
Amash
Amodei
Bachmann
Bachus
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bentivolio
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Cassidy
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clawson (FL)
Coble
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Conaway
Cook
Cotton
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Daines
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
Diaz-Balart
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gardner
Gerlach
Gibbs
Gibson
Gingrey (GA)
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gosar
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Grimm
Guthrie
Hall
Hanna
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (WA)
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Issa
Jenkins
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jordan
Joyce
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Lankford
Latham
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
Marchant
Marino
McAllister
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris Rodgers
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Olson
Palazzo
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Petri
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Posey
Price (GA)
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Royce
Runyan
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schock
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southerland
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Terry
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walorski
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IN)

NAYS—201

Barber
Barrow (GA)
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera (CA)
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Broun (GA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Enyart
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Garcia
Garrett
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hastings (FL)
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Holt
Honda
Horsford
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maffei
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Massie
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McIntyre
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Michaud
Miller, George
Moore
Moran
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Negrete McLeod
Nolan
O'Rourke
Owens
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor (AZ)
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters (CA)
Peters (MI)
Peterson
Pingree (ME)
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rahall
Rangel
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Schwartz
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Speier
Stockman
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Titus
Tonko
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Waxman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—6

DesJarlais
Foster
Hanabusa
Nunnelee
Pompeo
Sires

□ 1828

Mr. GUTHRIE changed his vote from "nay" to "yea."

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated against:

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 468 had I been present, I would have voted "no."

REDUCING REGULATORY BURDENS ACT OF 2013

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GIBBS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on H.R. 935.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WOODALL). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

Mr. GIBBS. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 694, I call up the bill (H.R. 935) to amend the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act and the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to clarify Congressional intent regarding the regulation of the use of pesticides in or near navigable waters, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 935

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Reducing Regulatory Burdens Act of 2013''.

SEC. 2. USE OF AUTHORIZED PESTICIDES.

Section 3(f) of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (7 U.S.C. 136a(f)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(5) USE OF AUTHORIZED PESTICIDES.—Except as provided in section 402(s) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, the Administrator or a State may not require a permit under such Act for a discharge from a point source into navigable waters of a pesticide authorized for sale, distribution, or use under this Act, or the residue of such a pesticide, resulting from the application of such pesticide.''.

SEC. 3. DISCHARGES OF PESTICIDES.

Section 402 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1342) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(s) DISCHARGES OF PESTICIDES.—

''(1) NO PERMIT REQUIREMENT.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), a permit shall not be required by the Administrator or a State under this Act for a discharge from a point source into navigable waters of a pesticide authorized for sale, distribution, or use under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act, or the residue of such a pesticide, resulting from the application of such pesticide.

''(2) EXCEPTIONS.—Paragraph (1) shall not apply to the following discharges of a pesticide or pesticide residue:

''(A) A discharge resulting from the application of a pesticide in violation of a provision of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act that is relevant to protecting water quality, if—

''(i) the discharge would not have occurred but for the violation; or

''(ii) the amount of pesticide or pesticide residue in the discharge is greater than would have occurred without the violation.

''(B) Stormwater discharges subject to regulation under subsection (p).

''(C) The following discharges subject to regulation under this section:

''(i) Manufacturing or industrial effluent.

''(ii) Treatment works effluent.

''(iii) Discharges incidental to the normal operation of a vessel, including a discharge resulting from ballasting operations or vessel biofouling prevention.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 694, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. GIBBS) and the gentlewoman from Maryland (Ms. EDWARDS) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio.

Mr. GIBBS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in strong support of H.R. 935, the Reducing Regulatory Burdens Act of 2013.

The reason we are back here on the floor for this bill today is pure politics. In the last Congress, this bill then was H.R. 872. It was introduced on a bipartisan basis, with overwhelming bipartisan support, and it passed on the suspension calendar with two-thirds of this body in support of it. In this Congress, H.R. 935—the exact same bill—was again introduced on a bipartisan basis, with bipartisan support, and it was voice-voted out of the Transportation and Agriculture Committees.

However, earlier this week, partisanship reared its ugly head, and Members who were on record as voting in support of this legislation or in having agreed to it by voice vote were urged to change their votes from ''yes'' to ''no'' in order for it not to be agreed on by two-thirds of this body. This is partisanship at its ugliest. The principles and policy of this legislation have not changed over the last few years. Instead, the politics of it did.

I introduced H.R. 935 to clarify congressional intent regarding how the use of pesticides in or near navigable waters should be regulated. It is the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act—also know as FIFRA—and not the Clean Water Act, which has long been the Federal regulatory statute that governs the sale and use of pesticides in the United States. In fact, FIFRA regulated pesticide use long before the enactment of the Clean Water Act. However, more recently, as the result of a number of lawsuits, the Clean Water Act has been added as a new and redundant layer of Federal regulation over the use of pesticides.

I will not repeat the history I gave in Monday's debate of how the EPA came to impose this unnecessary second layer of Federal regulation, but I think it is important for everyone to realize that this regulatory burden is impacting not just farmers, but cities, counties, and homeowners.

Federal and State agencies are expending vital funds to initiate and maintain Clean Water Act permitting programs governing pesticide applications, and a wide range of public and private pesticide users are now facing increased financial and administrative burdens in order to comply with the new permitting process. This is adding another layer to an already big and growing pile of unfunded regulatory mandates being imposed on the regulated community. Despite what some would have you believe, all of this expense comes with no additional environmental protection.

The cost of complying with the NPDES permit regulations and the fears of potential liability are forcing mosquito control and other pest control programs to reduce operations and redirect resources to comply with the regulatory requirements. This may be having an adverse effect on public health. In many States, routine preventative programs have been reduced due to the NPDES requirements. This most likely impacted and increased the record-breaking outbreaks of the West Nile virus around the Nation in 2012. H.R. 935 will enable communities to resume conducting routine preventative mosquito and other pest control programs in the future.

H.R. 935 exempts from the NPDES permitting process a discharge to waters involving the application of a pesticide authorized for sale, distribution, or use under FIFRA, where the pesticide is used for its intended purpose and the use is in compliance with pesticide label requirements. This is appropriate because pesticide registration and enforcement programs under FIFRA take into account environmental and human health risks just like the Clean Water Act does.

H.R. 935 was drafted very narrowly with technical assistance from the United States EPA to return pesticide regulation to where it was before the court got involved. It leaves FIFRA as the appropriate and adequate regulating statute. Well over 150 organizations, representing a wide variety of public and private entities and thousands of stakeholders, have signed a letter supporting a legislative resolution of this issue.

I will insert the letter in the RECORD. Just to name a few of these organizations, they include the American Mosquito Control Association, the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture, the National Water Resources Association, the American Farm Bureau Federation, the National Farmers Union, Farm Family Alliance, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, CropLife America, and Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment.

In addition, I will submit for the RECORD a letter from the National Alliance of Forest Owners, who expressed support for H.R. 935. NAFO represents private forest owners and managers of over 80 million acres of private forestland in 47 States, supporting 2.4 million jobs.

Finally, I will submit for the RECORD a letter of support, plus a rebuttal paper, prepared by the American Mosquito Control Association, which rebuts the inaccuracies of several statements made by several Members on the House floor Monday evening.

JULY 28, 2014.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVES: The undersigned organizations ask for your vote in support of H.R. 935, the Reducing Regulatory Burdens Act, today. The bill will be on the floor of the House of Representatives on suspension this evening.

Pesticide users must now comply with the added requirement that certain pesticide applications—already stringently regulated under the Federal Insecticide Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA)—obtain a Clean Water Act (CWA) National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit issued by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) or delegated states. The legislation would clarify that federal law does not require water permits for FIFRA-compliant pesticide applications.

The new water permit for pesticides provides virtually no environmental benefit because all pesticide applications are already stringently regulated through FIFRA, including applications to and near water. Compliance requirements under the permit impose significant resource and liability burdens on thousands of small businesses, farms, municipalities, counties, and the state and federal agencies legally responsible for protecting public health. Most notably, the permit potentially exposes all pesticide users to citizen law suits under the CWA.

In the 112th Congress, the Reducing Regulatory Burdens Act—then, H.R. 872—passed the House of Representatives on suspension.

Now, in the 113th Congress, the Act has been reintroduced as H.R. 935. Strong bipartisan support was again demonstrated by the bill's recent passage out of both the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the House Committee on Agriculture.

Pesticides play a critical role in protecting crops from destructive pests, controlling mosquitoes and other disease-carrying pests, and managing invasive weeds that choke our waterways and shipping lanes, impede power generation, and damage our forests and recreation areas. We believe that the water permit for pesticides jeopardizes these protections and the economy as regulators and businesses expend time and resources on implementation and compliance all for no additional environmental benefits. We urge you to vote in support of H.R. 935, the Reducing Regulatory Burdens Act.

Sincerely,

Agribusiness Council of Indiana, Agricultural Alliance of North Carolina, Agricultural Council of Arkansas, Agricultural Retailers Association, Alabama Agribusiness Council, American Farm Bureau Federation, Alabama Farmers Federation, American Mosquito Control Association, American Soybean Association, Aquatic Plant Management Society, Arkansas Forestry Association, Biopesticide Industry Alliance, California Association of Winegrape Growers, Cape Cod Cranberry Growers Association, The Cranberry Institute, CropLife America, Council of Producers & Distributors of Agrotechnology, Edison Electric Institute, Family Farm Alliance, Far West Agribusiness Association.

Florida Farm Bureau Federation, Florida Fruit & Vegetable Association, Georgia Agribusiness Council, Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation, Idaho Potato Commission, Idaho Water Users Association, Illinois Farm Bureau, Illinois Fertilizer & Chemical Association, Kansas Agribusiness Retailers Association, Louisiana Cotton and Grain Association, Louisiana Farm Bureau Federation, Maine Potato Board, Michigan Agribusiness Association, Minnesota Agricultural Aircraft Association, Minnesota Pesticide Information & Education, Minor Crops Farmer Alliance, Missouri Agribusiness Association, Missouri Farm Bureau Federation.

Montana Agricultural Business Association, National Agricultural Aviation Association, National Alliance of Forest Owners, National Alliance of Independent Crop Consultants, National Association of State Departments of Agriculture, National Association of Wheat Growers, National Corn Growers Association, National Cotton Council, National Council of Farmer Cooperatives, National Farmers Union, National Pest Management Association, National Potato Council, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, National Water Resources Association, Nebraska Agri-Business Association, North Carolina Agricultural Consultants Association, North Carolina Cotton Producers Association, North Central Weed Science Society, North Dakota Agricultural Association, Northeast Agribusiness and Feed Alliance.

Northeastern Weed Science Society, Northern Plains Potato Growers Association, Ohio Professional Applicators for Responsible Regulation, Oregon Potato Commission, Oregonians for Food & Shelter, Pesticide Policy Coalition, Plains Cotton Growers, Inc., Professional Landcare Network, RISE (Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment), South Dakota Agri-Business Association, South Texas Cotton and Grain Association, Southern Cotton Growers, Inc., Southern Crop Production Association, Southern Rolling Plains Cotton Growers, Southern Weed Science Society, Texas Ag Industries Association, Texas Vegetation Management Association, United Fresh Produce Association, U.S. Apple Association, USA Rice Federation.

Virginia Agribusiness Council, Virginia Forestry Association, Washington Friends of Farm & Forests, Washington State Potato Commission, Weed Science Society of America, Western Growers Association, Western Plant Health Association, Western Society of Weed Science, Wild Blueberry Commission of Maine, Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation, Wisconsin Potato and Vegetable Growers Association, Wisconsin State Cranberry Growers Association.

NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF FOREST OWNERS,
July 30, 2014.

Hon. BOB GIBBS,
Chairman, Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, House of Representative, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN GIBBS: On behalf of the National Alliance of Forest Owners (NAFO), I write to express NAFO's support for your bill, H.R. 935, the Reducing Regulatory Burdens Act. NAFO represents private forest owners and managers committed to promoting economic and environmental benefits of privately-owned working forests. NAFO membership encompasses more than 80 million acres of private forestland in 47 states, support 2.4 million U.S. jobs. NAFO seeks to sustain the ecological, economic and social values of forests and to assure an abundance of healthy and productive forest resources.

In many parts of the country, wetland areas form an integral part of working forests. Congress has recognized in section 404 of the Clean Water Act that forest management maintains the wetlands function and has provided a permit exemption for normal silviculture activities. Judicious use of herbicides once or twice over 30 years helps ensure a healthy and vigorous forest stand is regenerated after a harvest.

Herbicide use must now comply with the added requirement that certain pesticides obtain a Clean Water Act (CWA) National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit issued by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) or delegated states. This NPDES permit for herbicides provides virtually no additional environmental benefit because applications are already stringently regulated by EPA under the Federal Insecticide Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA). The permit must be renewed every five years and exposes all pesticide users to citizen law suits under the CWA.

Your legislation would clarify that federal law does not require water permits for FIFRA-compliant herbicide applications. We believe this clarification will provide certainty to forest managers and others who rely on these products. We appreciate your leadership to pass this important legislation.

Sincerely,

DANIEL SAKURA,
Vice President for Government Affairs.

AMCA,
July 30, 2014.

DEAR MEMBER OF CONGRESS, I am writing on behalf of the American Mosquito Control Association (AMCA) to request your support for H.R. 935, which is of vital importance to the public health mission of the nation's mosquito control agencies.

Threats to the public from existing and new and emerging mosquito-borne diseases persist and have amplified. West Nile virus (WNv) is now endemic throughout the United States and annually causes local epidemics and fatalities. Eastern equine encephalitis (EEE) continues as a significant health risk, especially to children. Now, a new mosquito-borne virus, chikungunya virus (CHK), has emerged in the Western Hemisphere, causing hundreds of thousands of human cases in the Caribbean and Central America. Recently, locally transmitted cases of CHK have occurred in Florida, and this disease now threatens numerous other states as well.

Effective, local mosquito control programs are the best line of defense against these mosquito-borne diseases. Yet these programs face challenges, not the least of which is the financial burden caused by the imposition of permit requirements under the Clean Water Act National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES). This NPDES permit requirement mandates that mosquito control agencies' limited financial resources be shifted away from actual mosquito surveillance and control activities to administrative and compliance monitoring activities.

Mosquito control products are already very well regulated under FIFRA. NPDES compliance by public health agencies does not, in fact, add any additional environmental benefit, but does add unnecessary costs. The impact of those added costs will be felt by people at most risk to mosquito-borne diseases.

The solution is the elimination of this duplicative regulatory burden by supporting and passing H.R. 935, the Reducing Regulatory Burdens Act. This legislation clarifies that no additional federal NPDES permits are required when pesticide applicators are using those products in accordance with the federal mandates established by the US Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Pesticide Programs that are already specified on the product label.

We respectfully request your support of H.R. 935.

Sincerely,

STEVE MULLIGAN,
AMCA President.

AMCA,
July 30, 2014.

On the House floor this week, Representative DeFazio said that his local mosquito control district applied for their permit online and has been able to operate just fine before and after the NPDES permits went into effect. It is our understanding that Rep. DEFAZIO does not live in a mosquito control district.

However, he has contacted the 4 Rivers Vector Control District in Bend, Oregon to

spray his vacation home. 4 Rivers VCD told him the permit would be a financial burden on their operation and they we were already regulated under FIFRA.

Rep. DEFAZIO's staff has called the North Morrow Vector Control and the Baker Valley Vector Control managers in Oregon who explained the negative impacts the permit was having on their districts. The managers of those districts have met with Rep. DeFazio's staff repeatedly in Washington D.C. over the past several years regarding the burden NPDES is having on mosquito control and provided written information (AMCA briefing papers) during those meetings.

It is our understanding that many Oregon Mosquito and Vector Control Districts have similarly written him about NPDES impacts on their districts at various times when there has been a push for legislation.

Rep DEFAZIO stated on the floor that anyone with a computer can easily get a NPDES permit online, with no fee, and no waiting period. This is not an accurate statement in the State of Oregon and most other states in the country.

Instead, operators seeking to register under the Oregon permit must take the following steps so that uninterrupted coverage continues:

Write a Pesticide Discharge Management Plan.

Obtain a Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) application form through the mail or in person from a DEQ regional office, or download the application from the DEQ website.

Submit the application and maps of the treatment area, by mail, no less than 45 days before a planned pesticide application. There is no online application system.

Pay the permit fee is $903, and you must continue to pay an annual fee.

Failure to pay applicable fees may result in denial of an application or termination of coverage under this permit.

Submit an Annual Report. This cannot be submitted online, and there is no acknowledgement from the state that your Annual Report has been received.

The free, online permit only applies to the EPA's pesticide general permit that covers discharges in areas where EPA is the NPDES permitting authority. This only includes four states (Idaho, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and New Mexico), Washington, D.C., all U.S. territories except the Virgin Islands, most Indian Country lands, and federal facilities in four additional states (Colorado, Delaware, Vermont, and Washington).

NPDES permits do not reduce the amount of pesticides being used, or bring about additional water monitoring. Integrated Mosquito Management strategies used by mosquito control programs for over a century, new technology, safer products, and our dedication to a healthy environment is what reduces adverse effects to Waters of the U.S.

The California NPDES permit is the strictest in the nation requiring post-treatment water testing, but after the initial samples showed that mosquito control did not adversely affect water quality, that provision of the California permit has been eliminated.

Our pesticides are vigorously tested by the Environmental Protection Agency to be used over, near, and in water without causing adverse affects to the environment. When used according to the label, the EPA has built in a significant margin of safety.

Pesticides are detected in many of our nation's waters, but the technology used today can detect pesticides at miniscule amounts; this does not mean that pesticides are present at levels toxic to people, aquatic plants or animals.

Why would environmental groups want pesticide applicators regulated under the CWA? Because it leaves municipal mosquito control programs vulnerable to lawsuits where fines may exceed $35,000/day. Under FIFRA they would need to demonstrate that the pesticides caused harm or were misapplied; because our pesticides are specific to mosquitoes and used in low doses by qualified applicators that would be extremely difficult. However, under the CWA, all they have to prove is a paperwork violation.

Communities without established Mosquito Control Districts are being deprived of the economic and health benefits of mosquito control. Historically, a local contractor could be hired to provide spraying services with the understanding that if he/she follows the FIFRA label he/she will be in compliance with the law.

Now, these local applicators must apply for a NPDES permit, create a Pesticide Discharge Management Plan, publish a Notice of Intent to apply pesticides, and wait for approval from the State or EPA. In most states the permits are not free. The steep fines under the Clean Water Act and the cumbersome administrative process have caused local applicators to discontinue mosquito control services.

Mr. GIBBS. This is a good bill that reduces burdensome regulations without rolling back any environmental safeguards.

Don't just ask the environmental community about what it takes to comply with the current duplicative Clean Water Act regulation of pesticides. Ask your farmers and your mosquito control agencies in your cities and your counties. Then look at your States' Web sites to see what it takes to apply for the NPDES permit for pesticide applications. We did that. It costs over $200 in my State of Ohio, and in Oregon, it is over $900. That does not count the time of an applicant to complete the process or the time of a regulator to evaluate the application—all to regulate again something that is already adequately regulated under FIFRA.

I urge all Members to support this bipartisan bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in opposition to H.R. 935.

In the 112th Congress, the Republican leadership moved similar legislation under the guise that, unless Congress acted, the process for applying a pesticide would be so burdensome that it would grind to a halt an array of agricultural and public health-related activities.

Now, some may say that this may be a bit of hyperbole to describe the impacts of the Environmental Protection Agency's pesticide general permit. However, if you were to compare the concern expressed before the Agency's draft permit went into effect with the almost nonexistent level of concern expressed after almost 3 years of implementation, you would likely question why we are here this evening debating this bill.

Contrary to the rhetoric, the EPA and the States have successfully drafted and implemented a new pesticide general permit, a PGP, for the last 2½ years that adopted several commonsense precautionary measures to limit the contamination of local waters by pesticides. They do so in a way that allows pesticide applicators to meet their vital public health, agricultural, and forestry-related activities in a cost-effective manner.

This sky has not fallen. Farmers and forestry operators have had two successful growing seasons, and public health officials successfully addressed multiple threats of mosquito-borne illness while, at the same time, complying with the sensible requirements of both the Clean Water Act and the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act, FIFRA.

I say ''sensible'' because, as we should clearly understand, the intended focus of the Clean Water Act and FIFRA are very different. FIFRA is intended to address the safety and effectiveness of pesticides on a national scale, preventing unreasonable adverse effects on human health and the environment through uniform labels indicating approved uses and restrictions. Very sensible. However, the Clean Water Act is focused on restoring and maintaining the integrity of the Nation's waters, with a primary focus on the protection of local water quality—two very distinct purposes.

It is simply incorrect to say that applying a FIFRA-approved pesticide in accordance with its labeling requirements is a surrogate for protecting local water quality. As any farmer knows, complying with FIFRA is as simple as applying a pesticide in accordance with its label. Farmers do not need to look to the localized impact of the pesticide on local water quality.

So why are groups, ranging from the American Farm Bureau Federation to CropLife America, so adamantly opposed to this regulation?

Let's explore that.

One plausible answer is that these groups do not want to come out of the regulatory shadows that have allowed unknown individuals to discharge unknown pesticides, in unknown quantities, with unknown mixtures, and at unknown locations.

I wonder how the American public would react to the fact that, for decades, pesticide sprayers could apply massive amounts of potentially harmful materials almost completely below the radar.

In fact, prior to the issuance of the pesticide general permit, the only hard evidence on pesticide usage in this country came from a voluntary sampling of the types and amounts of pesticides that were purchased from the commercial dealers of pesticides. No comprehensive information was available or required on the quantities, types, or locations of pesticides applied in this country.

Based on that practice, I guess we should not be surprised that, for decades, pesticides have been detected in the majority of our Nation's surface and groundwater, which leads me to

question how eliminating any reporting requirement on the use of pesticides is protective of human health and the environment. All this would do is make it harder to locate the sources of pesticide contamination in our Nation's rivers, lakes, and streams, and it would make the accountability for these discharges even more difficult. If this legislation were to pass, we would require more disclosure of those who manufacture pesticides than those who actually release these dangerous chemicals into the real world.

During the debate this past Monday, several speakers questioned the environmental and public health benefits of the Clean Water Act for the application of pesticides. However, many of these benefits are so obvious that it is not surprising they may have otherwise gone overlooked.

First, it is the Clean Water Act, not FIFRA, that requires pesticide applicators to minimize pesticide discharges through the use of pesticide management measures, such as integrated pest management. I find it very difficult to argue that using an appropriate amount of pesticides for certain applications would be a problem.

Second, it is the Clean Water Act, not FIFRA, that requires pesticide applicators to monitor for and report any adverse incidents that result from spraying.

□ 1845

I would think that monitoring for large fish or wildlife kills would actually be a mutually agreed-upon benefit.

Also, it is the Clean Water Act and not FIFRA that requires pesticide applicators to keep records on where and how many pesticides are being applied throughout the Nation. Again, if data is showing that a local water body is contaminated by pesticides, I would think the public would want to quickly identify the likely sources of pesticide that is causing the impairment.

Finally, and perhaps most important, I am unaware that, despite repeated requests to both EPA and the States, of any specific example where the current Clean Water Act requirements have prevented a pesticide applicator from performing their services.

So despite claims to the contrary, the Clean Water Act has not significantly increased the compliance costs to States or individual pesticide sprayers, nor has it been used as a tool by outside groups or the EPA to ban the use of pesticides.

So let me summarize just a few points.

One, the Clean Water Act does provide a valuable service in ensuring that an appropriate amount of pesticides are being applied at the appropriate times and that pesticides are not having an adverse impact on human health or the environment.

Number two, to the best of my knowledge, the pesticide general permit has imposed no impediment on the ability of pesticide applicators to provide their valuable service to both agricultural and public health communities. In fact, most pesticide applications are automatically covered by the pesticide general permit, either by no action or by filing of an electronic notice of intent.

Three, Federal and State data make clear that application of pesticides in compliance with FIFRA alone, as was the case for many years, was insufficient to protect water bodies throughout the Nation from being contaminated by pesticides. So, if we care about water quality, more needed to be done.

I can see no legitimate reason why we would want to allow any user of potentially harmful chemicals to return to the regulatory shadows that existed prior to the issuance of Clean Water Act pesticide general permits. It has caused no known regulatory, administrative, or significant financial burden, and it has been implemented seamlessly across country. As was stated during the debate on Monday, this legislation is seeking to address a pretend problem that simply does not exist.

I urge a ''no'' vote on H.R. 935, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GIBBS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Well, as a farmer, I take a little bit of offense to some of the remarks that we are applying pesticides in the shadows.

Pesticides cost money and, as farmers, we do not control what we get for our products, our commodities. We are raising corn and soybeans. We are at the mercy of the commodities market, so we have to do everything we can do on the cost side. And we certainly aren't going to waste a valuable input cost: pesticide, herbicide, and insecticide. So that is just an erroneous statement. That is just not true. Farmers of today are professionals, high capital cost operations, and it just makes no sense that we would waste those inputs.

On the issue about finding pesticide residues in water bodies, there is an issue that we call legacy issue, meaning that there was pesticides used many years ago that didn't break down in the environment, weren't biodegradable, and there is essentially a bank of residue left, and you get those legacy issues. The pesticides we are using today are much safer. The industry, the technology has improved drastically, and a lot of these pesticides, if not all, are more biodegradable.

Also, keep in mind, under FIFRA, the EPA approves the label. That is the approval of the process and the application and the amount that can be used. In most States, if not all States, most of these pesticides are being applied, have to be applied by certified applicators, and they are licensed. So they are filling out some paperwork and have to do due diligence.

This bill really does add a lot of duplication, because we went to a couple of States, and if you are applying a pesticide near a water body or a wetland—and that is open for definition how close that may be—you have to go online and apply for the permit. In some States, you have to apply for, you have to submit a management plan. You have to list where you are going to be applying the pesticide, the location.

So, basically, let's take this down to a homeowner level. A homeowner maybe wants to spray their yard for dandelions. If they are maybe reasonably close to a water body, or maybe not—that is open for discussion—they have to go online and, like I said, in Oregon, they have got to apply for a permit and submit a management plan and pay over a $900 fee. In my State of Ohio, it is over $200.

I think that is a little bizarre, as long as they are applying it to the label under EPA approval.

So let's also talk about mosquito control districts. We had a huge outbreak of West Nile virus in 2012. That was a big mosquito year. I guess last year wasn't as much. This year, the debate is going to be out on that.

But we were hearing evidence that, because of the permitting requirements, that some of our mosquito control districts—and the American Mosquito Control Association actually surveyed their members. Some of them were actually kind of holding back and doing the preventative programs.

I know of one large metropolitan area in the southern part of this country that had to declare an emergency. And the irony of this, when they declare an emergency, they don't have to get any permits. It was so bad, they had to do aerial spraying, so that was putting the environment even at more risk. When you go from land application up to aerial, you can imagine the possible results that could happen of contamination—and with no permit requirement.

So we do have evidence, there was some talk on Monday night in this debate that the one gentleman on the other side of the aisle was talking about: My mosquito control district, there is no issue—no issue, no problem.

Well, we talked to his mosquito control district and it is a problem, and they have been talking to them for the last several years that this is a problem.

I would also contend, I did some research, checked around with some of our local spraying outfits, the grain elevators that do spraying. They don't know about this new rule yet because the EPA, in a lot of States, hasn't notified, they haven't implemented it. I think maybe because they know there is legislation hanging out there. So a lot of our entities don't know about it yet. Some of the larger, obviously, mosquito control districts and larger operations might know.

But the reason, when you talk about it has been nearly 3 years, which is more like 2 years, and there hasn't been a problem as we might think

there should be a problem is because a lot of them aren't doing the NPDES permits because they are not aware of that fact yet.

So at some point, if we don't fix this, the hammer is going to come down and you are going to hear about it from farmers, mosquito control districts, and individual homeowners.

So I just want to make that clear that this bill is duplicative, and they are under a lot of regulation, and the EPA approves the label. If you are not applying a pesticide under the label requirements, then you have got a problem.

But we don't need to open this up to farmers and landowners and mosquito control districts to lawsuits and other problems. So what this is really boiling down to today is, now I am starting to see this is a revenue stream into the EPA for these outrageous costs of the NPDES programs.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. PETERSON).

Mr. PETERSON. I thank the gentlelady.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support H.R. 935, the Reducing Regulatory Burdens Act, which will relieve farmers, foresters, and other pesticide applicators from a potentially costly regulatory burden that would do little, if anything, to protect the environment. The legislation simply makes clear congressional intent by amending both the Clean Water Act and the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act, FIFRA, to prohibit permits for pesticide application when pesticides are applied consistent with FIFRA.

This legislation is necessary following a 2006 decision by the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals that overturned an EPA rule which specifically exempted permitting of certain pesticide applications under the Clean Water Act. The Court's decision preempts FIFRA by the Clean Water Act for the first time in the history of either statute.

Clean Water Act permitting requirements place a significant burden and responsibilities on the States and the EPA. These National Pollution Discharge Elimination System permits do not reduce the amount of pesticides being used or bring about additional water monitoring.

I know many of my colleagues share my concern about the regulations coming from the EPA, and frankly, the last thing we need to do, we need the EPA to do, or the lawyers or the judges who don't understand agriculture, is to have them tell farmers how to farm or add another meaningless paperwork exercise to their workload. The courts are not the place to make agriculture policy, and this legislation takes a step to address that.

Additionally, this bill is identical to legislation passed by the House last Congress with broad and strong bipartisan support. So I urge my colleagues to show that same support today.

Mr. GIBBS. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire how much time I have left?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Ohio has 18½ minutes remaining.

Mr. GIBBS. Mr. Speaker, I yield the remainder of my time to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LUCAS), the chairman of the Agriculture Committee, and ask unanimous consent that he be permitted to control that time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

(Mr. LUCAS asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this legislation.

This legislation was the product of collaborative work done by two House committees, along with technical assistance from the Obama administration's Environmental Protection Agency. This is the way legislation should be handled, and I am proud of our efforts in the House.

To refresh our memories, this problem stems from an uninformed court decision in the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals. This decision invalidated a 2006 EPA regulation exempting pesticides regulations that are in compliance with the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act from having to also comply with a costly and duplicative permitting process under the Clean Water Act.

I want to be clear, our pesticides are vigorously tested by the EPA to be used over, near, and in water without causing adverse effects to the environment. When used according to the label, the EPA has built in a significant margin of safety. Communities without established mosquito control districts are being deprived of the economic and health benefits of mosquito control.

Historically, a local contractor could be hired to provide spraying services with the understanding that, if they followed the FIFRA label, they would be in compliance with the law. Now these local applicators must apply for an NPDES permit, create a Pesticide Discharge Management Plan, publish a notice of intent to apply pesticides, and wait for approval from the State or EPA. In most States, the permits are not free. The steep fines under the Clean Water Act and the cumbersome administrative process have caused local applicators to discontinue mosquito control services.

The effort to have these same products today doubly regulated through the Clean Water Act permitting process is unnecessary, costly, and, ultimately, undermines public health. It amounts to a duplication of regulatory compliance costs for a variety of public agencies and doubles their legal jeopardy. Think about that—doubles their legal jeopardy.

I encourage my colleagues to vote in support of this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. CRAWFORD) for debate purposes.

Mr. CRAWFORD. I thank the chairman of the Agriculture Committee, and I certainly appreciate the chairman of the Subcommittee on Waterways for his leadership.

I rise today in support of H.R. 935.

Mr. Speaker, the last thing we need in agriculture right now is more regulation. Pesticides are and have been an integral part of insuring that our Nation continues to produce the world's most abundant, safe, and affordable food supply. As it stands today, pesticides already go through a minimum of 125 safety tests before being registered for use. On top of that, they are subject to strict labeling and usage requirements, as the Agriculture Committee chairman alluded to in his remarks.

Passage of H.R. 935 will clarify congressional intent that Clean Water Act permits are not required for lawful pesticide applications and protect pesticide users from abusive lawsuits.

□ 1900

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I now yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT).

Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 935, which prevents wasteful and duplicative regulations that could ultimately expand the EPA's reach further into every part of our country.

Federal law already requires the EPA to ensure that pesticides cause "no unreasonable adverse effect" to humans or the environment. Labels attached to pesticides that are related to its use are crafted to minimize such impacts. The label, in effect, is the law today. When a person does not follow the label, regardless of additional permits, they are violating the law.

Yet activists believe requiring water permits, even when a user abides by the pesticide label, will somehow strengthen our water quality. States continue to spend more and more money and man hours implementing and enforcing a water permit process that most regulators do not believe does anything to further protect the water quality. That is why H.R. 935 is so important.

This bill removes a pointless paperwork exercise and burden through NPDES permits that do nothing but create additional hurdles between consumers and the benefits of products like pesticides provide.

Registration and labeling of a pesticide already does as much as any additional NPDES permit would require. In fact, EPA's own analysis suggests that the NPDES permits program for pesticides is the single greatest expansion in the program's history, covering over 5.5 million pesticide applications per year by 365,000 applicators.

If H.R. 935 is not implemented, the effects of the EPA's overregulation would be felt across the State of Georgia. For example, county officials will

have one more hurdle to overcome when trying to control the mosquito population and the outbreak of West Nile virus. These counties are forced to address an additional bureaucratic hurdle before they are able to address a serious health threat to our citizens, a hurdle that provides no additional benefits.

With this unprecedented expansion, all stakeholders are affected, including State agencies, cities, counties, municipalities, research scientists, forest managers—and every American will pay for this. Last Congress, we passed this same legislation, 292–130, and I ask Congress to, again, do the same thing.

Ms. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I just want to clear up a couple of points here.

For the record, 45 States actually manage their own pesticide programs. So it is not the responsibility of the Federal Government or the EPA.

In fact, contrary to what we have heard here tonight, Mr. Speaker, small applicators are already covered. They don't need to do anything. They are covered already under the permitting process.

And then just to be clear, in fact, in the management of those 45 States—a State like Idaho, for example, currently has 122 active permits, and there has been no charge for that permit. It is free from the Federal Government. And that is true for actually a number of States.

Now, we have heard about the dramatic effect that the regulations would have. But, in fact, for almost 3 years now, there has been no drama. The process has worked well. And confusing the FIFRA process and the purposes of the Clean Water Act, I think in some ways, is what brings us here today. As I said earlier, they are very distinct. And, in fact, just because we need to cover applying pesticides and controlling the way that those are applied and the application doesn't absolve us of a responsibility also to make certain that our water bodies are clean.

There is another myth, actually, that has been put forward here that we have heard. And that is that maintaining the Clean Water Act would subject pesticide applicators to litigation and increase citizen suits. In fact, this is false. If a pesticide applicator abides by the terms of the Clean Water Act, the pesticide general permit—which applies in accordance with the FIFRA label and minimizes the use of the pesticide and conducts routine monitoring of acute impacts—they are, by the terms of the Clean Water Act, immune from lawsuits by any party.

Another myth that we have just heard here is that the permitting process, Mr. Speaker, the FIFRA requirements and the Clean Water Act, are duplicative. As I have said earlier, FIFRA addresses the safety and effectiveness on a national scale, preventing unreasonable adverse impacts on human health and the environment through uniform labeling requirements. In contrast, the Clean Water Act is focused on restoring and maintaining the integrity of local water bodies, with direct considerations on the potential impact of additional pollutants to specific waters. So measuring the human health and environment with uniform labeling and protecting the waters are two separate purposes.

Another myth that we have heard here is that most of the pesticides that are contained in the existing studies are legacy pesticides that are no longer used domestically. There is no evidence of pesticide contamination by currently used pesticides. This is absolutely false.

Although the U.S. Geological Survey did publish a report in 2006 that documented how pesticides were detected in every stream tested by the USGS, including pesticides such as DDT and chlordane that were previously banned as recently as 2014, the USGS has published several research studies showing how more recently developed pesticides and insecticides are being detected as widespread in streams in high corn and soybean regions of the United States.

So we have heard a lot of mythology here, but it is important for Congress to deal in reality. So I just wanted to clear those things for the record.

And I would inquire of the gentleman if he has additional requests for time because I am prepared to close.

Mr. LUCAS. I do, indeed, have one further request, and then I will yield back to my friend from Ohio, who will close.

Ms. EDWARDS. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, with that, I yield 4½ minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOHO).

(Mr. YOHO asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. YOHO. I thank the chairman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the legislation. This evening, we are, once again, considering H.R. 935, the Reducing Regulatory Burdens Act. Many of you will remember that the House voted in support of this legislation 3 years ago. That bill, H.R. 872, passed the House floor on suspension with a vote of 292–130.

This same language was included in the 2012 farm bill that was reported out of the Agricultural Committee, as well as the 2013 farm bill, which the House sent to the farm bill conference. It was included in the committee-reported text of the fiscal year 2012 Interior and Environment Appropriations bill. Unfortunately, due to the opposition from a couple of our friends in the Senate, we have been unable to get this bill to the President's desk, which we know, once done, will guarantee his signature.

As many of you may recall, this language was drafted at our request for technical assistance by the EPA general counsel. The problem we asked the EPA to help resolve stems from an uninformed court decision in the Sixth Circuit. This decision nullified a 2006 EPA regulation that exempted certain pesticides from having to comply with a costly and duplicative permitting process under the Clean Water Act.

My colleague, the gentlewoman from Maryland, gave a very nice speech. And she mentioned several times the potential problem of contaminating creeks, the potential problems of this pesticide causing all of these problems that we haven't seen. We don't have the facts on that, and to regulate something that is already regulated—and I must caution everybody how these drugs and how these pesticides come out. They go through extensive testing. Millions of dollars are spent by these industries. And the intent by those pressing to have federally registered pesticides regulated through the Clean Water Act is unnecessary, it is costly, and it ultimately undermines public health. It amounts to a duplication of compliance costs for a variety of public agencies, adding to their legal jeopardy and threatening pesticide applicators, including mosquito control districts, with fines set at $37,500 per day per violation. All I can say is, welcome to going out of business if you are in the private sector.

Across the country, several mosquito control districts may have to cease operations due to these costs. If this occurs, it would expose large portions of the population to mosquitoes carrying a number of dangerous and exotic diseases, such as West Nile virus. Hospitalization and rehab costs ranging from the tens of thousands into the millions of dollars, lost productivity, a decrease in tourism, and negative impacts on horses and livestock production are but a few of the costs that will further strain public health resources.

Being a veterinarian for the last 30 years, I have seen effects of mosquito-borne diseases. In addition, the West Nile virus causes deaths, from alligators to humans. Also, diseases such as Eastern encephalitis are transmittable to people, along with dengue fever, which is moving its way up from the Caribbean through the peninsula of Florida, and it will, no doubt, get up further to the mainland of the United States of America, in addition to the heartworm disease in our pets.

This unnecessary mandate applies not only to local and State interests but also to Federal agency lands located in States directly regulated by the EPA. For example, Federal agencies, such as the Army Corps of Engineers, authorize the use of some of their lands for many purposes, including recreation and agriculture. These uses often require pesticide applications to prevent mosquito-borne transmitted diseases and for other purposes.

Although the local mosquito control district may be the entity actually applying the pesticide, the Army Corps District is required to obtain the permit and sign off on related reports, thereby pointlessly driving up costs to

the Federal Government. We have agencies suing government agencies.

Further, experience has shown that the Corps is unwilling to assume permit responsibility for activities that it is not actually performing. This is a regulatory burden that Congress never intended, and I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Ms. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to enter into the RECORD a letter from 144 environmental organizations, community-based organizations around the country that oppose H. Res. 935.

BEYOND PESTICIDES, BEYOND TOXICS, CATA—THE FARMWORKER SUPPORT COMMITTEE, CENTER FOR BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY, DEFENDERS OF WILDLIFE, EARTHJUSTICE, ENDANGERED SPECIES COALITION, FARMWORKER ASSOCIATION OF FLORIDA, GREENPEACE, LOUISIANA ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION NETWORK, LEAGUE OF CONSERVATION VOTERS, LOWER MISSISSIPPI RIVERKEEPER, NATURAL RESOURCES DEFENSE COUNCIL, NORTHWEST CENTER FOR ALTERNATIVES TO PESTICIDES, NORTHWEST ENVIRONMENTAL ADVOCATES, NORTHWEST ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENSE CENTER, PESTICIDE ACTION NETWORK, SAN FRANCISCO BAYKEEPER, SIERRA CLUB, SURFRIDER FOUNDATION, WATERKEEPER ALLIANCE, WATERKEEPERS CAROLINA,

July 25, 2014.

Re Oppose H.R. 935 (''Reducing Regulatory Burdens Act of 2013'')

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of our millions of members and supporters nationwide, we urge you to oppose H.R. 935 (''Reducing Regulatory Burdens Act of 2013''), which would prevent the Environmental Protection Agency from protecting water supplies from direct applications of pesticides.

Nearly 150 human health, fishing, environmental, and other organizations have opposed efforts like H.R. 935 that would undermine Clean Water Act permitting for direct pesticide applications to waterways. We attach a list of these groups for your reference, as well as a one-page fact sheet with more information on the issue.

Regulating pesticide discharges to waterways under the Clean Water Act is critical. Despite current regulation under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act, pesticides continue to impair our waterways in significant quantities and have caused real harm to public health and ecosystems. H.R. 935 would render ineffective the Clean Water Act pesticide general permit that took effect in 2011 (''pesticide general permit''). This permit is necessary to protect our waterways, public health, and fish and wildlife.

There have been mischaracterizations of the existing permit that we must correct:

The pesticide general permit has no significant effect on farming practices. The permit in no way affects land applications of pesticides for the purpose of controlling pests. Irrigation return flows and agricultural stormwater runoff will not require permits, even when they contain pesticides. Existing agricultural exemptions in the Clean Water Act remain.

The pesticide general permit allows for spraying to combat vector-borne diseases such as the West Nile virus. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, the permit ''provides that pesticide applications are covered automatically under the permit and may be performed immediately for any declared emergency pest situations.''

The pesticide general permit—which has been in place for more than two and a half years now—simply lays out commonsense practices for applying pesticides directly to waters that currently fall under the jurisdiction of the Clean Water Act. Efforts to block this permit are highly controversial, as evidenced by the attached list of groups opposed.

Please protect the health of your state's citizens and all Americans by opposing H.R. 935.

Sincerely,

Marty Hayden, Vice President, Policy & Legislation, Earthjustice; Scott Slesinger, Legislative Director, Natural Resources Defense Council; Sara Chieffo, Legislative Director, League of Conservation Voters; Dalal Aboulhosn, Senior Washington Representative, Sierra Club; Jeannie Economos, Pesticide Safety & Environmental Health Project Coordinator, Farmworker Association of Florida; Nelson Carrasquillo, Executive Director, CATA—The Farmworker Support Committee; Mary Beth Beetham, Director of Legislative Affairs, Defenders of Wildlife; Jay Feldman, Executive Director, Beyond Pesticides; Brett Hartl, Endangered Species Policy Director, Center for Biological Diversity; Nina Bell, Executive Director, Northwest Environmental Advocates; Rick Hind, Legislative Director, Greenpeace.

Pete Nichols, National Director, Waterkeeper Alliance; Heather Ward, Executive Director, Waterkeepers, Carolina; Mark Riskedahl, Executive Director, Northwest Environmental Defense Center; Tara Thornton, Program Director, Endangered Species Coalition; Marylee Orr, Executive Director, Louisiana Environmental Action Network; Paul Orr, Riverkeeper, Lower Mississippi Riverkeeper; Jason Flanders, Program Director, San Francisco Baykeeper; Kristin S. Schafer, Policy Director, Pesticide Action Network; Lisa Arkin, Executive Director, Beyond Toxics; Gus Gates, Oregon Policy Manager, Surfrider Foundation; Kim Leval, Executive Director, Northwest Center for Alternatives to Pesticides.

WHO OPPOSES EFFORTS TO UNDERMINE CLEAN WATER ACT PERMITTING FOR DIRECT PESTICIDE APPLICATIONS?

The below organizations have signed letters opposing legislation that guts Clean Water Act safeguards protecting communities from toxic pesticides:

Alaska Community Action on Toxics, Altamaha Riverkeeper and Altamaha Coastkeeper, Atchafalaya Basinkeeper, Apalachicola Riverkeeper, Assateague Coastkeeper/Assateague Coastal Trust, American Bird Conservancy, American Rivers, Audubon California, Better Urban Green Strategies, Beyond Pesticides, Big Black Foot Riverkeeper, Biscayne Bay Waterkeeper, Black Warrior Riverkeeper, Blackwater Nottoway Riverkeeper Program, Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper, Butte Environmental Council, Californians for Alternatives to Toxics, Californians for Pesticide Reform, California Sportfishing Protection Alliance, Cape Fear River Watch, Cascobay Baykeeper, Catawba Riverkeeper Foundation, Inc., Center for Biological Diversity, Center for Environmental Health, Center on Race, Poverty & the Environment, Charleston Waterkeeper, Choctawhatchee Riverkeeper, Clean Water Action, Clean Water Network, Coast Action Group, Colorado Riverkeeper, Cook Inletkeeper, Inc., Defenders of Wildlife, Detroit Riverkeeper, Dolphin Swimming and Boating Club, The Earth Cause Organization, Earthjustice, Emerald Coastkeeper, Endangered Species Coalition, Environment America, Environment California, Environmental Protection Information Center, Environmental Advocates, Flint Riverkeeper, Food & Water Watch, Forestland Dwellers, French Broad Riverkeeper, Friends of the Earth, Friends of Five Creeks, Friends of Gualala River, Friends of the Petaluma River, Galveston Baykeeper, Geos Institute, Golden Gate Audubon Society, Grand Riverkeeper, Grand Traverse Baykeeper, Gunpowder Riverkeeper, Hackensack Riverkeeper, Inc., Haw Riverkeeper/Haw River Assembly, Housatonic River Initiative, Hurricane Creekkepper/Friends of Hurricane Creek, Hudson Riverkeeper, Humboldt Baykeeper, Idaho Conservation League, Indian Riverkeeper, Inland Empire Waterkeeper, Kansas Riverkeeper, Klamath Forest Alliance, Klamath Riverkeeper, Lake George Waterkeeper, Lake Pend Oreille Waterkeeper, Lawyers for Clean Water, League of Conservation Voters, Long Island Soundkeeper, Louisiana Bayoukeeper, Louisiana Environmental Action Network, Lower Mississippi Riverkeeper, Lower Neuse Riverkeeper, Lower Susquehanna Riverkeeper, Madrone Audubon Society, Milwaukee Riverkeeper, Mothers of Marin Against The Spray, Narragansett Baykeeper, National Audubon Society, National Environmental Law Center, Natural Resources Defense Council, Neuse Riverkeeper Foundation, New York/New Jersey Baykeeper, Northcoast Environmental Center, Northern California River Watch, Northwest Environmental Defense Center, Northwest Center for Alternatives for Pesticides, Ogeechee Riverkeeper, Orange County Coastkeeper, Oregon Wild, Oregon Toxics Alliance, Ouachita Riverkeeper, Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations, Pamlico-Tar Riverkeeper, Patuxent Riverkeeper, Peconic Baykeeper, Pesticide Action Network, Pesticide-Free Sacramento, Pesticide-Free Zone, Pesticide Watch, Planning and Conservation League, Potomac Riverkeeper, Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility, Puget Soundkeeper Alliance, Quad Cities Riverkeeper, Raritan Riverkeeper, Riverkeeper, Rogue Riverkeeper, Russian River Watershed Protection Committee, Russian Riverkeeper, Sacramento Audubon Society, Inc., Safe Alternatives for Our Forest Environment, Safety Without Added Toxins, Saint John's Organic Farm, Saint Louis Confluence Riverkeeper, San Diego Coastkeeper, San Francisco Baykeeper, San Francisco League of Conservation Voters, San Francisco Tomorrow, Santa Monica Baykeeper, Santee Riverkeeper, Satilla Riverkeeper, Save Our Wild Salmon Coalition, Savannah Riverkeeper, Shenandoah Riverkeeper, Sierra Club, Silver Valley Waterkeeper, Spokane Riverkeeper, St. Johns Riverkeeper, Stop the Spray East Bay, Tennessee Riverkeeper, The Bay Institute, Toxics Action Center, Tualatin Riverkeepers, Upper Neuse Riverkeeper, Upper Watauga Riverkeeper, Waterkeeper Alliance, West/Rhode Riverkeeper, Western Nebraska Resources Council, Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation, Yadkin Riverkeeper.

Ms. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Again, I think it is important for us to deal in facts and not in mythology. And a couple of the facts are these:

In 2008, States reported to the EPA—that is, State reporting agencies—that 16,819 miles of rivers and streams, 1,766 square miles of bays and estuaries, and

260,342 acres of lakes are impaired or threatened by pesticides. So it is simply not the fact, Mr. Speaker, that there is no identified pesticide contamination in our water bodies. It is simply not true.

I just want to note also for the record, Mr. Speaker, that, again, there has been no evidence at all that, again, despite the repeated request of the EPA and State-run permit programs, that there are specific examples where the application of the Clean Water Act requirements have prevented a pesticide applicator from performing their services. So if there was a problem and a burden, then identify it. And there simply has been no identification of such a problem.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I want to review our recent history. Just on Monday of this past week, the House of Representatives actually defeated the bill that we are considering tonight, H.R. 935, under suspension of the rules. So having gone through that defeat, tonight we have debated the merits again of that same piece of legislation under a rule that does not allow any amendments to improve the bill to be offered, debated, or voted on. Tomorrow, the House will, once again, vote on passage of H.R. 935, the bill that failed under a suspension of the rules on Monday.

This legislation will undermine one of our Nation's most successful environmental laws, the Clean Water Act, in limiting the potential contamination of our Nation's waters by pesticides.

Contrary to some of the rhetoric—some of which we have heard tonight, Mr. Speaker—the Environmental Protection Agency has successfully drafted and implemented a new pesticide general permit for the last 2½ years.

□ 1915

That regulation has several commonsense precautionary measures that limit contamination of local waters by pesticides—we have heard from the States even since 2008 that pesticide contamination in thousands of miles of streams, rivers, and estuaries are in fact contaminated by pesticide—while it would allow pesticide applicators to meet their vital public health, agricultural, and forestry-related activities in a cost-effective manner.

Now, last Congress, Mr. Speaker, the House narrowly approved a similar bill, H.R. 872, under suspension of the rules by a vote of 292–130, under the guise of regulatory uncertainty under a yet-unseen Clean Water Act permit program.

However, since that time, the EPA has issued a reasonable and protective Clean Water Act permit program that preserves vital farming, forestry, and mosquito control activities at the same time as protecting our Nation's waters. So a year passed, and we have implemented a program that is underway now.

Mr. Speaker, the Clean Water Act is a key to those of us who value clean drinking water and fishable, swimmable waters or who represent States that depend on tourism, like my home State of Maryland, since we have the fourth longest coastline in the continental United States, the Chesapeake Bay—which is the largest estuary in the United States—and several of its tributaries, including the Anacostia, Patuxent, Potomac, and Severn Rivers that flow through the Fourth Congressional District.

The shoreline of the Chesapeake and its tidal tributaries stretch for over 2,000 miles, and thousands of streams, rivers, and acres of wetlands provide the freshwater that flows into the bay.

Thanks to the Clean Water Act, over the past 40-plus years, billions of pounds of pollution have been kept out of our rivers, and the number of waters that meet clean water goals nationwide has doubled, with direct benefits for drinking water, public health, recreation and wildlife.

The act represents a huge step forward by requiring States to set clean water standards to protect uses such as swimming, fishing, and drinking and for the regulation of pollution discharges.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot possibly want to return to a laissez-faire policy that provided no accountability to who was using what pesticides, where they were using those pesticides, and in what amounts and resulted in thousands of miles of streams and lakes being contaminated by pesticides.

I would urge my colleagues to take the commonsense approach that the EPA has taken and to, on both sides of the aisle, vote ''no'' on H.R. 935 and to once again vote down legislation that is looking to solve a problem, Mr. Speaker, that simply does not exist.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, how much time does my side have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Oklahoma has 8½ minutes remaining.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 8½ minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. GIBBS).

Mr. GIBBS. Mr. Speaker, this bill does not deregulate pesticides as has been suggested by some speakers. Pesticides have been regulated under FIFRA for decades, and this bill does not change that.

This bill makes it clear that if you are a mosquito control agency, a farmer, or a citizen that is applying a pesticide and you are complying with FIFRA, you do not need an NPDES permit.

Now, there are a couple facts that came out here tonight that the other side said that, without this bill, it is not necessary because you don't have to get a permit to go out and apply pesticides. Well, if you are applying near a water body or a wetland, you do have to get an NPDES permit from the court decision.

This was not an EPA decision. This was a court decision that looked at it in a narrow vision, and it was a very ill-advised court decision, and I would say when you look at proposed rules out there about waters in the United States, it is up to debate what is near or close to a water body, so that is a fact that we would have that.

Mr. Speaker, I want to share a personal experience. Several years ago, my soybean crop—it was a Friday, late Friday afternoon, working with my certified pesticide applicator, we discovered that my soybean crop had just been attacked by spider mites, an insect, and we had to make application, insecticide application, to take care of it.

That application was made on a Friday night. If I had to apply for an NPDES permit, fill out the form, put in the management plan, submit it to the State, it comes back—I don't know if we would have got it until Tuesday. I would have lost—the damage to my soybean crop would have been substantial.

So the issue out here that there is no cost happening, there will when this thing gets fully implemented because, in practice, this court decision has not been fully implemented in practice across the country, but that will be coming if we fail to enact H.R. 935.

This bill removes the needless and duplicative regulation that threatens public health and imposes an expensive burden on public and private entities trying to safely approve pesticides.

This is a bipartisan bill. It has passed out of this House last Congress by a two-thirds majority. We had partisan antics going on Monday night. We had people switch their votes under pressure for partisan reasons, and that is not good government.

This bill will help protect the environment and human safety when you especially look at West Nile virus and all the other mosquito diseases we are finding that are coming about.

We have to allow our certified pesticide applicators, our mosquito control districts to do their job, and if the private sector wants to go in here and have to do all this extra permitting—we are not talking—when you hear about general permit, you think, oh, I just get a permit for the season, and I am good to go.

That is not what the general permit means. What it means is you have to go every time you do an application, if it is near or close to a wetland or water body, apply for a permit, put in that permit where the location is going to be, probably the date.

Well, say it is raining that day or it is too windy. Do you have to reapply for your permit? That is kind of up in the air still, so there are a whole bunch of issues out there, plus the costs, the time to do it, the bureaucracy, the red tape, and the costs.

Mr. Speaker, I think the one that is really bizarre is if you are a homeowner and you want to apply a pesticide to your yard and if you are near a water body or a wetland, whatever,

you have to apply for a permit because of this court decision.

This will bog down the NPDES permit process, and it will delay and add costs, and it puts farmers in jeopardy to get their crops to maintain and get the yields we need to produce the wholesome food supply in this country that our agricultural community produces and our mosquito control districts that protect many of our citizens from West Nile virus and other mosquito-borne diseases.

So this is critical that these bills pass because we are getting close to the time when we are going to see very much damage being done. We saw a little bit of it in 2012, in at least one large metropolitan area, when they had to spray for mosquitoes aerially when they declared an emergency when it got so far out of hand because they didn't do the preventative measures.

So, Mr. Speaker, I urge Members to pass this bill, send it to the Senate, and hopefully, the Senate takes it up and passes it to protect the environment and health and human safety of the citizens of this country.

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to House Resolution 694, the previous question is ordered on the bill.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 1(c) of rule XIX, further consideration of H.R. 935 is postponed.

HOUR OF MEETING ON TOMORROW

Mr. GIBBS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 9 a.m. tomorrow.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

HONORING THE LIFE OF ARKANSAS POLICE OFFICER AND LAW ENFORCEMENT TRAINING ACADEMY INSTRUCTOR MARK WILLIAMS

(Mr. COTTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. COTTON. Mr. Speaker, today, I want to honor the life of longtime Arkansas police officer and Law Enforcement Training Academy instructor, Mark Williams.

Born and raised in El Dorado, Mark began his law enforcement career in his hometown with the El Dorado Police Department in 1977, serving as a patrolman, detective, and sergeant.

Mark also served as a supervisor in the Hope Police Department's Patrol Division before joining the faculty of the Arkansas Law Enforcement Training Academy in 1994, where he trained new police officers until his retirement in 2013.

Mark's commitment to Arkansas didn't end there. He was also a gifted musician, who served as an Artist in Education, playing his guitar to entertain and educate children across south Arkansas.

I extend my deepest condolences to Mark's wife, children, and grandchildren on their loss. May they find comfort in knowing that Mark's legacy lives on with the thousands of Arkansas police officers he trained over nearly two decades at the academy and in the countless children and Arkansans he inspired with his music.

HONORING THE 138th ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD ACADEMY

(Mr. COURTNEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 138th anniversary of the founding of the Revenue Cutter School of Instruction, the predecessor of today's Coast Guard Academy, on July 31, 1876.

On that day, the Academy's first training exercise was held aboard the two-masted topsail schooner Dobbin, with a class of nine cadets. The class boarded the Dobbin in Baltimore, Maryland, for a 2-year training mission led by Captain John Henriques. Training aboard the ship emphasized seamanship and navigation, as it still does each summer when cadets still sail onboard the Coast Guard Barque Eagle.

Today, the Coast Guard Academy, located in New London, Connecticut, since 1910, is the home to a corps of nearly 1,000 cadets, 200 of whom graduate each year.

The Coast Guard Academy produces almost half of the service's corps of commissioned officers and has graduated distinguished leaders such as Thad Allen, Bob Papp, and the present commandant of the Coast Guard, Admiral Paul Zukunft, who lead our Coast Guard and serve the Nation. Today, it is led by the first woman officer to lead a United States military academy, Admiral Sandra Stosz.

As a cochair of the Congressional Coast Guard Caucus and the representative of Connecticut's Second District, home to the Coast Guard Academy, I am honored to recognize its distinguished beginnings and the longstanding traditions of leadership and excellence which continue to serve our country.

MEDICARE'S 49TH BIRTHDAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DESANTIS). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, Members of the House, I rise today to celebrate the 49th anniversary of the Medicare bill. The impact of Medicare on the lives of millions of Americans over the past 49 years has been extraordinary. As a result of this program, Mr. Speaker, millions of Americans have lived longer, more productive, and healthier lives.

I am very fortunate and honored to be able to say that I was one of the few Members still here who cast a vote for Medicare in 1965. Earlier that year, I joined with the gentleman from California, Cecil King, and I introduced, as my very first piece of legislation, a bill that would have provided health care under Social Security and an increase of benefits.

Mr. Speaker, I said at that time:

> Our senior citizens have far too long been neglected in this, the most prosperous society on Earth. Many of them, after leading productive lives prior to their twilight years, have been so overburdened with medical costs that they have been denied the rewards that should come with retirement.

I am proud to say that in my nearly five decades since the enactment of Medicare, the program has accomplished its mission of providing retirement security for America's seniors and care for those suffering from disabilities and debilitating diseases; yet Medicare continues to face threats from some of the same opponents that have opposed its enactment back in 1965.

They continue to seek to cut Medicare's guaranteed benefits and push seniors into private plans, which value profits over health outcomes.

□ 1930

Today we present another path forward, one in which Medicare's benefits are protected by expanding health care security and insurance coverage to more Americans, not fewer.

Since 2003, I have introduced H.R. 676, the Expanded and Improved Medicare for All Act, which would create a national publicly funded, privately delivered single-payer health care system. Studies have shown that enacting H.R. 676 would save nearly a half trillion dollars by slashing the administrative waste associated with the private health care system.

Another $100 billion would be saved by using the purchasing power of the Federal Government to reduce pharmaceutical prices to the levels that exist in other industrialized nations.

Lastly, by slowing the growth of health care costs, H.R. 676 would save $5 trillion over the next decade, thereby ensuring that the guarantee of affordable public health insurance will be there to be enjoyed by future generations.

And so for all of these reasons, H.R. 676 is one of my most important pieces of legislation in my way of thinking,

and I am proud that it now has 60 cosponsors. I want to thank the gentlewoman from Massachusetts (Ms. CLARK) for being the 60th sponsor. But I would be remiss if I did not reiterate my strong support for President Obama's landmark health care legislation, the Affordable Care Act.

The Affordable Care Act's results speak for themselves. As of this month, the percentage of uninsured Americans is now the lowest on record. The Affordable Care Act has protected as many as 129 million Americans with preexisting conditions from being denied health care coverage or being charged higher premiums. It has provided free preventive health care services such as mammograms, birth control, and immunizations to the 100 million Americans who are on private insurance or Medicare. Around 60 million Americans have gained expanded mental health benefits. And since the Affordable Care Act was enacted, almost 8 million seniors have saved nearly $10 billion on prescription drugs as the health care law closes Medicare's doughnut hole.

But, as with any complex law, implementation can be difficult and there will be unforeseen issues. Those issues have been seized by some opponents against expanding health care who hope to eliminate health insurance for those who cannot afford it. This is unacceptable.

While we must continue to defend the Affordable Care Act, we must also work to ensure that any future changes to the Affordable Care Act take us in the direction of the universal health care enjoyed by virtually all of the citizens of other industrialized countries.

I hope Members of Congress and the American public will join me to fight for a day when, in the wealthiest country on Earth, no one has to suffer and die unnecessarily because their health care system prioritizes corporate profits over their health.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

STUCK IN THE SENATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WOODALL) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate you being down with me here tonight. It took me awhile to get my materials over here because the topic I have tonight is the topic of what this House has been doing to make a difference in the life of families across this country. That is the good news. I have to confess, I am here with good news/bad news tonight.

This is the stack of bills that this House has passed, again, to make a difference in the lives of families, to makes a difference in small businesses, to grow the economy, to create jobs, the bills this House has passed collaboratively that sit collecting dust in the United States Senate. That is the bad news part of tonight.

It is fair enough if folks think this process is broken. It is fair enough if folks think there is too much partisanship in Washington, but what we have here are the successes. What we have here are not the hypothetical ''if only'' bills. What we have here are the bills that have actually left this House and sit in the United States Senate. It is 356 bills, Mr. Speaker, 356 bills that have left this House that sit collecting dust in the Senate. We did a hashtag, Mr. Speaker: #StuckInTheSenate. We all remember, ''I am just a bill sitting on Capitol Hill,'' that Saturday morning cartoon. This is not a dictatorship. We had that conversation a little bit earlier this afternoon. It is not a dictatorship. It is a collaborative effort, and the House has collaborated to pass over 356 bills that have gone to the Senate to do nothing.

Now, again, it is good news/bad news day. Let me start with something that is good news, because if folks don't believe there is opportunity for success, I could imagine how folks would give up, not just folks here in this Chamber, but folks across the country, families across the country.

This, Mr. Speaker, you may remember it, H.R. 803, the Workplace Innovation and Opportunity Act. This passed the House. It passed the Senate. It was signed by the President. This has become law. This was a bill to consolidate a variety of workplace training programs. We talk so much about a trained workforce, how it is we get Americans who may be transitioning in their life, are transitioning home from Iraq or Afghanistan, transitioning from an industry that is in decline to an industry that is growing, how do we get those folks trained.

I credit Dr. VIRGINIA FOXX with this. She is one of my colleagues here in the House. I serve with her on the Rules Committee, but she also serves on the Education and the Workforce Committee. She has been working to try to consolidate programs, take money from programs that were not effective and move the money to programs that were effective. Imagine that. Imagine that. Here she is, a conservative Republican, and what she was trying to do was take money from places that weren't working and put it into places where it would make a difference for moms and dads and kids. And she did it. She did it.

Now, what we passed out of the House was strong, Mr. Speaker. We went out and we found every single program that was failing in America and we brought them together and put them into a single pot and sent it over to the Senate. The Senate said: No, we don't think all of those programs are failing. We don't want to move that big of a package. We want to do something smaller. They ended up consolidating about half of what we consolidated in the House.

But guess what. When you elect ROB WOODALL dictator, then I get to have it my way every day. Until then, this is a collaborative effort here: the House, the Senate, and the President.

So we worked with the Senate, and we worked out our differences. We found that package of consolidation that we could all live with, and we sent it to the President and we got a signature. That is what the American people expect. That is what my constituents expect. They expect us to work together to get things done, not sacrificing principle, not compromising on values, but finding consensus because we all agree that American workers need help. We all agree that moms and dads in transition need to find a better way to feed their families.

We can spend tax dollars better. We found a way to do that here. I call it common sense, Mr. Speaker. It is not supposed to take a rocket scientist to sort some of these issues out. It is supposed to be common sense.

Did I mention #StuckInTheSenate, Mr. Speaker? If I didn't, I want to mention it right now because here is one that really gets me.

We were just talking about hiring more moms and dads. It is called the Hire More Heroes Act. Do you remember it, Mr. Speaker? We passed it out of this House with over 400 votes. Now, young high school students, middle school students, they might not know how many Members there are in the House. There are 435 Members in this House, and more than 400 of them said we should pass the Hire More Heroes bill, but it is stuck in the Senate. Over 400 folks voted ''yes,'' only one voted ''no,'' so I don't want to hear about bipartisanship in the House. I don't want to hear about Republican this and Democratic that.

Mr. Speaker, 400-plus folks said let's pass this bill. I will tell you what it does. The Hire More Heroes Act says one of the highest rates of unemployment we have in this country are men and women in uniform coming home from overseas. It says that we have small employers in this country, and as you know, Mr. Speaker, most of the employment in this country is not driven by the big guys. It is driven by small employers. We heard from small employers in this country who said: I want to hire those veterans, but I am worried about that 50-employee threshold that throws me into this brand-new round of ObamaCare regulations.

Guess what this House did, Mr. Speaker. More than 400 out of 435 got together and they said, if you are a small business owner in America and you want to put unemployed veterans to work but you don't because you are worried about some Federal Government regulation dealing with ObamaCare, we will waive that regulation for you. Hire all of the veterans you want to, and be not afraid of Federal Government regulation.

Think about that. Think about that. It is what I think about. It is why I ran

for Congress. It is why my friends on the other side of the aisle ran for Congress. We came to make a difference—to make a difference. Who among us doesn't want to see unemployed veterans get a job? Who among us doesn't want to see small businesses succeed? We came together, more than 400 of us, to pass the Hire More Heroes Act, but it is stuck in the Senate.

Why? Why? Over 400 of us, almost every Democrat—we lost one—but every Republican, almost every one of us voted ''yes'' to make a difference for small businesses, get them the labor that they need and make a difference for veterans looking for a job.

That was a good bill, Mr. Speaker, and still is, and it is stuck in the Senate. It is not stuck because we can't come to agreement on it, Mr. Speaker. It is not stuck because Republicans are intransigent. It is stuck because the Senate can't get these bills moving.

Mr. Speaker, I am not asking folks to just come together and do what I want them to do. What I am talking about are things that we are celebrating in this institution. I am not talking about things that squeaked through by the skin of their teeth. I am not talking about Republican proposals that we jammed through with the might of the majority. I am talking about commonsense proposals that make a difference in people's lives.

I will give you another one. How about H.R. 4414, Mr. Speaker? It is the Expatriate Health Coverage Clarification Act of 2014. That doesn't sound very exciting, does it? And you know what, it is not very exciting for about 99 percent of Americans. But for Americans who have to work overseas and who have seen their health insurance policies canceled, quadrupled in price, folks who have struggled to find coverage, what this says is, if you don't live in America but you are working for an American company, really, you can sort out your insurance needs on your own over there. If you don't live in America, you don't have to comply with all these needs because—guess what—if you are doing business in London, the health care system is different in England.

□ 1945

If you are doing business in Paris, the health care system is different in France. If you are doing business in Moscow, the health care system is different in Russia. The rules we passed here won't work in those places. It is commonsense.

Had we not jammed that bill through Congress, that Affordable Care Act, maybe we would have gotten to that, but I don't know. It is a small group of people.

We passed a solution—let's look—269–150. I dare say those folks who voted ''no'' wouldn't say they opposed the policy, they would say they just thought it was a symbol of undermining ObamaCare in some way, they didn't want to undermine the President. I say nonsense about undermining the President. I want to make a difference in the lives of families.

Ninety-two days, Mr. Speaker, 92 days this bill has been sitting in the Senate.

Now, that is a minor piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker, that could make a big impact, but for a small number of people. What about things that make a big impact for a large number of people? What about those things?

The REINS Act, Mr. Speaker, H.R. 367, the REINS Act says—and it is a crazy bill, I will confess—it says before you pass a regulation, you need to consider the economic impact of that regulation. Now, while that is commonsense back home in Atlanta, it may seem crazy here in Washington, D.C.

Before you pass a regulation, weigh the pros and the cons to see if it is a good idea or not, weigh those pros and the cons. It is a REINS Act because we are just out of control here with regulation and we need to have a thoughtful conversation about it.

H.R. 1105, the Small Business Capital Access and Job Preservation Act. Trying to find ways for our small businesses to get access to the capital they need in what have been incredibly tight credit markets.

H.R. 2374, the Retail Investor Protection Act.

Time and time again, Mr. Speaker, we are passing bills—they are all here, they are all sitting on HARRY REID's desk over in the Senate—passing bills in an effort to make a difference in people's lives. If it didn't matter, we wouldn't be interested in doing it. I don't have a bill in this stack that is about making a political statement. I don't have a bill in this stack that is about trying to be one up on the other guy, trying to embarrass somebody, trying to call somebody out. What I have in this stack—did I mention there are 356 bills in this stack?—what I have in this stack are bills that could make a difference to a struggling economy today—today. I say today. These bills passed a week ago, a month ago, a year ago or more. They could make a difference. They are #StuckInTheSenate—356 bills.

I have got the great honor tonight, Mr. Speaker—I am not alone in this endeavor, haven't been alone in passing 356 bills. It has been a team sport from day one, team sport from day one—Republicans, Democrats, folks from the North, folks from the South, folks representing families from across the country.

Tonight, I have got Mr. ROTHFUS here, an 18-month Member of this institution, who came, I wager, not to make a point, but to make a difference, and has been doing that every day he has been in this Chamber.

I would be happy to yield to the gentleman.

Mr. ROTHFUS. I thank the gentleman from Georgia for organizing this very informative Special Order tonight.

You are right: I came here to make a difference. I came here to be part of a team that wants to relight America, relight the job market, relight opportunity, relight the American Dream, because people are hungry for it. They see this town that is out of control, they look at this town, and if they visit this town, they marvel at the growth that is happening in Washington, D.C.

I challenge everybody who visits Washington to count the construction cranes they see and the explosive growth and the high-end shops that open here and the concentration of wealth and power in this town. It is a scandal to the rest of the country. I see these construction cranes here on Pennsylvania Avenue. I would like to see those construction cranes back in Pennsylvania, Mr. Speaker.

But this is a very important discussion we are having about the actions that this House is taking to relight the American economy and how it gets snuffed out in the Senate.

As we have reviewed this evening, Mr. Speaker, the House has continued to pass legislation that would move our country ahead, grow our economy, add more jobs, and increase wages and prosperity. Then there is the brick wall across the other side of the Capitol.

Nowhere is the Senate's inaction more evident than in the budgeting and appropriations process we have here in Washington, D.C. The Senate and House have together managed to pass all 12 appropriations bills and complete the appropriations process on time by September 30 only four times since 1977. It is shocking.

This House, Mr. Speaker, has been working to correct this problem. I want to recognize the hard work of the House Appropriations Committee and my colleagues from both sides of the aisle.

This year, the Appropriations Committee has already passed 11 out of the 12 appropriations bills out of committee. Seven of those bills have already passed the House here, most of them with strong bipartisan majorities.

How many bills, how many appropriations bills has the Senate passed? Zero. They have yet to pass a single one.

The Senate's failure to do its work is disappointing, but it is not surprising. That is why I introduced the Congressional Pay for Performance Act earlier this year.

The bill is simple. The House and Senate must each pass a budget and all annual appropriations bills by August 1 or have their pay withheld until the job is done. It applies that fundamental lesson that we learn in our first job: if you don't do your work, you don't get paid until you do. That is the lesson that millions of young Americans learned working their first job this summer. It is the lesson I learned on my first paper route. I didn't get paid if I didn't deliver the newspaper. It is past time for Members of Congress to live by that lesson.

Beyond the Senate's failure to execute their constitutionally prescribed job of appropriations, the House has passed, as you noted, more than 350 bills, including many jobs bills, that Senator REID allows to collect dust in the Senate. Over 98 percent of these bills have passed with bipartisan support, both Republicans and Democrats.

As of this morning, Mr. Speaker, 195 of these bills passed without opposition. House Democrats introduced 60 of these bills that now gather dust in the Senate. Again and again, the Senate refuses to act.

Mr. WOODALL. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. ROTHFUS. I am happy to yield to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. WOODALL. I may have misunderstood what you said, because what my constituents believe is that it is partisanship that has shut this down. That it is Republicans fighting with Democrats and Democrats fighting with Republicans.

We are talking about over 350 bills that are sitting in the Senate that have passed this House, that we have come together on this House, you are saying 60 of those were introduced by Democrats?

Mr. ROTHFUS. Sixty of those bills, Mr. Speaker—you look at the stack of paper that the gentleman from Georgia has with him here today—Mr. Speaker, 60 of those bills were introduced by Democrats, and yet they gather dust in the Democrat-controlled Senate.

Mr. WOODALL. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, we passed dozens of energy-related bills designed to increase production, reduce prices, add family sustaining jobs, and promote American energy independence. Bills like the Natural Gas Pipeline Permitting Reform Act, the Energy Consumers Relief Act, the Northern Route Approval Act, which is going to get the Keystone XL pipeline going, passed in May of 2013, 241–175. It has been sitting over in the Senate for 434 days.

We have passed dozens of regulatory reform bills to promote job growth and keep an out-of-touch and out-of-control Washington, D.C., bureaucracy in check. Those like the REINS Act that the gentleman from Florida mentioned. A very simple bill. If a regulatory agency puts out a regulation on the economy that is going to cost more than $50 million to implement, suppressing job growth, bring it back here for an up-or-down vote. Let's restore the constitutional responsibility for both the Senate and the House, who have that responsibility for making the law. Let us take accountability for that. If there is a regulation that merits approval, we are going to vote for it. It is called being accountable. But you can't fire these bureaucrats who come up with these regulations that have a negative impact on our economy.

We have also passed the Achieving Less Excess in Regulation and Requiring Transparency Act, known as the ALERRT Act. It is an effort to improve thoughtful consideration of the consequences of regulation.

I offered an amendment to the ALERRT Act. The amendment requires the capital bureaucrats to acknowledge whether their regulations will have a negative impact on jobs or wages in a particular industry.

Any such regulation will be subject to additional review to ensure that the benefits justify the costs to families and communities. The principle is simple: if Washington bureaucrats are going to implement rules that take wages or jobs away from hardworking Americans, they should take responsibility for and justify their decisions. It is important that regulators think through the impacts, costs, and burdens that red tape imposes on families and communities, and it is time for the Senate to come to the support of those individuals and those communities and take up the ALERRT Act.

We have passed several tax-related bills to help individuals keep more of their hard-earned money and to help small businesses add jobs and increase wages, like the Child Tax Credit Improvement Act and the Student and Family Tax Simplification Act.

We have also heard stories of people whose hours have been cut because of the 30-hour work week in the President's health care law. But the House has acted. That is why we passed the Save American Workers Act to restore the traditional 40-hour work week and help those who want the opportunity to work more hours and see their wages go up.

The Senate has to act. Time and again, Mr. Speaker, the House has acted but the Senate has not.

I really thank the gentleman from Georgia for shining a light on what is going on at this Capitol, the production that is coming out of this side of the Capitol and then hits the wall on the other side. It is time for the Senate to act, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. WOODALL. I would like to ask the gentleman if he would stay just 1 more minute. I see you are down here with three lovely young women from the next generation of Americans. When they grow up, they are going to be the leaders of this country.

You mentioned energy in your presentation. I have got to be honest with you, I didn't come to deal with those big issues that are sometimes amorphous. I came to deal with the issues that make a difference in families' lives today, tomorrow, and in the next generation.

We talk about energy, we talk about streamlining production, we talk about the Keystone pipeline, but I live in Georgia. We are not drilling any wells in Georgia. I can't tell much of a difference at the price of the pump. I don't have that many families who say: This is going to make a difference in my pocketbook, this is going to make a difference for a job right here in Atlanta, Georgia. But you come from a different part of the country.

Can you see the difference that these bills make, not from a Republican/Democrat partisan perspective, but from a real world difference, real dollars in families' pockets back home?

Mr. ROTHFUS. Absolutely, Mr. Speaker. The gentleman from Georgia notes that western Pennsylvania has a growing energy industry. We are seeing a tremendous number of jobs coming in, family sustaining jobs.

Bear in mind, Mr. Speaker, when somebody gets a job in that field and they start to get that paycheck—and every American who gets a paycheck sees this—there is some stuff that is taken out. There is a FICA charge, a Medicare tax charge, and Federal taxes.

Mr. Speaker, that is how we are paying for Social Security, that is how we are paying for Medicare. When people pay their income taxes, it is how we pay for the defense of our country. This is a dangerous world, Mr. Speaker.

We need to have an economy that is generating the kind of jobs where people can get back to work and get those salaries and wages so that when they pay taxes, they are paying for Social Security, Medicare, and veterans benefits. We have got a boom like you have never seen before, Mr. Speaker.

The gentleman from Georgia has all these bills there that show the work that this House is doing, all to help this economy get growing again.

If you want to be paying for Social Security, if you want to be paying for Medicare, if you want to be paying for veterans benefits, we have got to grow this economy at 4 percent, at 5 percent, yes, at 6 percent. So many people, Mr. Speaker, have said, that is not going to happen, we can't get there. It happened. It happened in the 1980s, it happened in the 1990s. We can do this. We are a blessed land, Mr. Speaker, and in western Pennsylvania we see that.

□ 2000

We are having a big debate right now with respect to the President's greenhouse gas emissions, and there is testimony being taken across the country, including in Pittsburgh. We have to use our resources.

Under his plan, in 2008, when the President was running for his seat, he promises, ''Electricity rates will necessarily skyrocket.''

No single person should have the authority to impose a policy on a country that would cause electricity rates to necessarily skyrocket. That is why the REINS Act is so important. That is why Senator REID has to move the REINS Act to the floor of the Senate, to have this Congress have a voice. Our Constitution has an executive branch, a legislative branch, and a judicial branch. The legislative branch is where those policy decisions should be made.

Mr. WOODALL. I am looking at the Northern Route Approval Act poster you have got behind you, and I am

looking at the ''days in the Senate'' column. It says it has been 434 days that that bill has been in the Senate.

You are a new Member in this body. I have only had a voting card for 3 years. I know it is a collaborative process, but as I look at that 434 days in the Senate, does it mean that we have sent over a proposal to expand energy production to make those family-providing jobs that you mention and the Senate didn't like our idea, and so they sent us back a different proposal, and we have dropped the ball? Is that a possibility?

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Georgia is asking questions about what is happening on the Senate side. They are simply not acting.

It was 241–175. I think the last time I counted, there are some 234 Republicans in this House. It was 241, so there are Democrats voting for this bill.

There is almost universal support for Keystone XL. The President could allow it to go forward. Thousands of jobs are in the waiting—thousands of jobs where people would be paying Social Security tax and Medicare tax and increasing the supply of North American energy being able to be refined in this country, which means American jobs refining that.

So what is happening over there in the Senate? It is not coming up. We get phone calls all the time from our constituents, and it is important that constituents call their Members of Congress, who are their employees. We are the employees of the American people. The Senators are the employees of the American people because they pay our paychecks.

Their hard-earned tax dollars are what fund the paychecks for Senators and the paychecks for the Members of this House. We are the employees of the American people.

So we welcome phone calls from our bosses, our employers out there. They need to be calling their employees in the Senate and saying: Why aren't you approving the Keystone XL pipeline? We need those jobs. Why aren't you approving the REINS Act?

We don't think one person should make the decision that would turn off the lights in this country, turn off the lights at power plants, turn off the lights in coal mines, turn off the lights in factories because the prices are going too high.

When the President said that electricity rates will necessarily skyrocket, if you are opening up a plant and you are looking at that, that is a cost. If the income doesn't exceed the cost, that factory isn't going to get built.

So there are folks across the country—entrepreneurs—who want to get things going. They want to hire people, but then they look at the cost, and they say: no, we are going to put our money elsewhere.

We need people investing in this country because that is what is going to cause this country to boom again, and look at some of the tax bills we passed out of this House, which wait in the Senate—where is the Keystone XL pipeline? Where is the Northern Route Approval Act right now?

I can't answer the question that the gentleman from Georgia asks, but I think maybe the Senators could answer that question if their bosses—the people who pay their salaries—would call them.

Mr. WOODALL. The gentleman said it so well. This isn't about one person. This isn't about one Chamber. This isn't about one part of the government. We are all in this together. Families in western Pennsylvania and families in north Georgia are in this together. We will rise or fall as a Nation together.

I go back to what you said when you first took the well. There are so many awful stories about Washington, D.C., and the way that we work together. Some of them are true, and many of them are just lore, but I believe you said—and my staff handed it to me after you said it—that about 254 of the 356 bills that are stuck in the Senate passed this House either unanimously or with more than two-thirds of the Members voting in favor of them.

I don't know everything about western Pennsylvania, but I know you don't get elected to Congress there because you are interested in propounding wild views that make no difference to people. You get elected there because you care about people and you want to do the things that matter. You know who the boss is, and it is those folks back home.

When I think that about this stack of bills, it would be so easy for people to dismiss it as: well, those are those crazy Republican ideas, and this is just some sort of political stunt.

How many times have we heard that it is a political stunt? Why are those guys talking about those bills? It is because of what you said. Sixty of these bills introduced by Democrats passed this Chamber, and 254 of these bills stuck in the Senate passed with two-thirds of us coming together—or more—to send them over to the Senate.

We have an obligation to work together. The answer to the question is that, after 434 days, the Senate hasn't said no. The Senate hasn't said: we have a better idea, so we will send this back to you. The Senate didn't say: you are focused on the wrong pathway; let's look at a different route approval.

The Senate did nothing.

Mr. ROTHFUS. You raise a good point because the way the process is supposed to work, one side of our Capitol—the House—will pass the bill or maybe the Senate will pass a bill, and then there might be a slightly different bill passed out of the other Chamber, and then the two sides would come together in a conference, and there would be some negotiating. There is some compromise going on.

Prior to coming to Congress, I had a job of negotiating contracts. Your client would tell you when you go into that negotiating room: whatever you do, make sure you get A and B into that contract.

So you know what your marching orders are, but you understand the other side has come in, and they have been told by their client: make sure you get C and D in that contract, whatever you do.

The art is that the two of you get together and you negotiate. You go back and forth. Are you going to get 100 percent? You never do. That is negotiating. That is life, but here, we passed these bills. We are waiting to negotiate. They are not even acting.

I go back to the appropriations process, which is fundamentally broken. Since 1977, you have only four times that the House and the Senate got this job done by September 30. That is a scandal.

Everybody in this country knows that April 15 is an important date. You have got to pay your taxes that day. You can't call the IRS and say: Hey, can I get a continuing resolution on that? Can I have 3 weeks?

The gentleman from Georgia pointed out that I have two of my young children with me. We know that the Tuesday before Labor Day, school starts. Am I supposed to able to call the principal and say: hey, we're not ready? Can I have a continuing resolution on that summer, so we can have 3 more weeks to get ready?

It shouldn't happen. The spending bills will be passed, whether it is through a continuing resolution that will extend it until December or January or February or March. Why can't it get done by September 30? It is an act of the will.

If the other side of the Congress—the Senate—hasn't passed any, where can you even begin to have that negotiation between the two different ideas and what is in those bills? We would love to negotiate with Senator REID.

We would love to negotiate. In fact, it has worked. I think you pointed out the SKILLS Act which, again, the House passed some 16 months ago. It took a while for the Senate to get going. It finally did. We passed the Water Resources Reform and Development Act last summer. We finally got it to the Senate and got together. It got done.

We passed a temporary patch for the highway trust fund that we sent over to the Senate. The Senate had some other ideas, so they are making some changes, but this is the process that is supposed to work. One House moves; the other House moves. They are not even moving, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. WOODALL. I think about those seven appropriations bills you talked about. I want to remember the numbers. We have gotten 12 out of committee. We passed seven on the floor of the House. We have sent those over to the Senate.

Again, I don't know if the Senate is going to take our ideas or reject our

ideas or come up with their own ideas, but they have done none of those things. They haven't taken our ideas, they haven't rejected our ideas, and they promulgated absolutely no ideas of their own.

I don't enjoy being down here. This is not #kickthesenate. This is #StuckInTheSenate. It is not that there is not a way forward. You have described the way forward. It is not all my way. It is not all your way. It is not all anyone's way. It is a negotiated pathway forward.

When I ran for Congress, that is what I expected. When my constituents sent me here, that is what they expected.

Mr. ROTHFUS. It isn't my way or the highway, but if you have one part of this Congress—the Senate—not even acting, what is the communication there? It is no way.

We invite the Senate to act. We invite the Senate to come and start to talk about the Keystone XL pipeline and the thousands of jobs that are waiting, talk about the REINS Act, talk about the ALERRT Act to require the bureaucrats in this wealthy and powerful Capitol to take a look at the regulations that they are putting out and making an assessment whether those regulations are going to hurt wages or jobs.

I talk to people who are capped at 29½ hours. They can't get above 30 hours, Mr. Speaker, so we passed legislation that, again, sits in the Senate. We need to boom this economy again. That is how you pay for the critical programs that we have.

We have to use the God-given resources we have in this country—yes, prudently, smartly, and in a responsible way. There are ways to do that.

We have made tremendous progress in this country over the last 50 years. I am from Pittsburgh, and they talk about, back in the day, that you had to bring two shirts to work because, by noon, your shirt would be dirty.

We are making tremendous progress with the environment. I have another bill that I am trying to get this House to move, so we can send it over to the Senate to help that progress continue, called the SENSE Act, H.R. 3138. Again, I hope to get this House to move it, but we have to get the Senate to act.

Mr. WOODALL. I thank my friend for focusing on those commonsense points.

Again, when I open up the newspaper, what I hear is it is about partisan nonsense and it is about election-year politics. When we are talking about over 350 bills and we are talking about 60 of those bills being introduced by Democrats, but passed with Democrat and Republican support here in the House, when we are talking about 250 of those bills being passed with more than a two-thirds vote—many of those unanimously—what it tells me is we are not in the business of trying to make a point.

We are in the business of trying to make a difference, and if we had a willing partner in the Senate, we could absolutely make that difference.

I yield to my friend from Indiana, a former secretary of State, which has you in the executive side of things. You actually had to be responsible for getting things done. I guess that is my frustration with the Senate.

I just need somebody to stand up and be a partner and take responsibility for moving a few of these things forward, trying to make a difference in people's lives.

□ 2015

Mr. ROKITA. I thank the gentleman for yielding. I thank the gentleman for organizing this here tonight.

I think the gentleman is exactly right. We need leadership. Leaders are supposed to lead. When you look at what the gentleman rightly put here on the House floor in terms of the stack of work that sits in HARRY REID's—the Senate majority leader's—in-box, you realize what leadership isn't, and that is a real problem.

If my constituents, Mr. Speaker, saw that pile in my in-box, I don't know how much longer I would last. I wonder what the citizens and voters and taxpayers of Nevada think at this point.

Mr. Speaker, as chairman of the Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education, I rise today to discuss with my colleagues the importance of improving education in our country.

This House has done excellent work in that regard. We understand here in the House—and parents, teachers, and school administrators are all too aware—that the current state of our education system threatens the American Dream for the current and future generations of students.

I know that we want to help create a better world and the possibility of a better life for our young students. Leaving the world in better shape than we found it is as much a part of our American exceptionalism as is the freedom we enjoy that allows us to pursue the American Dream.

To our credit, frankly, when American citizens see what is not being done in the Senate, they can look to the House for some great things that have been accomplished in terms of righting what is wrong on education.

Right now, sadly, we are not faring well on the international education stage. Our children are not reading at grade level, while math and science performance by U.S. students trails far beyond that of our counterparts in other developed countries. We are not competing to win in a 21st century world.

The comical irony of that—if it weren't just so plain sad—would be that the American education system is failing the students that its most passionate advocates claim to want to help. Sure, you can argue that somehow while we aren't universally successful, our best and brightest rival any in the world, and our leading institutions will continue to provide the high-quality instruction that will keep us afloat, but I would say to the gentleman of Georgia, Mr. Speaker, that the America I know, the America that I believe in—the America that my constituents and that, I think, Americans across the country believe in—doesn't include a two-tiered system. We want everyone to have an equal opportunity. We want everyone to only be limited by the capacity of their dreams.

At the subcommittee level, in what we call K–12 education and in a more broad sense on the Education and the Workforce Committee and then on the floor of the House, we have done some things to right that ship, as I explained.

One of those bills that passed the House was H.R. 10, the Success and Opportunity through Quality Charter Schools Act. This was a bipartisan bill. It passed on 5–9-14, just this year. The vote tally, Mr. Speaker, was 360–45. It has been in the Senate for 82 days. 360–45 is a huge bipartisan victory. It is one of the biggest bipartisan victories we have had on the floor of the House.

This is a charter school bill. It is school choice. I believe charter schools—like a majority of the people on the floor of this House believe—play a critical role in creating educational options for all children. Charter schools encompass two key principles American families want from our Nation's education system: choice and flexibility.

These innovative institutions will empower parents to play a more active role in their children's educations, open doors for teachers to pioneer fresh teaching methods, encourage State and local innovation, and help students escape poor-performing schools.

Why do we want to continue to shackle students to poor-performing schools and give them no choice and take away that equal opportunity for them to be successful? This bill, Mr. Speaker, did it. This bill now sits in HARRY REID's in-box.

Across the Nation, charter schools are leading the way in innovation and in improving education outcomes. In my home State of Indiana, for example, the Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School in Indianapolis—which serves a predominantly low-income and minority student body—expects every student, no matter his or her background or circumstances, to have a college acceptance letter upon graduation.

No matter his or her background or circumstances, one has to have a college acceptance letter upon graduation. The school's rigorous curriculum and laser focus on preparing students for higher education has helped 100 percent of its students to date gain acceptance into college. This bill sits, awaiting action in the Senate. It is not leadership.

Mr. WOODALL. I would just like to ask my friend because, in serving on the committee, you have an insight that most of us don't have.

I am looking at those numbers, at 360 Members of this House voting ''yes.''

That is more than you need to pass a constitutional amendment, for Pete's sakes.

Mr. ROKITA. That is right.

Mr. WOODALL. That is about as close to unanimous as we generally get. I am looking, and it hasn't been at the Senate for 1 week or 2 weeks. It has been there for almost 3 months so far.

What have they said? Have they said, We have got a better idea, and they have sent back an alternative to the committee? What have you heard?

Mr. ROKITA. I would love at this point—I think we all would—to hear them say: We have a better idea, we are going to take it up, and we will show you.

I would take that as progress, sir. This is what we have heard: silence.

Mr. WOODALL. These are not partisan issues. Education is not a partisan issue. Children are not partisan issues. We have votes with 360 Members of this body. Again, this is the hyperpartisan House—so the news tells me—and two bills right there in front of you are making a difference in people's lives. They could make that difference today, and yet the Senate does nothing.

I have been preaching the ''Stuck in the Senate'' hashtag message, I will say to my friend, because I still believe. I told folks when we started this hour tonight that this is a good news/bad news hour. The good news is I am sitting on top of a stack of 356 bills that this House has passed in a bipartisan way, and the bad news is that they are stuck in the Senate.

I believe that perhaps you and I, as young Congressmen, can't move the Senate, but I believe the American people still can move the Senate.

Mr. ROKITA. I think the gentleman is exactly right, if the American people show the Senate that the American people care as we know they do. This is still the home of the free. This is still an open republic, and it is still we, the people, who are in charge. We can make the change happen if we show the ''leaders'' of this country that we care.

Mr. WOODALL. It is a ''we'' question. I thank my friend. There are folks who get wrapped up in the partisan issues of the day, and there are those folks who have committed themselves to finding willing partners wherever those partners may be.

What I have seen of you in our 3 years of working together is that you came here to do things that mattered, and whoever you have to partner with and however late you have to work and however early you have to get up—whatever you have to do—if this job is worth doing, it is because it is making a difference in people's lives, and I am grateful to you for that.

It may be a Midwestern values night. I have got the gentleman from Indiana, and I have been joined by a gentleman from Illinois, who has also been a true champion, Mr. Speaker. You didn't have the great pleasure of coming in with this big freshman class of 2010, but what was so neat about it to me was that, in showing up to freshman orientation, I met these two guys for the very first time, and I met my new Democratic colleagues for the very first time.

Truthfully, when we talked about why we came here, I couldn't tell the difference between the two because the American people sent a crowd of folks here to do the things that mattered, and we have partnered to do those.

The gentleman from Illinois is one of those great partners, and I would be happy to yield.

Mr. HULTGREN. Thank you so much. I want to thank my good friend from Georgia for hosting this hour.

It is so important to talk about what really matters to people—our constituents, hardworking families—who are just trying to make it through, to get by, and to have hope for a bright future.

Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight, troubled over a recent email I received from a constituent of mine. Jessica from Lake in the Hills in Illinois wrote me with concern about her current economic condition.

She is a single mother with two teenagers, but like many Americans, she recently lost her job amidst the slow economic recovery. Of course, she is greatly concerned about providing for her children, now that her main source of income has dried up.

As Gallup recently confirmed, many Americans like Jessica are having to spend more on items they have to buy and less on items they choose to buy. This mandatory spending is squeezing out everything else in their budgets.

The rising costs of basic necessities, like groceries, gas, and utilities for middle class families like Jessica's, smothers them as the cost of day-to-day living goes up and up. At the end of the month, there is little left over for them to choose to buy something for their homes, for their families, or for themselves.

This is heartbreaking and frustrating because the House has passed legislation to lower energy prices, create jobs, improve work-life balance, and do many other things to help people.

Energy prices are an ever-present concern for Americans who drive their kids to school, commute to their jobs, cool their homes, run their manufacturing plants, or harvest their crops.

The House passed Lowering Gasoline Prices to Fuel an America That Works Act, and it would do just that, cut prices at the pump by opening new Federal lands to energy development. The Small Business Capital Access and Job Preservation Act would grow Main Street jobs by reducing regulatory burdens on American businesses.

The Working Families Flexibility Act would help workers better manage their work-life balance. That is especially crucial for families like Jessica's who are stretched thin between caring for their families and working just to earn a living.

The House has also acted on behalf of veterans, and I am so proud of this. When our servicemen and -women return home, the last thing they should have to worry about is unemployment.

It is our duty in Congress to ensure there are jobs available for our veterans, but the employer mandate in the President's health care law has discouraged many small businesses from hiring more workers at a time when our economy is still struggling to recover.

H.R. 3474, the Hire More Heroes Act, is commonsense legislation that relieves the employer mandate burden on businesses that want to hire veterans.

It is just astounding to me that the Senate still refuses to take up this legislation that would help our veterans. Still, I do have hope. I have hope that we can work across the aisle to help address the problems of the middle class.

That is what the American people sent us here to do. Just this month, the House and Senate passed and the President signed H.R. 803, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, or the SKILLS Act, which helps reform and modernize our Federal jobs training programs.

By 2022, our country will lack millions of skilled workers with degrees beyond high school, such as paralegals, welders, radiology technicians, and police officers. Federally funded job training programs help Americans of all working ages gain the knowledge and skills necessary to reenter the workforce, retrain for new jobs, or increase their value to their current employers.

When far more people in my home State of Illinois have given up looking for work and have left the workforce than have found new jobs, our communities need the tools necessary to match available jobs with available and trained workers.

H.R. 803 will help put local workforce investment boards in the driver's seat to tailor their services to fill the local jobs of the 21st century. It also streamlines a confusing maze of programs and ensures the business community's voice is heard, putting businesses above bureaucrats.

At the same time, it ensures that we have strong accountability over the use of taxpayer dollars. H.R. 803 is a good example—when regular order is followed and both sides agree to talk and work out their differences—that the House can pass important legislation.

We have also passed the Permanent Internet Tax Freedom Act, a bill I cosponsored, which permanently prevents States and local governments from taxing Internet services. Taxing the on-ramp to the Internet is just bad policy.

It hurts lower income families the most and penalizes Americans for communicating with family or for looking for a job online. Again, this bill passed with strong bipartisan support.

The Science Committee recently passed the RAMI Act, which will help

the strong manufacturing base we have in Illinois and others across the country. The bill creates a network of nationwide regional institutes, each specializing in the production of a unique technology material or process relevant to advanced manufacturing.

Small- and mid-sized manufacturers can expand their research and development capabilities and train an advanced manufacturing workforce.

The Senate also introduced a companion bill, and I trust the RAMI Act will become law soon. When it does come down to it, I truly believe we can all agree on about 80 percent of the issues facing this Nation.

Building relationships and working on common goals can help us address the other 20 percent without being divisive.

□ 2030

But where does this leave middle class families right now? They are still finding their paychecks don't go as far as they used to go. Energy prices are still high, and groceries aren't getting any cheaper.

More than 350 bills are stuck in the Senate. Many of those would help Americans get back on their feet again. We don't need political posturing. We need real solutions for hardworking individuals and families. Let's help families like Jessica's and get these bills passed through the Senate now.

Mr. WOODALL. I thank my friend. It is exactly that commitment to working together to make a difference that I think folks long for in this place. And it is exactly what you have there, H.R. 803, the Workplace Innovation Act. It is true. That is one of our success stories.

But you first came to the floor to support that in March of 2013. The reason we are able to call this a success is because the Senate finally got around to dealing with it in June of 2014—over a year. It could have been making a difference in people's lives.

I am thrilled that now we are making that difference, but we wasted a year. And the family that you talked about, a family struggling to try to decide what tomorrow is going to look like, doesn't have a year to wait.

The Internet Tax Freedom bill you discussed just came out of this body this summer. That is something the Senate could take up immediately. As you said, it came out of here with wild bipartisan support. It could begin to make a difference tomorrow—tomorrow.

I am happy to yield to my friend.

Mr. HULTGREN. I agree with you. And families like Jessica's can't afford to wait any longer. They want help. They are not looking for something to be given to them. They are just looking for opportunity. They are looking for hope, and that is the legislation that we have passed, any legislation like this that just makes sense.

As I travel around my district, it is in the western suburbs of Chicago. As I travel around and talk to job creators, small businesses, entrepreneurs, people who are starting up small businesses or want to start up small businesses, I ask them over and over again—I would love for them to hire 20 more people, but I ask: What would it take for you to hire one more person, just one more person? And over and over again it is common themes of: deal with the things that are causing us to struggle. They are convinced they can continue to make a great product, provide a great service, serve their customers, beat all competition all throughout the world if they can just have an opportunity, if government can get out of the way.

Their fear is uncertainty that is coming out of Washington, D.C., uncertainty under high taxes, increase of taxes and different things, so much regulation that is out there, and now the high cost of health care, uncertainty there as well.

We have taken some commonsense steps, as my good friend from Georgia has pointed out so well. So many of these votes have been strong, bipartisan votes, people on both sides of the aisle working together, cosponsors on both sides of the aisle getting this done, oftentimes with well over 300 votes, and yet it languishes over in the Senate. 356 bills stuck in the Senate.

It is about time that we get that moving. Families like Jessica's, so many other families across this Nation want that help, want us to get out of the way, want the Senate to act, move things forward, and have that hope and opportunity once again.

I thank my good friend from Georgia.

Mr. WOODALL. I thank my friend. He is such a great leader. Bringing voices together is that skill set that sometimes this institution lacks, and he has it in spades.

As I close tonight, Mr. Speaker, I just want to make it clear, this isn't a partisan stunt. This isn't Republican machinations. 356 bills sit in the Senate right now that, if the Senate moved them, could begin to make a difference in the lives of American families.

I want to tell you about those bills: 98 percent of them passed with a bipartisan vote. 98 percent of these bills passed with a bipartisan vote. 254 of these bills passed with either no opposition or two-thirds support. Almost 200, no opposition at all; 60 introduced by my Democratic colleagues.

Making a difference for America is not a partisan exercise, Mr. Speaker, but it is a sacred trust. I am so proud of this House for moving forward on these bills to make a difference. I know that we can work together to encourage HARRY REID to do the same. I know our friends across the country, the bosses of the United States Senate, can encourage the Senate to do the same.

This country is thirsty for leadership. I am proud of my colleagues on both sides of the House for providing it. I look forward to partnering with the Senate and the President to move these bills into that difference-making position for those families across this country.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

EXPORT-IMPORT BANK REAUTHORIZATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS) for 30 minutes.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, today we have Democrats on the Financial Services Committee here where we have gathered on the House floor to talk about the Export-Import Bank, which supports hundreds of thousands of jobs and levels the playing field so that American businesses, large and small, can compete successfully in the global markets.

Tomorrow, Speaker BOEHNER and the Republican leadership will leave town for a 5-week congressional recess, and legislation to renew the Export-Import Bank hasn't even seen a vote in our committee. When we return in September, there will be just 10 legislative days to renew the bank before its charter lapses on September 30.

This ideological push to abolish the Ex-Im Bank is an irrational crusade to destroy an agency that supports hundreds of thousands of jobs and propels economic recovery without costing taxpayers a dime. The result could be the end of an institution that, over the past 5 years, has supported 1.2 million private sector American jobs, and over 200,000 jobs last year alone.

Additionally, the Ex-Im Bank reduced our deficit by returning over $1 billion to taxpayers last year alone through interest and fees. Still, critics of the bank say it is a risk to taxpayers, that it picks winners and losers, and that it interferes in the free market and, therefore, creates a less efficient economy. For all of those reasons, it should be abolished, they say.

But first, let me say, this notion that there is such a thing as pure free enterprise, that if left to its own devices would flourish with total efficiency and self-discipline and allocate resources and spread risk in such a way that accrues to the benefit of everyone in society, this notion of just pure free enterprise simply doesn't exist.

In fact, I thought one of the lessons we learned from the recent financial crisis is that markets must be embedded in systems of governance. The idea that markets are self-correcting, many of us thought, had received a mortal blow.

Regardless of the outcome, Republicans have already created uncertainty for thousands of American companies trying to compete against businesses in China, Korea, and across Europe, all of which have their own version of the Ex-Im Bank.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to enter into the RECORD a letter from Mr. Steve Wilburn, who is the CEO of the

green energy company FirmGreen, who lost $57 million in contracts because of uncertainty surrounding the future of the Ex-Im Bank.

At this time, and before us sharing this information with you, I would like to yield to the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. BEATTY).

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, thank you to Ranking Member Congresswoman MAXINE WATERS.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the Export-Import Bank and current legislation, H.R. 4950, to reauthorize the bank introduced by my freshman colleague and fellow Financial Services Committee member, Congressman HECK from Washington.

The Export-Import Bank has been helping United States businesses of all sizes sell their products around the world for over 80 years. But despite the bank's proven track record of creating jobs, helping American businesses compete globally, and reducing the Federal deficit, a faction of House Republicans want to close the door of this important Federal agency forever.

Mr. Speaker, shutting down the Export-Import Bank makes no sense to me, and it makes no sense to my constituents. In my congressional district, Ohio's Third, 10 companies, including six small businesses, have grown because of the Export-Import Bank. These businesses have been able to expand sales internationally and create jobs locally because of the Export-Import Bank.

Earlier this month I received a letter from the CEO of Yenkin-Majestic Paint, a manufacturer in my district. In his letter, he writes: ''Normally we would not write in context of Washington crosscurrents about the bank. However, it would be very unfortunate if the Congress cannot reach a responsible bipartisan reauthorization of this work to encourage commerce for American-made products abroad and to help expand U.S. employment from sales beyond what is available on the home front.''

Mr. Speaker, this is just one of many letters I have received from affected constituents.

I have also heard from a young man who works at International Risk Consultants, a Columbus-based company that provides guidance to small businesses to export internationally. He writes: ''The Ex-Im Bank offers trade finance solutions that work for small businesses that cannot find alternatives in the private market.''

He closes his letter in this way, I think most telling: ''Perhaps the most devastating effect of not reauthorizing the Ex-Im Bank will be visited upon the many firms that never began exporting but would, if they were introduced to Ex-Im Bank solutions.''

Mr. Speaker, Congress should not allow an extreme faction of the Republican Conference to execute an ill-conceived and destructive plan to close Export-Import Bank. My constituents deserve better. Ohioans deserve better, and the American people deserve better.

I urge the House Republican leadership to bring H.R. 4950, a bill with over 200 cosponsors, to the floor so we can keep the Export-Import Bank operating and, more importantly, keep Americans working.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material in the RECORD on the topic of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker and Members, I will read into the RECORD a letter from Steve Wilburn, CEO of the green energy company FirmGreen, who lost a $57 million contract because of uncertainty surrounding the future of the Ex-Im Bank. I will read you excerpts from his letter.

Mr. Wilburn attended the Ex-Im Bank panel I organized in April, and last month we invited him back to be one of our Democratic witnesses at a House Financial Services Committee hearing on the Ex-Im Bank. He is among the best witnesses we have ever had at a hearing.

In his letter, Mr. Wilburn explains that FirmGreen's export potential has been directly affected by the uncertainty of reauthorization of Ex-Im Bank U.S. and the aggressive financial terms offered by the Korean Ex-Im Bank.

Attached to his letter is another letter from a company in the Philippines, Green Energy Solutions, informing him that his business lost a $57 million contract. The letter begins: ''Dear Mr. Wilburn, in view of the uncertainty of the reauthorization of the Ex-Im Bank and project finance structure you proposed have become problematic. We have made the decision in May, this year not to proceed with your project offering.''

□ 2045

Mr. Wilburn goes on to say: ''In summation, as a combat-decorated veteran, small business owner, job creator, exporter, and concerned citizen, I believe we should not unilaterally disarm and abandon the very governmental agency that allows U.S. manufacturers and other U.S. exporters to fairly compete on the world's trading stage.''

Mr. Speaker and Members, the main criticism of the bank that I would like to discuss right now is the assertion that the bank is the embodiment of corporate welfare, benefiting a handful of large companies, which they claim represents crony capitalism.

Last April, I held a panel on the Ex-Im Bank which included a number of small business owners from across the country. They came here to Washington to discuss their work with the bank and how the bank helped their companies compete in the global marketplace. Every one of those panel members were extraordinarily decent people, hardworking business owners who create jobs and pay taxes and have families and a civic sense of duty. And this is why I am so offended by this label of ''crony capitalists'' that critics like to attach to users of the bank.

Those of us who know what it is like to live behind a label understand how they work. Once you are able to put a label on something or to someone and it sticks, then you could be done with them. And if enough people can be convinced that customers of the Ex-Im Bank are crony capitalists, well, there is nothing left to do but get rid of them.

It is so important to note that while a good amount of the bank's support goes to large companies, the vast majority of Ex-Im transactions—nearly 90 percent—help small businesses. In fact, if the Ex-Im Bank were abolished today, it would affect small- and medium-sized businesses just as much, or more, as large exporters—perhaps more, given the distinct challenges and risks small businesses face when looking to export.

Moreover, large U.S. exporters that benefit from high dollar values of Ex-Im financing also have large domestic supply chains which consists largely of small- and medium-sized businesses that benefit indirectly but in very important ways from Ex-Im support.

At a later time, I will be entering into the RECORD excerpts from Brek Manufacturing and Hansen Engineering.

This letter is from Mr. Greg Lay, vice president of Hansen Engineering. I will read this letter first from Hansen Engineering:

> Hansen Engineering company is one of many small businesses in the South Bay area of Los Angeles, California, that is dependent on Boeing contracts to support the business. Ninety percent of our contracts support Boeing aircraft, either directly or indirectly, through our prime aerospace companies throughout the world. My company staffs approximately 60 employees who live in the South Bay and surrounding areas and depend upon the support of Boeing for the well-being of their families.
>
> Without the reauthorization of Ex-Im Bank, it would be impossible for us to have a big impact on the health of our businesses and its employees and their families.

Next we have a letter from Brek Manufacturing:

> Brek Manufacturing company is a small business in California with 170 employees who have a critical interest in foreign sales of Boeing commercial aircraft. The Export-Import Bank plays an important role as an intermediary in the sale of these aircraft.
>
> This letter is to express our support for the Ex-Im Bank, as it is key to securing additional sales of Boeing commercial aircraft.

He goes on to say:

> Our representatives who support the military should also be concerned with the Ex-Im Bank because of the role it plays in supporting jobs and companies like ours, both large and small across the country.

He further states:

We supply critical aircraft structural components which are key to successful, safe air transport and air defense. There are many others like us who represent thousands of high-skilled and well-paying positions with good benefits.

Please express our support for the Ex-Im Bank to your colleagues. We are counting on them to do the right thing and support American manufacturing jobs.

At this time, I would like to yield to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HECK) who is a leader with the bill that would reauthorize the Ex-Im Bank, if we could get the support from the opposite side of the aisle that we need.

Mr. HECK of Washington. I thank the ranking member of the committee very much.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to offer four elegant, simple, straightforward reasons why it is so critically important that the U.S. Congress reauthorize the Export-Import Bank prior to its expiration on October 1, and they are simply as follows: the Export-Import Bank creates jobs; it helps small businesses; it promotes fiscal responsibility; and it advances economic growth.

With respect to jobs, it has already been cited that in the last 5 years alone, the Export-Import Bank is responsible for the creation of over a million jobs, 205,000 jobs in just the last year.

But here is what has not been said: export-related jobs in America pay 13 to 18 percent more than non-export jobs. So it doesn't just create jobs; it creates good jobs. And it helps small businesses. Nearly 90 percent of all transactions of the Export-Import Bank are with small businesses. And to put a fine point on that, last year, it was 3,413 small businesses, businesses like Pexco in Fife, Washington, which makes traffic signs to promote safety during construction. Pexco recently sold $125,000—a small order by any measure—to the Netherlands, I think it was. Only one entity would guarantee payment because no one else could collect across international borders. And that entity, of course, was the Export-Import Bank.

Stac, another veteran-owned business in Sumner, Washington, with eight employees, they do exporting. They are going to hire three new employees on the basis of their international sales. But do you know what is incredibly frustrating for somebody who comes from the private sector? It is, frankly, the woeful deficiency in understanding, because the small business support that the Export-Import Bank provides does not stop with direct loans and loan guarantees to small businesses because big businesses buy goods and services from small businesses as well.

The greatest airplane maker in the world, Boeing airplanes, uses 15,000 businesses in their supply chain, and 6,600 of them are small businesses.

I was recently on an Alaska flight from Sea-Tac to National Airport in Washington, D.C., and a friend of mine named Eric Hahn, who works at General Plastics in south Takoma, was sitting a couple seats behind me. As everybody was gathering on the plane and shoving their luggage up above and getting seated, Eric jumped up, and he said, ''Denny, do you see this? Do you see this?'' And he was pointing at the plastic between the two overhead bins. He said, ''We made that. We made that.'' General Plastics has 185 employees, another small business.

The Export-Import Bank promotes fiscal responsibility. It has been more than a generation since there was any red penny supporting or subsidizing the Export-Import Bank, in the wake of reforms adopted during the Reagan years. Indeed, last October, more than $1 billion transferred to the U.S. Treasury. If we deauthorize the Export-Import Bank, our deficit is going up. Who wants that to happen? And finally, the Export-Import Bank promotes economic growth.

Let me give you a series of facts. We cannot change these facts by wishing them away. Fact number one: 95 percent of the consumers in the world live outside our borders—95 percent-plus, actually. Another fact: since 1980, global trade has increased something like fivefold—fivefold. And let me give you another fact: if we in America want to keep our middle class, we had better learn how to sell to the growing middle class throughout the world. And the Export-Import Bank is an outstanding tool to do that.

You know, America's economy is projected to grow by only about 2.4 percent a year over the next 10 years. And do you know what the shame of that is? The shame of that is, it is not fast enough to absorb even the kids coming out of high schools and postsecondary education and colleges. We simply have to grow this economy faster. And there is no better way than to participate in the exploding global economy.

Every developed nation on the face of the planet has an export credit authority. And, in fact, about 60 in all, theirs are larger than ours either in absolute dollars or in terms of a percentage of their gross domestic product. Why? Why would we unilaterally disarm? Why would we unilaterally disarm?

Finally, let me say this. Right now, tonight, as we sit, as we speak, the people of China are pouring billions of dollars into the development of a commercial aircraft. They call it the C–919. They say it will be available for sale within 2 years. Frankly, I think it is going to be longer than that. It will be 3 or 4 or 5 years. But whenever it is, they are going to create even more fierce competition for an industry that is a bulwark of America's manufacturing base, a bulwark. And what about China's export credit authority? It is six times larger in absolute dollars than America's. And as a percentage of GDP, it is 35 times larger.

So I ask the Members of the House, let us not wake up 63 days from now with no export credit authority. This is the 16th time, by my count, we have reauthorized the bank. Almost every time by virtually unanimous support. And there are more than 300 votes on this floor to pass it, if they will bring it to a vote.

In the name of jobs, in the name of small businesses, in the name of fiscal responsibility, and in the name of economic growth, let us reauthorize the Export-Import Bank.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. AL GREEN), and I thank him for the leadership and the support that he has shown for the Export-Import Bank.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. I thank you, Madam Ranking Member of the full committee. I am exceedingly proud to be a part of this effort. And I want to you know that when we succeed, it will be due in no small part to the energy that you have provided to help us get this legislation through.

I would also like to thank the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HECK) for H.R. 4950, an outstanding piece of legislation. It extends the Export-Import Bank for 7 years, and it will increase the cap to $175 billion. I think it is an outstanding piece of legislation. And, of course, I am one of the persons who is supporting it.

Mr. Speaker, let me start by indicating that the Export-Import Bank is not one of the too big to fail institutions. It wasn't involved in the credit default swaps. It wasn't involved with derivatives. It wasn't involved with no-doc loans. It wasn't involved in all of these exotic products that nearly caused the collapse of the economy.

If the truth be told, the Export-Import Bank was one of the reasons why the economy was able to survive. It has been thriving. It has done well. It pays for itself by virtue of the loans that it makes, by virtue of the fees that it collects, by virtue of the products that it insures. The Export-Import Bank makes good sense.

I find no businesspeople in my community who are in opposition to the Export-Import Bank. It is not too big to fail, and it should not be too small to save. We ought to do what we have done 16 times in the previous 80 years, and that is, reauthorize the Export-Import Bank in a clean bill, and do it with very little fanfare.

Unfortunately, that is not the circumstance that we confront presently. Unfortunately, there are persons who believe that the Export-Import Bank no longer serves a useful purpose.

Well, it serves a useful purpose for the people in my district. And the facts speak for themselves. In my district, between 2007 and 2013, in the Ninth Congressional District, we had a total of 88 export-importers.

□ 2100

We had 39 small businesses, 13 minority-owned businesses, and four women-owned businesses, and we are proud of these businesses that are owned by women because we still contend that when women succeed, America succeeds. The Export-Import Bank is on the agenda to help women succeed.

I would add that there are businesses that have indicated that they are supportive. I have a letter from a company in Houston, the style of it is the South Coast Products Company, and I just shall read an excerpt from their letter. I have many letters to read, but I shall pick a few and just read excerpts.

This one reads—and it is addressed to the Honorable MAXINE WATERS:

> We are a small manufacturer in Texas that exports thread and valve lubricants primarily to the oil and gas industry. We have used Export-Import Banks' export credit insurance for 13 years. During that time, our export business has grown by a factor of 15 because of the security offered by our policy with Export-Import.

I shall go to the last paragraph which reads, ''Please emphasize to your colleagues that Ex-Im Bank is not corporate welfare''—this is a business, a business that has written this to us—''or a charity of any kind. It facilitates U.S. exports, especially for small businesses like us, while supporting itself. Please do not let them put our livelihoods on the chopping block for their own political gain.''

This is from South Coast Products, a Texas business.

I would also like to read a letter from the Greater Houston Partnership. The Greater Houston Partnership is the preeminent chamber of commerce in my area. It is called the partnership because we do things differently in Texas, and the partnership has also joined in this letter by a good many other entities that I shall name after having read an excerpt from this letter.

It reads:

> The Houston region continues to enjoy strong economic growth driven in large part by the Export-Import Bank. In order to keep momentum, it is crucial that Congress supports tools encouraging businesses to expand into new markets and create new jobs. The Export-Import Bank of the United States is one of these tools, and we ask that you support this legislation.

The letter is addressed to me.

It goes on to add:

> Small- and medium-sized businesses in our region also benefit directly from Export-Import. Small businesses account for nearly 85 percent of Ex-Im Bank's transactions; further, these transaction figures do not include the tens of thousands of small- and medium-sized businesses that supply goods and services to large exporters using the bank.

This is signed by the Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership, the Baytown Chamber of Commerce, the Brenham/Washington County Chamber of Commerce, the Clear Lake Chamber of Commerce, the Greater Beaumont Chamber of Commerce, the Greater Tomball Area Chamber of Commerce, the Houston East End Chamber of Commerce, the Houston Northwest Chamber of Commerce, Lake Houston Area Chamber of Commerce, League City Chamber of Commerce, Pearland Chamber of Commerce, West Chambers County Chamber of Commerce, and the Wharton Chamber of Commerce.

I close simply with these words: businesses are supportive of the Ex-Im Bank. People understand the necessity for it. We but only need to have a vote on it to get it continued.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, Members, you have heard about businesses in any number of districts that receive the support from the Ex-Im Bank.

I would like to read to you excerpts from a letter from Chairman HENSARLING's district. This is from Fritz-Pak, and this letter is about how the Ex-Im Bank helped save his business.

His name is Gabriel Ojeda, president of Fritz-Pak Corporation, and this is the excerpt I would like to read:

> During the past 5 years, we have grown our international sales from 15 percent to over 35 percent of our business. We now have major trading partners in over 30 different countries, including Brazil, Russia, India, and Taiwan. Most recently, we exhibited our products at Bauma International Trade Fair in Munich, Germany.
>
> So what is Fritz-Pak Corporation today? We are an American manufacturer of the best concrete admixtures in the world, and we sell them as far as Yellowknife, Canada, and as far south as Wellington, New Zealand. We may be small, but we think big. In an age where everything seems to be made someplace else, we are thriving here in the USA and in no small part due to the services provided by Ex-Im Bank.

Lastly, I would like to read excerpts from Mr. Mike Boyle of BES&T in New Hampshire. The CEO and president of BES&T is Mr. Michael Boyle, and he sent us a very good letter last week.

Mr. Speaker, at a later time, we will enter into the RECORD these letters that we are not able to read this evening. I thank you, and I yield back the balance of my time.

THE IMPACT OF A POROUS BORDER

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. JOYCE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. SCHWEIKERT) for 30 minutes.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Mr. Speaker, one of my reasons for coming and taking some of this time this evening was around a frustration I have had, and I think this may be for a lot of us who are from a border State, who have been watching both the press and a lot of our brothers and sisters around this place speechify about immigration, about the border crisis, and what is happening. If you are actually from Arizona, this isn't a new issue for us. We have been bathing and living this for decades now.

I had that moment this last week, Mr. Speaker, where I realized maybe the awareness in this body is starting to change to understand the impact of a porous border and what it means to communities.

When I had one of my friends here from the Midwest come up to me and ask me a number of questions because he had held a townhall—and it was the first time he had had to face barrages of questions about immigration, about the unaccompanied minors, about the populations coming across the border, what were the potential threats, the disease, the drugs—then I realized maybe I have partially had a misunderstanding because, when I go home, the border is one of the key questions we talk about because of the effects it has had on my home State, in regards to education, incarceration, health care, and the amount of the burden that my citizens in Arizona, my taxpayers, have had to take on that ultimately were the responsibility of this Federal Government.

I wanted to go through just a handful things, a couple of numbers that we have found, talk about some of the mechanics that may be coming at us tomorrow. I know many of us are going to have some different views on legislation, where it takes us, but I want to get some of the record straight here.

Do you remember, over the last 3, 4 years, particularly before the 2012 Presidential race, we kept hearing how secure the border was? I remember my former Governor, Janet Napolitano, giving a speech telling us that the border is more secure today than ever before.

Do you remember the rhetoric that the President was bathing in, in early 2012, allowing himself to be called the ''deporter in chief''?

Well, Mr. Speaker, as we later found out—and we found out sort of when many of the Democrat base activists started believing it and started protesting the President, saying: How can our Democratic President be the deporter in chief?

All of a sudden, the truth came out, and we found out that the Obama administration had manipulated the way they calculate the numbers.

The previous administration, if you were a Mexican national—and this is for the southern border—if you had been arrested within a couple miles of the border, you were captured, taken back, and released back over the border, then that did not count in the deportation numbers. This President very conveniently apparently allowed them to redefine the math.

There becomes one of our great frustrations. We have debates here on this floor, and we realized how manipulated so much of the math is, some of the underlying statistics that we will come down here and quote, and we are holding the data, and we realize that we have we got conned. We got played.

Mr. Speaker, if you are going to build public policy, and I don't care if you are on the left or the right, you have to have an administration that is willing to play the data straight. If you are going to make public policy on public data, give us honest data.

That becomes one of our great frustrations, Mr. Speaker, because I will even have my hometown newspaper quote numbers that we found out months ago weren't correct, were manipulated. They redefined the math. So just keep that in mind.

Just something that came across my desk just before I was walking over

here, one of my county sheriffs—and you have to understand, in Arizona, we have only 15 counties—our counties are big, but Arizona is a small State relative to the rest of the country.

We are also the most urbanized State in the country, something that most people don't understand. Most of our population lives in Maricopa County and then the Tucson area.

So think, Arizona is the most urbanized State because the Federal Government controls the vast majority of our land. It is also why you have these incredible opportunities of a porous border because you have distances where there is no civilization.

Our Pinal County sheriff was on the radio, apparently, today and had a quote that we have had 123,000 illegals arrested in the Tucson sector. I am assuming that is over this last calendar year.

I haven't been able to get a response on that one, but think about that. Right now, so much of the national attention is the discussion of what is happening along the Rio Grande, in Texas. Don't forget Arizona. Don't forget what is going on in our State for so many years.

I had an economics professor years ago, that we had actually had this discussion of if you were ever to try to truly understand the math and how porous a border is, how would you build an economic model to truly understand it?

He had this brilliant idea, and it still rings in the back of my head because, multiple times, we have had this discussion of if we were going to build a border enforcement bill before allowing anything else to move in this body, do you have the border State Governors be the ones to declare the border secure?

Well, do you really want to put that type of political pressure on my Governor in Arizona, the Governor of New Mexico, small States where, let's face it, some of the activist groups with their budgets could manipulate our Governor's races, our elections? So what would be an honest economic method?

My old professor had this one thing: look at the price of drugs on the street, look at the price of certain types of labor; but he liked the drug calculation because if illegal drugs that are being sourced in other parts of the world and the price stays stable or is actually going down on the streets across the country, particularly in communities like Phoenix, which is often a distribution center, you actually have an economic model to understand if the border is truly secure.

Mr. Speaker, in conversations I have had with some law enforcement over the last year, apparently, a lot of the illegal drug prices on the streets in my community are stable or going down; but, yet, I had a President who is willing to stand behind microphones—I had the head of Homeland Security willing to stand behind microphones and declare the border more secure than ever, but the underlying fact is, now, we know we weren't being told the truth.

On occasion, we will go home, and we will hold townhall meetings and discussion groups in the chambers, and some of the activist groups will come and sit down with us and say: Why won't you do this? Why won't you do that? Why won't you accept the Gang of Eight bill? Why won't you do this?

You turn and say: How would you hand that type of policy, that type of legislation to this administration? Do you really trust them? Do you really trust the Obama administration to keep its word? Do you really trust the Obama administration not to play games with the math? Because we already have multiple occasions here where I can demonstrate to you the math has been played you with.

So then I wanted to chase after something else that we came across. How many speeches here, how many discussions, how many press conferences, how many talking heads on evening cable have we seen over the last month saying, oh, the unaccompanied minor issue, well, was a surprise to all of us, we never expected this, if we had just known—which is an amazing thing because I have a few documents here, and they are budget documents, and we all know what goes into starting to model and build budgets.

□ 2115

Here is one. It is a newsletter from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, and it was talking about some of the Catholic services. They do wonderful work. They do it at some great prices. But this was a newsletter from last November, so November 2013. On that one, the Department of Homeland Security estimates more than 60,000 unaccompanied minors could enter the United States in 2014. It was out there in writing.

Then we came across some other things that we found very interesting. Here is actually from 4–13, so over a year ago, a number of budget line items for the Department of Labor, Health and Human Services in regards to unaccompanied minors. The original 2014 budget request they had been working on earlier was going to be $494 million, and somehow on 4–13, so well over a year ago, they knew something was wrong and they added another $373 million to that budget line item. Yet earlier today, I watched a Member of the other side get behind a microphone and tell me how surprised they were.

So let me pull what we voted for last January. Unaccompanied alien children, line item, and this was woven into the continuing resolution we did last January, so you know the numbers were worked up months before that. We went from the 2013 estimate, $376 million, to $868 million. That is what we pushed out of here in January.

So back to that whole trust conversation, as we put forward policy in dealing with our crisis on our border, don't forget States like Arizona that have had to take this on for years and had to carry the burden of the cost as those here in the Federal Government, here in this bubble that is Washington, D.C., looked at a small State like Arizona and said: Stop making so much noise; you are bothering us. Stop telling us one thing in your speeches, but we can find documents that show your staff knew something very different.

Tomorrow we will have a piece of legislation to step up and deal with parts of the border crisis. It is not a half a loaf. It is not a quarter of a loaf. It is not an eighth of a loaf. It is sort of the heel of the loaf. But for those of us in Arizona, I believe it does a handful of things that we have been demanding.

I have a piece of legislation to put 10,000 National Guard troops on the border, and I had a little fun with a couple of Members who have been here for a long time. I had one Member who has been here for a long time, and she was just outraged that we would want to put that many troops on the border. So I said: But you supported this in 2006 and 2008 when we had Operation Jump Start, and I think at that time we put 7,000 National Guard troops on the border as auxiliary services to the Border Patrol.

So think of that, 2006 to 2008, who controlled this body? It was the Democrats. We had a Republican President, and NANCY PELOSI was the Speaker here. And it is fascinating, now we are a few years later, that formula has flipped. We are proposing it, and the very people who supported it a few years ago now are just appalled. The duplicity around this place sometimes is stunning.

One of the things that I support that will be voted on tomorrow, it is not just putting National Guard troops, if our Governor so will; there will be money behind it, the ability to pay for it. One more time asking States like Arizona, Texas, New Mexico, that if you are going to step up and take these responsibilities that belong to the Federal Government, you need to cover our costs. I don't think it is enough money that is in the bill, but remember, this is short term. What is going to run tomorrow is actually only between now and the end of the fiscal year, which is the end of September.

Updating the 2008 language, we have heard a lot of discussion about this. The reality of it is we have a White House, Department of Homeland Security, I believe, that has already been manipulating the actual language. If you sit down and read it, it had to do with those who were being exploited and being brought across the border, trafficked. This is a little different mechanically than someone who goes out and hires a coyote or a family who takes their children and hires the services.

But nevertheless, we have been told over and over, if we don't update the 2008 law, our hands are tied by so many of our law enforcement on the border. So we are going to do that.

There are a couple of other mechanics here, but I want to make it perfectly clear for many of us—and hopefully I am speaking for many of my supporters and friends and family and my State—this isn't enough. It may be just the beginning.

I do hope we get the chance to discuss the one issue here that continues to be a bit of friction. The President's deferred action, many of our friends on the left keep trying to tell us that that had nothing to do with what we are seeing at the border, but as we have already just walked through the documents, once the deferred action, referred to as DACA, had gone into effect, they knew the numbers were coming. They were calculating. We now have some charts that much of this crisis was being watched for months. It finally just became overwhelming.

Illegal immigration—and legal immigration—work on incentives and disincentives. We have created incentives. This President has created incentives to break our laws, and until we step up with a number of policies that change those incentives, I believe we are partially chasing our tail here. We will do some good things. We need to step up the quality of our law enforcement and our border enforcement, but we also need an administration that we can trust, an administration that will tell us the truth, and an administration that will actually follow our laws.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

THE CRISIS AT OUR SOUTHERN BORDER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) for 30 minutes.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to be recognized to address you here on the United States floor of the House of Representatives in this most deliberative body that we have and are. I appreciate the comments and the position taken by the gentleman from Arizona ahead of me. He is one who has lived along the border for a lifetime. He deals with the issue every day, every week. He is one of the individuals that I look to to inform me, but also I have taken a real interest in it myself.

Even though I am from the heart of the heartland, from Iowa, Mr. Speaker, I have a great appreciation for the Constitution and the rule of law. Because of that, I have watched as the lawlessness has grown along our border.

I will say that certainly in all of the time that I have been in this Congress and in the years building up to it, and less so in the years prior to that, and I take myself back to 1986 when Ronald Reagan signed the Amnesty Act of 1986 due to the counsel that he had around him, I believed at the time that he would veto that bill because of his reverence for the rule of law would overcome all of the counsel that came from the House and the Senate and the people around him. Well, Reagan relented and signed the bill on the promise that we would legalize roughly a million people in exchange for the enforcement of the law thereafter and that there would never be another amnesty again so long as this country would live.

The 1 million became 3 million, and the amnesties that were added to that in smaller proportions added up to at least 6, perhaps 7, in addition to the 1986 amnesty. And here we are today, having fought off this amnesty these years for more than a decade that I have been directly involved in the immigration policy, and we are on the cusp of it again.

The President of the United States stood up there in front of you where you are, Mr. Speaker, and he gave his State of the Union address here on the floor of the House of Representatives and essentially, and figuratively, he waved his ink pen at us and he said: Congress, you do what I tell you on immigration. I want comprehensive immigration reform. I want you to pass the Senate Gang of Eight amnesty act.

Now I am speaking figuratively, of course, because that is not a direct quote of the President, but it is certainly the message that the President delivered: Do what I tell you to do, or I will use my, in one other setting, his cell phone, or his ink pen, to act in a unilateral—he didn't say it, but he knows it—unconstitutional fashion.

I can think of another night during the State of the Union address when our President came here and he spoke right in front of you, Mr. Speaker, and he pointed down here to the Supreme Court and he lectured the Supreme Court on what they should do, as if somehow he were article III, somehow he was the man who commanded the Supreme Court of the United States. And the camera was looking over at the Justices as the President lectured them on the Constitution and the rule of law as if the Chief Justice and the Associate Justices of the United States Supreme Court needed to get a lesson from an adjunct professor of the University of Chicago School of Law who taught Constitution law for 10 years in Chicago. He should go to school with every one of those Justices, Mr. Speaker.

And one of them, the television cameras repeated it over and over again until they read the lips, and they interpreted his lips to say ''not true, not true.'' That seat that that camera was focused on has been empty ever since. It has been empty ever since because that Justice, and I suspect a number of other Justices, decided I am not going to listen to that again. I am not going to listen to a President that is out of bounds, a President who believes somehow he can lecture to the judicial branch of government, that he can lecture to the judicial branch of government, that he can stand here at this rostrum as a guest of the House of Representatives and wave his ink pen or finger at us and announce that we shall do in this Congress what he commands or he will do so in a unconstitutional fashion. Essentially, what did the President say? So sue me. The President says: I am going to do what I am going to do. I know it is lawless, it is unconstitutional, so sue me.

So today we passed here on the floor of the House of Representatives a resolution that declares that the House of Representatives has standing to go before the court to command the President to take care that the laws be faithfully executed.

We have had multiple hearings before the Judiciary Committee in the House of Representatives. We have had excellent constitutional scholars come forward. There hasn't been one who can carry water for the President's position and hold his own under the scrutiny of the constitutional lawyers and other scholars that we have on the Judiciary Committee who take them apart one by one, argument by argument, piece by piece. And yet the President of the United States persists in asserting that he can be article I, the legislative branch of government, the United States Congress, and he can be article III, the judicial branch of government, and the sole commander of the executive branch, article II.

He is the Commander in Chief of our Armed Forces. He leads from behind. He stepped back and followed the French into Libya, and he waited for the British to go before the House of Commons and vote down David Cameron's initiative to go into Syria, and then the President of the United States, following—and leading from behind is the very definition of following—the President of the United States then offers to Congress, through trial balloons through the press, that he would like to have Congress endorse military action in Syria.

Where is our leader? Where is our Commander in Chief? Well, he is off in the never, never land of advancing administrative amnesty, calling together his smartest, leftist lawyers that he can find, Mr. Speaker, and saying to them: Put your think tanks together. You guys go grab the best brains you can find, attached to the leftist brains you are, and see if you can come up with a strategic plan that I can grant some administrative amnesty to the maximum number of people because, Lord knows, there aren't enough undocumented Democrats in America. We need more of them. We need an endless supply and endless stream of them. And where do they come from? Well, they come across our southern border primarily, although they come in other ways.

□ 2130

And Democrats in here, when the President says to Congress: Thou shall pass the bills that I tell you to pass or I am going to use my pen to unconstitutionally—that is in parentheses, Mr.

Speaker—enact executive edicts that will do what I want done, regardless of whether it has the support and the will of the people or not—we are the support and the will of the people—when the President said that he is going to enact those immigration unconstitutional executive edicts, when the President uttered that, I saw a little less than half of this Chamber rise in a spontaneous standing ovation, enthusiasm for the President's statement.

It reminds me of the one Democrat who said: I am marching for abortion rights because my mother didn't have that opportunity. Who would say that? If your mother didn't have the opportunity to have an abortion, but you want to march so that you wish she would have, that means you wish you had never been born. And this Congress with less than half of it, a bunch of Democrats over here, cheered the President when he said: I am going to usurp your article I legislative authority, and I am going to write legislative law with my pen the way I see fit. And they cheered.

These are the same people that stood here on the floor of the House a year ago last January and took an oath to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States so help them God. And they say: Well, we were glad when the President decides he is going to roll over Congress, roll over the House, roll over the Senate, roll over the judicial branch by intimidating them into, some say, a decision on ObamaCare that would not conform with the constitutional directives that they have.

We are in a mess, Mr. Speaker. We are in a mess, and we have the President of the United States poised during August, when this Congress has every year been out of session because our Founding Fathers and our early, early leaders recognized that Washington, D.C., gets to be a hot and humid place in the month of August, and you need a little break to get out of the circle of the Beltway that causes Potomac fever to go back to your districts so you can look real people in the eye and hear from them. That has been the tradition of this country.

Some people complain that Members of Congress actually go home. I would say on the other way around, if we didn't go home we would hear a lot of complaints. It is important that we go back to our districts and go out and hear from the people that we have the honor and privilege to represent, and we will do that, maybe as early as tomorrow, Mr. Speaker.

But the President is poised to follow through on his threat to issue the edict, not a lawful act, not a lawful executive order, an edict, that he would give a lawful status to 5 or 6 million illegal aliens, many of them, maybe most of them, probably not all of them, criminal aliens.

He has issued orders to the Department of Justice to examine how they can get an early release for people who are in our prisons who have been sentenced. That is hundreds of thousands, as many as 400,000 felons that the President would release on the streets of America. He has released criminals to the tune of 36,000-plus out onto the streets. That is in one category. There is another category of tens of thousands more.

And he has opened up our borders by signing the documents and the Morton Memos—not physically signed, he had his subordinates do that—and the Morton Memos say we are not going to enforce a law against people who didn't commit a felony or aren't guilty of these three mysterious misdemeanors. And they said that if you came into the United States illegally, theoretically through no fault of your own, if you did so before your 18th birthday and you did so before December 31 of 2011, then you get to stay for the duration of this permit that he manufactures lawlessly out of thin air.

And then he manufactures a work permit so that these people can compete for jobs against naturalized and natural born American citizens and green card holders, who likely did it the legal way.

Because he gets a political kick out of this, a political bonus out of this, because he is bringing in undocumented Democrats, and they have a plan to document them so they can vote, we have a situation here where the constitutional underpinnings of America are in crisis mode. The employment in America is at great risk and under great threat, and the security of our border is very weak.

I went down, Mr. Speaker, last weekend, down to the southern tip of Texas, down to the mouth of the Rio Grande, planted a flag right there at the southern tip where the waters of the Rio Grande flow out into the sea, and then followed the river to Brownsville and went through the ports of entry at Brownsville, other facilities in Brownsville, on up into McAllen and to the ports of entry there, to the border patrol centers there, to a resettlement center there, and on up all the way to Laredo.

And from what I saw and what I heard, from our Border Patrol, from our Customs and Border Protection, from the Department of Public Safety in Texas, and others, they are good people, a lot of them with uniforms on, that are doing a good job, doing the best they can with what they have to work with.

We have a lawless order from the President, DACA, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, which is more accurately DACA, Deferred Action for Criminal Aliens. DACA has become the magnet that the coyotes have used to advertise throughout the Central American countries, in particular, El Salvador, Honduras, and also Guatemala. People that are already in the United States oftentimes will save up money, maybe borrow money, and send it down to Central America to the tune of, the lowest number that I pick up is $4,000 a head, on up to 5, 6, 7, 8, maybe even $9,000, for the coyotes to transport an illegal alien into the United States.

They are coming into America in the southern tip of Texas and the Rio Grande Valley sector of the border in numbers that work out this way. The unaccompanied alien children, UACs as they are known, and referred to sometimes as ''unaccompanied alien juveniles,'' number this way: this fiscal year, from October 1 to June 15, 57,000 UACs, unaccompanied alien children—57,000. That number has surely grown to over 60,000, probably over 70,000, predicted to go to 90,000 for this fiscal year.

The peak of this thing seems to have passed behind us. We are either in a temporary lull, or we have seen the peak behind us. But, in any case, when we think of numbers in the area of 60,000 unaccompanied alien children coming into the United States, that is only 20 percent of the overall population coming in. So we are at 300,000 or more. But of those roughly 60,000—the number that we surpassed—here is how they break down: 80 percent male, 20 percent female.

The 80 percent male and the 20 percent female also need to take into account that these are not kids that range from age 1 day to 1 day before their 18th birthday, Mr. Speaker. These are unaccompanied alien children that have a demographic breakdown that works like this: 80 percent male, 83 percent that are either the ages of 15, 16, or 17. Once they are 18, they are no longer qualified as UACs—83 percent.

So I do the simple math, Mr. Speaker, and I say: 0.8, 80 percent, times 0.83, 83 percent, 15, 16, or 17 years old—that means that 66.4 percent of these unaccompanied alien ''children'' are young men ages 15, 16, and 17 years old. They come from the most violent countries in the world. The six most violent countries in the world are south of Mexico. It is not Mexico, it is south of Mexico, Mr. Speaker. Eight of the 10 most violent countries in the world are also south of Mexico.

It is a fact, according to the United Nation's data, that of the most violent countries in the world, only Honduras is more violent than the city of Detroit. Yet, there are those in this Congress that are convinced, because the Central American countries have a high degree of violence, that the people are leaving those countries because of the violence, and they are scared and they are running off. Well, if that is so, then one would think they would be running out of Detroit at a pace similar to the pace they are running out of Guatemala and El Salvador and other violent countries down there—probably run a little faster out of Honduras than they are out of the other countries, than they are maybe out of Detroit.

But as I said in a Judiciary Committee hearing, in response to the witness' testimony that was there, I said: If we are going to bring these kids to

the United States because they are afraid where they are, we had better not take them to Detroit because they will be in more danger there, unless they came from Honduras. Those are the facts, and those are the data. Yes, they come from violent countries, and they come from countries that are controlled to a high degree by drug cartels.

But here is what is happening. The families that are sending people here usually have one or more members in the United States now. They may have left their kids back in their home country in Honduras. They will send money down there, they might borrow money. Then usually locally they will hire a coyote that is going to smuggle them up into the United States.

Then the family most often, not 100 percent of the time, but most often, whoever is in custody of this young girl that might be 12 or 13 or 14, or on up to 17 or older, they go down to the local pharmacy, where a prescription is not required, and they buy a monthly supply of contraceptives, birth control bills, and they take it back and they start giving those birth control pills to that girl, and then send her across 2,000 to 2,500 miles of dangerous Central America and Mexico to get on the train of death—it is called ''The Beast,'' and ride that train up as near the Rio Grande as possible. Then that child has to get off of there and make their way to the Rio Grande River, then pay a coyote to get a ride across the river, and then submit themselves to the U.S. authorities.

We went to center after center, we talked to people after people that had been working with these unaccompanied alien children, and we asked them how many of them are sexually assaulted, how many of them are raped? And the answers came back a guess, but a range, a range between 30 percent and 70 percent.

Think of it, Mr. Speaker. Think of having a daughter and living in El Salvador and deciding, I want to send her to her mother in the United States or her aunt in the United States, or being an aunt in El Salvador and you want to send your niece to her mother in the United States. You get a wire that sends you down $5,000 or $6,000, and you go out into the neighborhood and you solicit a coyote, and then you say, I want to send this niece or my daughter up to America, but why don't you wait a few days because I have got to go down and buy some birth control pills and make sure she is ready for the trip, because I am pretty confident she is going to be raped along the way.

That is what is going on, Mr. Speaker. It is not going on now and then; it is going on from a third to 70 percent of the time for the girls, and they told us that the numbers of boys were equivalent to the numbers of girls who were sexually assaulted. That was a question that was repeated over and over again.

So this President has done real damage and destruction to the rule of law. The result of that is America is flooded with illiterate, unskilled people into the job categories where we have the highest available employment, the highest ratios of unemployment. The double-digit unemployment exists in the lowest-skilled jobs. There is no metric out there that suggests that we should be bringing more unskilled people in, more people who are illiterate in their own language into America, thinking somehow that that is work that Americans won't do.

Nuts. There is no work that Americans won't do. There has been no work that I won't do. I have done some of the toughest, nastiest, most difficulty, and some of the dangerous jobs that the country has to offer, and I haven't come close to doing the jobs that the United States Marine Corps does on a regular basis.

What is the most dangerous job that we ask an American to do? How about rooting terrorists out of places like Fallujah? How about taking on radical al Qaeda extremists in places like Afghanistan?

When the Marine Corps goes into Fallujah for the first or second battle, and we have seen what has happened since then, what do they get paid to put their lives on the line? If you figure it at 40 hours a week, something like $8.49 an hour, Mr. Speaker. That is back then when I calculated it, when we had operations going on then. If you can pay a United States marine $8.49 an hour to lock and load and go into a place like Fallujah, you can't convince me that there is work that Americans won't do, especially if it pays an appropriate wage and we respect the work that gets done.

So we have a President who has decided he is going to defy the rule of law, and he is going to manufacture law as he goes and create work permits out of thin air.

□ 2145

When we see this calamity of the huge hole in our southern border, primarily at McAllen, Texas, the House of Representatives decides it wants to overreact to the President of the United States, and since they are afraid that they will somehow get the blame if nothing gets done in the month of August, they decided to bring a piece of legislation here to the floor.

This piece of legislation was written by a staff person that was once that of JOHN MCCAIN, and we know what he has brought for immigration policy. It has been very troubling to me to deal with the legislation that he has supported, but I have this in my hand here on the floor, Mr. Speaker.

It doesn't do what it is advertised to do. It doesn't do what needs to be done, but it grants this. If there is an unaccompanied alien child, here are the consequences for failure to appear to a hearing:

> Any alien who fails to appear at a proceeding required under this section, shall be ordered removed in absentia if the government establishes by a preponderance of the evidence that the alien was at fault for their absence from the proceedings.

No evidence can be admitted into that proceeding after the fact, and it can't be admitted if they don't anticipate that there is not going to be an appearance of the alien, so that means the government has to prove by a preponderance of the evidence that it was the alien's fault they didn't show up.

The only way I know that you can do that is if you have a video camera on them, and they are sitting on the couch, Mr. Speaker. This is a wide open hole that grants a pass under that provision. Then it says:

> In General—at the conclusion of a proceeding under this section, the immigration judge shall determine whether an unaccompanied alien child is likely to be admissible to the United States.

They get a new hearing under a new section created, which is 235, and if the preponderance of the evidence indicates that they might receive asylum and if they think they are likely to receive asylum in a separate category, then 50 percent plus 1 is preponderance—likely is 50 percent plus 1. Fifty percent of 50 percent is 25 percent, plus one, are the odds that they need to claim in order to receive a hearing for asylum.

So if you have got a one in four shot at it, Mr. Speaker, you are going to get a hearing for asylum. Then you are going to get an asylum hearing, and then if you are turned down at the asylum hearing, you get to go to a removal hearing. That is three bites at the apple. They are all renewable; times two, that is six different bites at the apple.

No such thing exists for Mexican unaccompanied alien children. The determination is made under the Wilberforce law of 2008 by the Border Patrol whether or not they go back to Mexico.

They purport that this bill treats the other than Mexican unaccompanied alien children the same as the existing law treats unaccompanied alien Mexican children. Mr. Speaker, if it does, there is language in here that then diminishes our ability to send the Mexican kids back. That is what we have. We have a bill that has been whipped to be something that it is not.

I offered an amendment to the Rules Committee tonight. There was a long discussion and debate over it, Mr. Speaker, but here is what we have: my amendment said that we have got to fix the 2008 William Wilberforce language.

By the way, no Republican voted for that, not one. It was introduced on December 9, 2008. It was taken up by a unanimous consent request after everybody left town on December 10, 2008. It was passed by voice in the House, sent to the Senate. The Senate caught the lateral and passed it by voice to the President.

We didn't see that bill. It became a component of what they have utilized as an open door; coupling the 2008 bill

with an expansive reading of the asylum language and the President's DACA language is what is bringing these tens of thousands of unaccompanied alien minors here, which are only 20 percent of the overall group that are coming.

There are also family units—usually, mothers with a child or children. There are individual males coming in, in significant numbers. I have said that we have imported at least 40,000 15-year-old, 16-year-old, and 17-year-old boys—prime gang recruitment age—and that doesn't give you the data on those that are 18, 19, 20, 25 to 31; and those are just the ones that are covered under DACA.

I offered an amendment that would have cut off all funding to DACA. It mirrors the Cruz-Blackburn language. It is good language, and it should be part of this bill. It is not, by the information I have, Mr. Speaker.

There is a 2008 fix that I wrote over a month ago that needs to be part of this bill. It is not, by the report I am getting from the Rules Committee, Mr. Speaker. I don't know that there was even a vote on it up in the Rules Committee.

There is asylum language that has been offered by the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, BOB GOODLATTE, that fixes some of the expansive utilization of asylum that is allowing for people to be distributed all over the United States at taxpayers' expense. That is not part of this bill, Mr. Speaker.

We don't have a deliberative process in this Congress because they are not going to allow a legitimate vote, and the language that is out here is bad.

Mr. Speaker, I will vote ''no'' on this bill that has come before us, and I am going to have to consider what I do on the rule, but if this House sends a message to support cutting off all funding to enforce or implement DACA, that will be constructive because it will say to the President: these are the Republicans that have at least a chance of standing up against you if you decide that you are going to function in a lawless, unconstitutional manner in the month of August—or any other month—with regard to this granting any expansion of the lawlessness that we have seen today.

Mr. Speaker, with that, I yield back the balance of my time.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 51 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 2338

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SESSIONS) at 11 o'clock and 38 minutes p.m.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 5230, SECURE THE SOUTHWEST BORDER ACT OF 2014; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 5272, PROHIBITIONS RELATING TO DEFERRED ACTIONS FOR ALIENS; AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF THE SENATE AMENDMENT TO H.R. 5021, HIGHWAY AND TRANSPORTATION FUNDING ACT OF 2014; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Mr. COLE, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 113–567) on the resolution (H. Res. 696) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 5230) making supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 5272) to prohibit certain actions with respect to deferred action for aliens not lawfully present in the United States, and for other purposes; providing for consideration of the Senate amendment to the bill (H.R. 5021) to provide an extension of federal-aid highway, highway safety, motor carrier safety, transit, and other programs funded out of the Highway Trust Fund, and for other purposes; and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

SENATE BILL REFERRED

A bill of the Senate of the following title was taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. 2577. An act to require the Secretary of State to offer rewards totaling up to $5,000,000 for information on the kidnapping and murder of Naftali Fraenkel, a dual United States-Israeli citizen, that began on June 12, 2014; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled a bill of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 4028. An act to amend the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 to include the desecration of cemeteries among the many forms of violations of the right to religious freedom.

SENATE ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

The Speaker announced his signature to an enrolled bill of the Senate of the following title:

S. 1799. An act to reauthorize subtitle A of the Victims of Child Abuse Act of 1990.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. COLE. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 39 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, July 31, 2014, at 9 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

6678. A letter from the Associate Administrator, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Oranges and Grapefruit Grown in Lower Rio Grande Valley in Texas; Change in Size and Grade Requirements for Grapefruit [Doc. No.: AMS-FV-14-0015; FV14-906-2 FIR] received July 22, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

6679. A letter from the Associate Administrator, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Marketing Order Regulating the Handling of Spearmint Oil Produced in the Far West; Revision of Administrative Rules and Regulations Governing Issuance of Additional Allotment Base [Doc. No. AMS-FV-13-0088; FV14-985-2 FR] received July 22, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

6680. A letter from the Supervisory Financial Program Specialist, Bureau of the Fiscal Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's final rule — Federal Government participation in the Automated Clearing House (RIN: 1530-AA05) received July 18, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

6681. A letter from the Director, Regulations Policy and Management Staff, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Tobacco Products, User Fees, Requirements for the Submission of Data Needed to Calculate User Fees for Domestic Manufacturers and Importers of Tobacco Products [Docket No.: FDA-2012-N-0920] (RIN: 0910-AG81) received July 21, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

6682. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Amendments to Compliance Certification Content Requirements for State and Federal Operating Permits Programs [EPA-HQ-OAR-2013-0162; FRL-9913-88-OAR] (RIN:2060-AQ71] received July 24, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

6683. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Maine; Nitrogen Oxides Exemption Request [EPA-R01-OAR-2012-0895; A-1-FRL-9913-56-OAR] received July 16, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

6684. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Texas; Control of Air Pollution from Nitrogen Compounds [EPA-R06-OAR-2013-0400; FRL-9914-44-Region 6] received July 24, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

6685. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Protection of Stratospheric Ozone: The 2014 and 2015 Critical Use Exemption From the Phaseout of Methyl Bromide

[EPA-HQ-OAR-2014-0065; FRL-9911-OAR] (RIN: 2060-AR80) received July 24, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

6686. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Illinois; Amendments to Vehicle Inspection and Maintenance Program for Illinois [EPA-R05-OAR-2013-0046; FRL-9913-15-Region 5] received July 22, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

6687. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Indiana; Solvent Degreasing Operations Rule [EPA-R05-OAR-2013-0214; FRL-9914-24-Region 5] received July 22, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

6688. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Ohio; Redesignation of the Bellefontaine Area to Attainment of the 2008 Lead Standard [EPA-R05-OAR-2013-0791; FRL-9914-22-Region 5] received July 22, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

6689. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Texas; Control of Air Pollution from Motor Vehicles, Vehicle Inspection and Maintenance and Locally Enforced Motor Vehicle Idling Limitations [EPA-R06-OAR-2010-0890; FRL-9914-31-Region 6] received July 22, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

6690. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Interim Final Determination to Stay and Defer Sanctions, Clark County Department of Air Quality [EPA-R09-OAR-2014-0495; FRL-9914-17-Region 9] received July 22, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

6691. A letter from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Amendment of Section 73.202(b), Table of Allotments, FM Broadcast Stations. (Moran, Texas) [MB Docket No.: 13-102] [RM-11696] received July 28, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

6692. A letter from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Closed Captioning of Internet Protocol-Delivered Video Programming: Implementation of the Twenty-First Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act of 2010 [MB Docket No.: 11-154] received July 21, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

6693. A letter from the Associate General Counsel for General Law, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

6694. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Atlantic Sea Scallop Fishery and Northeast Multispecies Fishery; Framework Adjustment 25 [Docket No.: 140305202-4478-02] (RIN: 0648-BE07) received July 21, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

6695. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries Off West Coast States; Modifications of the West Coast Commercial Salmon Fisheries; Inseason Actions #4, #5, #6, #7, #8, and #9 [Docket No.: 140107014-4014-01] (RIN: 0648-XD329) received July 21, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

6696. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Special Local Regulations for Marine Events, Nanticoke River; Bivalve, MD [Docket No.: USCG-2014-0138] (RIN: 1625-AA08) received July 28, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

6697. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Notice of Arrival Exception [Docket No.: USCG-2013-0797] (RIN: 1625-AC12) received July 17, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

6698. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Special Local Regulations; Beaufort Water Festival, Beaufort, SC [Docket No.: USCG-2014-0005] (RIN: 1625-AA08) received, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

6699. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Special Local Regulation; Tennessee River, Miles 255.0 to 256.5, Florence, AL [USCG-2013-0753] (RIN: 1625-AA08) received July 17, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

6700. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; United States and Canadian Military Exercise Jump Training, Lake Erie, Hamburg, NY [Docket No.: USCG-2014-0260] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received July 17, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

6701. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Meridian Health Fireworks, Navesink River, Rumson, NJ [Docket No.: USCG-2014-0353] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received July 17, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

6702. A letter from the Regulatory Ombudsman, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Incorporation by Reference; North American Standard Out-of-Service Criteria; Hazardous Materials Safety Permits [Docket No.: FMCSA-2014-0135] (RIN: 2126-AB73) received July 28, 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

6703. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Restricted Area R-5304C; Camp Lejeune, NC [Docket No.: FAA-2014-0272; Airspace Docket No. 14-ASO-5] (RIN: 2120-AA66) received July 28, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

6704. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendment of Class E Airspace; Elkin, NC [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0046; Airspace Docket No. 14-ASO-1] received July 28, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

6705. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Foreign tax credit guidance under section 901(m) received July 22, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

6706. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Rules Regarding the Health Insurance Premium Tax Credit [TD 9683] (RIN: 1545-BM23) received July 28, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. COLE: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 696. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 5230) making supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 5272) to prohibit certain actions with respect to deferred action for aliens not lawfully present in the United States, and for other purposes; providing for consideration of the Senate amendment to the bill (H.R. 5021) to provide an extension of Federal-aid highway, highway safety, motor carrier safety, transit, and other programs funded out of the Highway Trust Fund, and for other purposes; and for other purposes (Rept. 113–567). Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Ms. ESHOO (for herself, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. HANNA, Mr. SWALWELL of California, and Ms. DELBENE):

H.R. 5255. A bill to enhance the procurement of information technology by establishing a United States Digital Government Office and United States Chief Information Officer, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS (for herself, Mrs. CAPITO, Ms. JENKINS, Mrs. ELLMERS, Mrs. BACHMANN, Mr. VALADAO, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. GRANGER, Mrs. LUMMIS, and Mr. FITZPATRICK):

H.R. 5256. A bill to encourage compensation transparency; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS (for herself, Mrs. CAPITO, Mrs. WAGNER, Mrs. ELLMERS, Mrs. BACHMANN, Mr. VALADAO, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, and Mr. FITZPATRICK):

H.R. 5257. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a deduction relating to the compensation of the lesser earning spouse; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. CAPITO (for herself, Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, Mrs. WAGNER,

Mrs. ELLMERS, Mrs. BACHMANN, Mr. VALADAO, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. GRANGER, Mrs. LUMMIS, and Mr. FITZPATRICK):

H.R. 5258. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to index the dependent care credit and income exclusion for inflation; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. HUFFMAN:

H.R. 5259. A bill to establish State infrastructure banks for education; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas (for himself, Mrs. BLACK, Mr. BRADY of Texas, Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas, and Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania):

H.R. 5260. A bill to amend the Social Security Act to prevent disability fraud, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California:

H.R. 5261. A bill to establish a North and Central American and Caribbean border security cooperation initiative, enhance the security of Mexico's southern border, improve United States short term detention standards, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committees on Homeland Security, and the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. MEADOWS (for himself, Mr. MESSER, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. HUDSON, Mr. MCINTYRE, Mrs. ELLMERS, Mr. COBLE, Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. ROKITA, and Mr. BOUSTANY):

H.R. 5262. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exempt student workers for purposes of determining a higher education institution's employer health care shared responsibility; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. NADLER (for himself, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. CLAY, and Mr. COSTA):

H.R. 5263. A bill to promote and protect from discrimination living organ donors; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on Oversight and Government Reform, House Administration, Education and the Workforce, and Financial Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. SCHOCK (for himself and Mr. RANGEL):

H.R. 5264. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make the work opportunity credit permanent; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. HUDSON (for himself, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mrs. ELLMERS, Mr. JONES, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Ms. FOXX, Mr. COBLE, Mr. MCINTYRE, Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. MCHENRY, Mr. MEADOWS, and Mr. HOLDING):

H.R. 5265. A bill to name the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic in Hamlet, North Carolina, as the ''Edward 'Ed' James O'Neal Department of Veterans Affairs Clinic''; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. LOBIONDO (for himself, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. POSEY, and Mr. MURPHY of Florida):

H.R. 5266. A bill to reauthorize the National Estuary Programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts (for herself and Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN):

H.R. 5267. A bill to protect the pets of victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Agriculture, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. GINGREY of Georgia (for himself and Mrs. BLACKBURN):

H.R. 5268. A bill to amend title 44, United States Code, to prohibit the assembly or manufacture of secure credentials or their component parts by the Government Printing Office; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Ms. SPEIER (for herself, Mr. MEEHAN, Ms. LEE of California, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Ms. NORTON, and Ms. CHU):

H.R. 5269. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to increase transparency and reporting on campus sexual violence, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. GARAMENDI (for himself and Mr. HUNTER):

H.R. 5270. A bill to promote the transportation of liquified natural gas from the United States on United States flag vessels, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. VAN HOLLEN (for himself, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. HOLT, Ms. NORTON, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. WELCH, and Mr. THOMPSON of California):

H.R. 5271. A bill to cap the emissions of greenhouse gases through a requirement to purchase carbon permits, to distribute the proceeds of such purchases to eligible individuals, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mrs. BLACKBURN:

H.R. 5272. A bill to prohibit certain actions with respect to deferred action for aliens not lawfully present in the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BARBER:

H.R. 5273. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to expand the authority of veterans to transfer entitlement to Post-9/11 Educational Assistance to dependents; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Ms. BORDALLO (for herself and Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA):

H.R. 5274. A bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to allow voluntary agreements for Social Security and Medicare coverage of employees of Guam and American Samoa; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. COHEN (for himself, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, and Mr. ELLISON):

H.R. 5275. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to increase the amount of loan forgiveness for which teachers in teacher shortage areas are eligible; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. CROWLEY (for himself and Mr. PAULSEN):

H.R. 5276. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to treat bicycle sharing systems as mass transit facilities for purposes of the qualified transportation fringe; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. DAVIS of California:

H.R. 5277. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to require institutions of higher education to have an independent advocate for campus sexual assault prevention and response; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Ms. DELAURO (for herself, Mr. DOGGETT, and Mr. LEVIN):

H.R. 5278. A bill to prohibit the award of Federal Government contracts to inverted domestic corporations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. DELAURO (for herself, Mr. MORAN, and Ms. NORTON):

H.R. 5279. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to impose an excise tax on sugar-sweetened beverages, to dedicate the revenues from such tax to the prevention, treatment, and research of diet-related health conditions in priority populations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. ELLISON (for himself, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. NADLER, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Ms. HAHN, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. SIRES, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. NORTON, Ms. FUDGE, Ms. BASS, Ms. LEE of California, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. HOLT, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. JACKSON LEE, and Mr. RYAN of Ohio):

H.R. 5280. A bill to strengthen the current protections available under the National Labor Relations Act by providing a private right of action for certain violations of such Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. HANNA (for himself and Mr. KIND):

H.R. 5281. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for tax preferred savings accounts for individuals under age 18, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. HARPER (for himself and Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi):

H.R. 5282. A bill to award posthumously a Congressional Gold Medal to Medgar Wiley Evers, in recognition of his contributions and ultimate sacrifice in the fight for racial equality in the United States; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. HONDA:

H.R. 5283. A bill to establish national goals for the reduction and recycling of municipal solid waste, to address the growing problem of marine debris, to require the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to promulgate regulations to attain those goals, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. JOLLY:

H.R. 5284. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make permanent the work opportunity tax credit and to allow the transfer of such credit in the case of contracted veterans; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania (for himself, Mr. PITTS, Mr. MULVANEY, Mr. HUELSKAMP, Mrs. BACHMANN, Mr. LATTA, Mr. BRADY of Texas, Mr. NUNNELEE, Mr. ADERHOLT, Mr. BARLETTA, Mr. PITTENGER, Mr.

WEBER of Texas, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. FORTENBERRY, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. LONG, Mr. SOUTHERLAND, Mr. JONES, Mrs. BLACK, and Mr. JOLLY):

H.R. 5285. A bill to ensure that organizations with religious or moral convictions are allowed to continue to provide services for children; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. LARSON of Connecticut:

H.R. 5286. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for a more equitable geographic allocation of funds appropriated to the Department of Veterans Affairs for medical care; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Ms. LEE of California (for herself, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mrs. LOWEY, and Ms. DELAURO):

H.R. 5287. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a tax credit for expenses for household and elder care services necessary for gainful employment; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico:

H.R. 5288. A bill to establish a National Care Corps through which qualified volunteers provide care, companionship, and other services to seniors and individuals with disabilities; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. MURPHY of Florida:

H.R. 5289. A bill to establish the Indian River Lagoon Nutrient Removal Assistance Grant Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. HECK of Washington (for himself, Mr. JONES, and Mr. KILMER):

H.R. 5290. A bill to establish a Military Community Infrastructure Program to provide grants for transportation infrastructure improvements in military communities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. OWENS:

H.R. 5291. A bill to amend the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States with respect to goods exported for processing abroad and reimported, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. REED (for himself and Ms. SLAUGHTER):

H.R. 5292. A bill to provide public safety officer disability benefits to officers disabled before the enactment of the Federal public safety officer disability benefits law; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. ROGERS of Alabama (for himself, Mr. FORBES, and Mr. TURNER):

H.R. 5293. A bill to address non-compliance by the Russian Federation of its obligations under the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committees on Armed Services, and Oversight and Government Reform, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD (for herself, Ms. LEE of California, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Ms. BORDALLO, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Ms. CHU, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. DEGETTE, Ms. DELAURO, Ms. EDWARDS, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA, Mr. FARR, Mr. FATTAH, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. GARCIA, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Ms. HAHN, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. HONDA, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. LEWIS, Ms. LOFGREN, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, Ms. MATSUI, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mrs. NEGRETE MCLEOD, Mr. MEEKS, Ms. MENG, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Ms. NORTON, Mr. PASTOR of Arizona, Mr. PIERLUISI, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. RUSH, Mr. SABLAN, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. SIRES, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. TONKO, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. VELA, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, and Ms. WATERS):

H.R. 5294. A bill to improve the health of minority individuals, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on Ways and Means, Agriculture, Education and the Workforce, the Budget, Veterans' Affairs, Armed Services, the Judiciary, and Natural Resources, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. SMITH of Nebraska:

H.R. 5295. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, with respect to apportionments under the Airport Improvement Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. TAKANO (for himself, Mr. WAXMAN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. TSONGAS, and Mr. GARAMENDI):

H.R. 5296. A bill to require a demonstration program on the accession as Air Force officers of candidates with auditory impairments; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Ms. TITUS:

H.R. 5297. A bill to improve transparency in charity regulation; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. TURNER:

H.R. 5298. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exempt student workers for purposes of determining a higher education institution's employer health care shared responsibility; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. TURNER (for himself and Mr. FATTAH):

H.R. 5299. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow an enhanced credit for the rehabilitation of buildings located in low-income communities; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. WAGNER (for herself, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mr. LONG, Mr. SMITH of Missouri, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. MCKINLEY, and Mr. GUTHRIE):

H.R. 5300. A bill to require the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to primarily consider, and to separately report, the domestic benefits of any rule that addresses emissions of carbon dioxide from any existing source or new source that is an electric utility generating unit, in any such rule, and in the regulatory impact analysis for such rule, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. WELCH (for himself and Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico):

H.R. 5301. A bill to amend title VI of the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1978 to establish a Federal renewable electricity standard for retail electricity suppliers and a Federal energy efficiency resource standard for electricity and natural gas suppliers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. MILLER of Florida:

H. Con. Res. 111. Concurrent resolution directing the Clerk of the House of Representatives to make certain corrections in the enrollment of the bill H.R. 3230; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. NOLAN:

H. Res. 695. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives regarding steps that Congress should take to restore democracy and change the way we do politics in the United States by reducing the influence of money and corporations and promoting the participation of the people in politics and government; to the Committee on House Administration, and in addition to the Committees on Rules, and the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. DELAURO (for herself, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. BARR, Mr. BROOKS of Alabama, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. COFFMAN, Mr. CRAMER, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER, Mr. HOLT, Mr. ISSA, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. VELA, and Ms. SLAUGHTER):

H. Res. 697. A resolution expressing support for the designation of September 2014 as National Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. VALADAO (for himself, Ms. CHU, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. JOYCE, Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin, Mr. RIBBLE, Mr. HONDA, Mr. COSTA, Mr. PETERS of Michigan, Mr. HOLT, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. KIND, Mr. NUNES, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. RUSH, Ms. MOORE, Ms. NORTON, Ms. MENG, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. LAMALFA, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. SHERMAN, Ms. LOFGREN, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. POCAN, and Mr. SWALWELL of California):

H. Res. 698. A resolution condemning the attack that occurred at the Oak Creek Sikh Gurdwara on August 5, 2012, and honoring the memory of those who died in the attack; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

MEMORIALS

Under clause 3 of rule XII, memorials were presented and referred as follows:

295. The SPEAKER presented a memorial of the Senate of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, relative to Senate Resolution No. 397 urging the Pentagon to explore alternatives to increase the cost-effectiveness of maintaining the Army National Guard in ways that do not adversely impact its mission readiness; to the Committee on Armed Services.

296. Also, a memorial of the Senate of the State of Tennessee, relative to Senate Resolution No. 61 urging the Speaker and Clerk of the House of Representatives to release the TBI report ''MLK Document 200472''; to the Committee on House Administration.

PRIVATE BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 3 of rule XII,

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California introduced a bill (H.R. 5302) to authorize the President to award the Medal of Honor to Special Forces Command Sergeant Major Ramon Rodriguez of the United States Army for acts of valor during the Vietnam War; which was referred to the Committee on Armed Services.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Ms. ESHOO:

H.R. 5255.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18.

By Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS:

H.R. 5256.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to Congress' legislative powers under Article I, Section 8.

By Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS:

H.R. 5257.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to Congress' legislative powers under Article I, Section 8.

By Mrs. CAPITO:

H.R. 5258.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to Congress' legislative powers under Article I, Section 8.

By Mr. HUFFMAN:

H.R. 5259.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

clause 1 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution

By Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas:

H.R. 5260.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution, to ''provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States.''

By Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California:

H.R. 5261.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 4.

By Mr. MEADOWS:

H.R. 5262.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1, which empowers Congress, in part, to ''lay and collect Taxes'' and ''provide for the common Defense and general Welfare of the United States . . .'' The bill will exempt certain educational institutions from taxes imposed by public Law 111–148, as amnded. Congress has the power to repeal such taxes and provide for the general welfare of those who have been and will be harmed by their imposition.

By Mr. NADLER:

H.R. 5263.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clauses 3 and 18 of Section 8 of Article I of the Constitution.

By Mr. SCHOCK:

H.R. 5264.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of Congress as stated in Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. HUDSON:

H.R. 5265.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. LOBIONDO:

H.R. 5266.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18 of the Constitution of the United States of America

By Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts:

H.R. 5267.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

By Mr. GINGREY of Georgia:

H.R. 5268.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, clause 3, granting Congress the power ''to regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.''

By Ms. SPEIER:

H.R. 5269.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. GARAMENDI:

H.R. 5270.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. VAN HOLLEN:

H.R. 5271.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

''This bill is enacted pursuant to Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.''

By Mrs. BLACKBURN:

H.R. 5272.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8: To make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States or in any Department or Officer thereof

By Mr. BARBER:

H.R. 5273.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States

By Ms. BORDALLO:

H.R. 5274.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 4 Section 3

By Mr. COHEN:

H.R. 5275.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The changes made by this bill to the Higher Education Act are within Congress' authority under Article I, section 8, clause 1 of the Constitution.

By Mr. CROWLEY:

H.R. 5276.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1: ''The Congress shall have Power to law and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises . . .''

By Mrs. DAVIS of California:

H.R. 5277.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the Constitution

By Ms. DELAURO:

H.R. 5278.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clauses 1 and 3 of the United States Constitution

By Ms. DELAURO:

H.R. 5279.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1

The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defense and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.

By Mr. ELLISON:

H.R. 5280.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 3 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution; clause 18 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution; section 5 of Amendment XIV to the Constitution.

By Mr. HANNA:

H.R. 5281.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to Clause 1 of Section 8 of Article 1 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. HARPER:

H.R. 5282.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

clause 3 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution

By Mr. HONDA:

H.R. 5283.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

section 8 of article I of the Constitution

By Mr. JOLLY:

H.R. 5284.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1, Section 8 of Article ' of the United States Constitution which reads: ''The Congress shall have the Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts, and Excises, to pay Debts, and provide for the common Defense and General Welfare of the United States; but all Duties and Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.''

By Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania:

H.R. 5285.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The Congress enacts this bill pursuant to Clause 1 and Clause 3 of Section 8 of Article I of the United States Constitution and Section 5 of Amendment XIV to the United States Constitution.

By Mr. LARSON of Connecticut:

H.R. 5286.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution

By Ms. LEE of California:

H.R. 5287.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

United States Constitution Article 1

By Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico:

H.R. 5288.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18

By Mr. MURPHY of Florida:
H.R. 5289.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1 section 8 Constitution of the United States, which states the Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States.

By Mr. HECK of Washington:
H.R. 5290.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States

By Mr. OWENS:
H.R. 5291.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. REED:
H.R. 5292.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1—promoting the general welfare

By Mr. ROGERS of Alabama:
H.R. 5293.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1 Section 8

By Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD:
H.R. 5294.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article X, Section Y, Clause Z

By Mr. SMITH of Nebraska:
H.R. 5295.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution, specifically Clause 3 (related to regulation of Commerce among the several states).

By Mr. TAKANO:
H.R. 5296.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States.

By Ms. TITUS:
H.R. 5297.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
The bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. TURNER:
H.R. 5298.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the Constitution: The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States
Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the Constitution: The Congress shall have Power * * * To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with Indian Tribes.

By Mr. TURNER:
H.R. 5299.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the Constitution: The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States

By Mrs. WAGNER:
H.R. 5300.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article I, Section 8, Clause 3
The Congress shall have Power * * * to regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.
Article I, Section 8, Clause 18
The Congress shall have Power * * * To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by the Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. WELCH:
H.R. 5301.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18: The Congress shall have Power To . . . make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California:
H.R. 5302.
''The constitutional authority of Congress to enact this legislation is provided by Article I, section 8 of the United States Constitution (clauses 12, 13, 14, 16, and 18), which grants Congress the power to raise and support an Army; to provide and maintain a Navy; to make rules for the government and regulation of the land and naval forces; to provide for organizing, arming, and disciplining the militia; and to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying out the foregoing powers.''

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 32: Mr. BRALEY of Iowa, Mr. PALLONE, and Mr. CUELLAR.
H.R. 129: Mr. LEWIS.
H.R. 279: Ms. KUSTER.
H.R. 292: Ms. JACKSON LEE.
H.R. 303: Mr. HIMES.
H.R. 333: Mr. GALLEGO, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Ms. KAPTUR, and Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois.
H.R. 440: Mr. DELANEY.
H.R. 460: Mr. SMITH of New Jersey.
H.R. 523: Mr. BISHOP of New York.
H.R. 543: Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 647: Mr. REED and Mr. JOLLY.
H.R. 676: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.
H.R. 690: Mr. LANCE, Mr. CRENSHAW, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. HORSFORD, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. BRALEY of Iowa, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. FOSTER, and Mrs. CAPITO.
H.R. 725: Mr. THOMPSON of California.
H.R. 728: Mr. BERA of California.
H.R. 792: Ms. HANABUSA.
H.R. 831: Mr. ISRAEL.
H.R. 851: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.
H.R. 954: Ms. NORTON and Mr. TAKANO.
H.R. 975: Mr. GALLEGO.
H.R. 1020: Mr. CARTWRIGHT.
H.R. 1070: Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, and Mr. SIRES.
H.R. 1074: Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois, Ms. GRANGER, and Ms. WATERS.
H.R. 1148: Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana and Ms. BONAMICI.
H.R. 1179: Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 1250: Mr. ADERHOLT.
H.R. 1284: Mr. GALLEGO.
H.R. 1318: Mr. TIERNEY.
H.R. 1339: Ms. NORTON, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, and Ms. EDWARDS.
H.R. 1387: Mrs. HARTZLER.
H.R. 1428: Ms. ESTY.
H.R. 1431: Mr. MURPHY of Florida.
H.R. 1449: Mr. VEASEY.
H.R. 1462: Mr. COOPER and Mr. BARLETTA.
H.R. 1507: Mr. SMITH of Washington.
H.R. 1527: Mr. CICILLINE.
H.R. 1563: Mr. BERA of California and Mr. ENGEL.
H.R. 1620: Mr. LANCE, Mr. YOHO, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. HIMES, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. FOSTER, Ms. KAPTUR, and Mrs. CAPITO.
H.R. 1696: Mr. LEWIS, Mr. TIERNEY, Ms. CHU, and Mr. COHEN.
H.R. 1725: Mr. CICILLINE and Mr. GALLEGO.
H.R. 1812: Mr. GARCIA.
H.R. 1852: Mr. PALAZZO, Ms. KUSTER, Mr. ENGEL, Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, Mr. COLE, and Mr. ROSKAM.
H.R. 1878: Mrs. DAVIS of California, Ms. BROWN of Florida, and Mr. CRENSHAW.
H.R. 1910: Mr. CAPUANO.
H.R. 1921: Mr. RANGEL.
H.R. 1953: Mr. DAINES.
H.R. 2001: Mr. GALLEGO.
H.R. 2056: Mr. GALLEGO.
H.R. 2086: Mr. GALLEGO.
H.R. 2116: Ms. ESTY.
H.R. 2169: Mr. GALLEGO.
H.R. 2323: Mr. STIVERS.
H.R. 2417: Mr. WENSTRUP.
H.R. 2450: Mr. LOEBSACK.
H.R. 2457: Mr. QUIGLEY.
H.R. 2468: Ms. ESTY, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, and Mr. CICILLINE.
H.R. 2504: Mr. KILMER, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, and Mr. LARSEN of Washington.
H.R. 2506: Mr. BERA of California.
H.R. 2536: Ms. SINEMA, Mr. WOMACK, and Mr. FOSTER.
H.R. 2540: Mr. GALLEGO.
H.R. 2594: Mrs. BUSTOS.
H.R. 2662: Mr. SCHIFF.
H.R. 2673: Mr. FLEMING and Mr. WENSTRUP.
H.R. 2707: Mr. FATTAH.
H.R. 2745: Mr. MASSIE.
H.R. 2835: Mr. SMITH of New Jersey and Mr. AMODEI.
H.R. 2841: Mr. GALLEGO.
H.R. 2870: Mr. SMITH of Nebraska.
H.R. 2957: Mr. TIERNEY.
H.R. 2994: Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. BARROW of Georgia, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Ms. MOORE, Mr. ROONEY, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. COBLE, Mr. BACHUS, Mr. LOBIONDO, and Mr. DIAZ-BALART.
H.R. 3123: Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi and Mr. HASTINGS of Florida.
H.R. 3276: Mrs. BUSTOS.
H.R. 3327: Mr. GALLEGO.
H.R. 3395: Mr. GALLEGO.
H.R. 3426: Mr. GUTHRIE.
H.R. 3456: Mr. GALLEGO.
H.R. 3471: Mr. ENGEL.
H.R. 3555: Mr. CARTER.
H.R. 3560: Mr. SWALWELL of California.
H.R. 3600: Mr. GALLEGO.
H.R. 3680: Mr. SERRANO.
H.R. 3708: Mr. HARRIS and Mr. CARTWRIGHT.
H.R. 3711: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.
H.R. 3714: Mr. GALLEGO.
H.R. 3717: Mr. COLLINS of New York.
H.R. 3722: Mr. FLEISCHMANN.
H.R. 3740: Mr. PASCRELL.
H.R. 3742: Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas.
H.R. 3833: Mr. LIPINSKI and Mr. SMITH of New Jersey.
H.R. 3850: Mr. CARTWRIGHT and Mr. LOBIONDO.
H.R. 3852: Mr. CARTWRIGHT and Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.

H.R. 3877: Ms. ESTY.
H.R. 3899: Mr. MATHESON.
H.R. 3940: Mr. LATTA.
H.R. 3991: Mr. MARINO and Mr. PETRI.
H.R. 3992: Mr. LOBIONDO, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. COHEN, Ms. KAPTUR, and Mr. HUNTER.
H.R. 4149: Mr. GALLEGO.
H.R. 4158: Mr. GUTHRIE and Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California.
H.R. 4162: Mr. DOYLE.
H.R. 4172: Mr. VALADAO and Ms. TITUS.
H.R. 4190: Mr. HALL and Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois.
H.R. 4214: Mr. SIMPSON and Mr. MCKEON.
H.R. 4216: Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia and Mr. RICHMOND.
H.R. 4221: Mr. COHEN and Mr. PAYNE.
H.R. 4252: Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. JOYCE, and Mr. RENACCI.
H.R. 4319: Mr. HASTINGS of Washington.
H.R. 4365: Mr. LARSON of Connecticut and Mr. CARTWRIGHT.
H.R. 4378: Ms. SHEA-PORTER.
H.R. 4385: Ms. JENKINS.
H.R. 4426: Mr. TONKO and Mr. SWALWELL of California.
H.R. 4427: Mr. COHEN.
H.R. 4498: Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 4504: Mr. GALLEGO.
H.R. 4510: Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. NUNNELEE, Mr. YOUNG of Indiana, Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois, Mr. FORTENBERRY, Mr. LYNCH, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. KILDEE, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California and Mr. MCKEON.
H.R. 4525: Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. PETERS of Michigan, and Mr. OWENS.
H.R. 4544: Mr. CARTWRIGHT.
H.R. 4567: Mr. SMITH of Washington.
H.R. 4577: Ms. CLARKE of New York and Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi.
H.R. 4584: Mr. CARTWRIGHT.
H.R. 4620: Mr. O'ROURKE.
H.R. 4632: Mrs. BUSTOS.
H.R. 4664: Mr. CARTWRIGHT.
H.R. 4674: Mr. GALLEGO.
H.R. 4682: Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. BISHOP of New York, Mr. GALLEGO, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. SALMON, Mrs. BACHMANN, Mr. STUTZMAN, and Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California.
H.R. 4717: Mr. SHIMKUS.
H.R. 4723: Mr. CARTWRIGHT.
H.R. 4726: Mr. CARTWRIGHT.
H.R. 4748: Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. REED, and Mr. NEAL.
H.R. 4763: Mr. HONDA and Mr. SWALWELL of California.
H.R. 4793: Mr. KING of New York, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. RANGEL, and Mr. GALLEGO.
H.R. 4811: Mr. BACHUS.
H.R. 4815: Mr. VEASEY.
H.R. 4818: Mr. RANGEL and Mr. GALLEGO.
H.R. 4833: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.
H.R. 4837: Mr. CONNOLLY.
H.R. 4847: Mr. CUELLAR.
H.R. 4857: Mr. TAKANO.
H.R. 4863: Mr. RUSH.
H.R. 4864: Mr. CARTWRIGHT.
H.R. 4865: Ms. TITUS.
H.R. 4886: Mr. PETERSON, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. GOODLATTE, Ms. CHU, and Mr. NOLAN.
H.R. 4906: Ms. SLAUGHTER and Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 4930: Mr. SIMPSON and Mr. YODER.
H.R. 4933: Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. GARCIA, Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois, and Mr. VALADAO.
H.R. 4942: Ms. SINEMA and Mr. GALLEGO.
H.R. 4951: Mr. GALLEGO and Ms. SINEMA.
H.R. 4960: Mr. KLINE, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. PETRI, Mr. HIGGINS, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. COOPER, and Ms. ESTY.
H.R. 4964: Mr. RYAN of Ohio.
H.R. 4970: Mr. DELANEY.
H.R. 4989: Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California.
H.R. 4995: Mr. COOK.
H.R. 5002: Mr. WELCH.
H.R. 5007: Ms. SINEMA.
H.R. 5009: Mr. CARTWRIGHT and Mr. KILMER.
H.R. 5011: Ms. SINEMA and Mrs. BUSTOS.
H.R. 5014: Mr. ROKITA.
H.R. 5023: Mr. GALLEGO.
H.R. 5051: Mr. DELANEY and Mrs. DAVIS of California.
H.R. 5052: Mr. SIMPSON and Mr. SMITH of Texas.
H.R. 5059: Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. PETERSON, and Mr. FORBES.
H.R. 5064: Mr. CALVERT.
H.R. 5069: Mr. JOYCE.
H.R. 5071: Mr. BRIDENSTINE.
H.R. 5078: Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. RIGELL, Mr. WALBERG, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. FLEMING, Mr. SALMON, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. POSEY, Mr. COLE, and Mr. FLORES.
H.R. 5082: Mr. SMITH of New Jersey and Ms. DELAURO.
H.R. 5088: Mr. RANGEL and Mr. GALLEGO.
H.R. 5101: Mr. TAKANO, Mr. ELLISON, and Ms. BROWN of Florida.
H.R. 5110: Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. LONG, Mr. CALVERT, and Mr. SMITH of New Jersey.
H.R. 5113: Mr. ROTHFUS.
H.R. 5130: Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. MICHAUD, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. NORTON, and Ms. SCHWARTZ.
H.R. 5137: Mrs. BLACK and Mr. GIBBS.
H.R. 5143: Mr. MARCHANT.
H.R. 5146: Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. PERRY, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. GERLACH, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. SHUSTER, Mr. MARINO, Mr. BARLETTA, Mr. ROTHFUS, Ms. SCHWARTZ, Mr. DENT, Mr. PITTS, and Mr. CARTWRIGHT.
H.R. 5160: Mr. BYRNE, Mr. MARCHANT, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. BROUN of Georgia, Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. FLORES, Mr. POSEY, Mr. MULVANEY, Mr. PITTS, Mrs. BACHMANN, Mr. CARTER, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. WENSTRUP, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. ROHRABACHER, Mr. PRICE of Georgia, Mr. SANFORD, Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas, and Mr. MCCAUL.
H.R. 5168: Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. DEUTCH, and Mr. MCGOVERN.
H.R. 5179: Mr. HINOJOSA and Mr. CARTWRIGHT.
H.R. 5182: Mr. LOWENTHAL, Ms. ESTY, and Mr. MCGOVERN.
H.R. 5185: Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, Mr. HOLT, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. NADLER, Ms. NORTON, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. ROONEY, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mrs. CAPITO, Ms. LEE of California, Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. HONDA, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Ms. MOORE, and Ms. MATSUI.
H.R. 5194: Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. POMPEO, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mrs. BLACK, Mr. STOCKMAN, Mr. STIVERS, Mr. STUTZMAN, and Mr. DIAZ-BALART.
H.R. 5207: Mr. TIBERI.
H.R. 5219: Mr. HONDA, Mr. VARGAS, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Ms. LEE of California, and Mrs. NAPOLITANO.
H.R. 5226: Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. MASSIE, Ms. GABBARD, and Mr. AMASH.
H.R. 5227: Mr. LONG and Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois.
H.R. 5238: Mr. CARTWRIGHT.
H.R. 5239: Ms. NORTON, Mr. DEFAZIO, and Mr. HINOJOSA.
H.R. 5245: Mr. COBLE and Mr. BUTTERFIELD.
H.R. 5253: Mr. SANFORD.
H.J. Res. 68: Mr. LOEBSACK.
H.J. Res. 119: Mr. PETERS of Michigan.
H. Con. Res. 27: Mr. CALVERT.
H. Con. Res. 69: Ms. ESTY and Mr. VEASEY.
H. Con. Res. 107: Mr. SHERMAN, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. ROKITA, Mr. REICHERT, Mr. ROSKAM, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mrs. NOEM, Mr. GIBBS, Mrs. WAGNER, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. GARDNER, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mr. BARLETTA, Ms. FOXX, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. ROYCE, Mr. NEAL, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. OLSON, Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, Mr. TERRY, and Mr. LANGEVIN.
H. Con. Res. 110: Mr. PITTS, Mr. WALBERG, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. MCHENRY, Mr. ADERHOLT, Mrs. BACHMANN, Mr. SCALISE, Ms. LOFGREN, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. LEE of California, Mr. MCKINLEY, and Mr. CLAWSON of Florida.
H. Res. 35: Mr. SMITH of Texas.
H. Res. 208: Mr. DOYLE and Mr. NADLER.
H. Res. 231: Mr. BRALEY of Iowa and Mr. MCCLINTOCK.
H. Res. 281: Ms. SLAUGHTER and Mr. HIGGINS.
H. Res. 440: Mr. FITZPATRICK.
H. Res. 489: Mr. PRICE of North Carolina.
H. Res. 518: Mr. LOEBSACK.
H. Res. 522: Mr. KILMER.
H. Res. 536: Mr. BRALEY of Iowa.
H. Res. 587: Mr. VARGAS.
H. Res. 620: Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. GALLEGO, and Mr. Labrador.
H. Res. 683: Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. PETERS of Michigan, Mr. PETERS of California, Mr. HUNTER, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. MCKINLEY, Mr. LIPINSKI, and Mr. SHERMAN.
H. Res. 689: Ms. JACKSON LEE, Ms. NORTON, Mr. PAYNE, Ms. MOORE, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. RANGEL, and Mr. RUSH.

United States of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 113th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 160 WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, JULY 30, 2014 No. 121

Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Wondrous God, angels bow before You, heaven and Earth adore You.

As the days pass swiftly, we pause to thank You for surrounding us with the shield of Your favor. Your anger is only for a moment, but Your favor is for a lifetime.

Today, lead our lawmakers to greater maturity and wholeness in You. May they grow in grace and in a deeper knowledge of You, becoming better prepared to be Your ambassadors, reconciling the world to You. May they continue to be controlled by Your Spirit, always walking on the road that leads to life. Give them, O God, a common commitment to the crucial cause of keeping America strong.

We pray in Your sacred Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

MAKING EMERGENCY SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2014—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 488, S. 2648, the emergency appropriations supplemental act.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the motion.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 488, S. 2648, a bill making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Following my remarks and those of the Republican leader, there will be 1 hour for debate equally divided prior to a cloture vote on S. 2569, the Bring Jobs Home Act. If cloture is not invoked, there will be an immediate cloture vote on the motion to proceed on S. 2648, the emergency supplemental appropriations act.

Following those votes, there will be voice votes on confirmation of the Akuetteh, Moritsugu, and Kennedy nominations.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

I ask unanimous consent that the time from 3 p.m. to 4 p.m. be under the control of the Republicans and the time from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. be controlled by the majority.

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

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 2685

Mr. REID. Mr. President, S. 2685 is due for a second reading.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will read the bill by title for the second time.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2685) to reform the authorities of the Federal Government to require the production of certain business records, conduct electronic surveillance, use pen registers and trap and trace devices, and use other forms of information gathering for foreign intelligence, counterterrorism, and criminal purposes, and for other purposes.

Mr. REID. I would object to any further proceedings with respect to the bill.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection is heard. The bill will be placed on the calendar.

BRING JOBS HOME ACT

Mr. REID. Mr. President, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow wisely noted: ''It takes less time to do a thing right than it does to explain why you did it wrong.''

In about 1 hour, Senators will be on the floor and have an opportunity to follow what Longfellow said; that is, to do the right thing. We have a bill that protects American jobs. The Bring Jobs Home Act tackles the growing problem of American jobs being shipped overseas. It is called outsourcing, shipping jobs overseas.

We Democrats are lined up against outsourcing. The Bring Jobs Home Act would protect about 21 million jobs in our country.

Today in the United States, anytime an American company closes a factory or a plant in America and moves operations to another country, American taxpayers pick up part of that moving bill. It is hard to believe, but it is true. A company moves from America, and American taxpayers help them with the move. If they want to move, American taxpayers shouldn't help them at all.

The Bring Jobs Home Act ends senseless tax breaks for these outsourcers. It ends the ridiculous practice of American funding outsourcing of their own jobs.

The Bring Jobs Home Act doesn't just fight to keep jobs here in America, it also brings jobs back.

This bill provides a 20-percent tax credit to help American companies with the costs of moving operations back to the United States. The Bring Jobs Home Act will protect 150,000 jobs in Nevada. It could potentially save as many as 325,000 at-risk jobs in Kentucky and jobs all over the country.

Economically speaking, what else could be more important than ensuring our working Americans' jobs are protected. Regardless of what Republican leaders said and what the Republican

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Printed on recycled paper.

leader has opined, helping our constituents stay employed is our duty as a Senator.

Frankly, a vote against this bill is a vote against American jobs. There is absolutely no excuse, no justification, for any Member of this body to vote against this legislation. But as of late, Senate Republicans have repeatedly blocked legislation, such as the Bring Jobs Home Act, which is good for the American people.

Remember, the Longfellow quote that I mentioned at the beginning of my remarks: ''It takes less time to do a thing right than it does to explain why you did it wrong.''

The wisdom of Longfellow's quote is there, and each time another good bill is blocked by the Senate Republicans we must think of Longfellow and what he said: ''It takes less time to do a thing right than it does to explain why you did it wrong.''

Each time after Republicans have voted against legislation that is good for working families, an odd scene has developed on the Senate floor. A procession of Republicans makes it way to the floor and individually Senators begin to explain why they voted against a good bill, trying to explain why Americans don't deserve a fair shot. For example, after voting against an increase in the minimum wage, after voting against equal pay for women, after voting against cost-cutting energy efficiency, and after voting against student loan refinancing, after all of these votes, the same spectacle unfolds immediately after. The Republicans come through that door and try to make their case.

All the American public wants is a fair shot at a good life. Instead of voting for a good piece of legislation that would benefit folks back home, they spend time explaining why they did the opposite.

Maybe our vote today will be different. Maybe Senate Republicans will finally focus on the many families depending on the jobs we are trying to protect. If they do, they will vote to bring jobs home. This legislation is important and necessary. If they do, they will vote to keep American jobs from going overseas.

Those of us who do the right thing and vote for this will not need to explain because we have done the right thing; and that is because our constituents know we work to give them a fair shot at good, secure jobs.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MARKEY). The minority leader is recognized.

EPA REGULATIONS

Mr. MCCONNELL. The Obama White House likes to pretend that its war on coal is about protecting the planet. Yet his newest regulations would hardly do a thing to impact global carbon emissions.

The President's own EPA Administrator basically admitted it when she said a few years back that U.S. action alone won't meaningfully impact global CO_2 levels.

They don't seem to care that their regulations would devastate the lives of whole families in my State, working-class Kentuckians who just want to put food on the table and give their children a better life.

They don't seem to care that their regulations threaten to undermine Kentucky's traditionally low utility rates, splinter our manufacturing base, and shift well-paying jobs overseas. They don't seem to care that the people who stand to be hurt most by their regressive policies are those who can afford it the least.

As a candidate President Obama wasn't just open about his plan to make American energy bills skyrocket, he was pretty cavalier about it too. For him it was a necessary sacrifice to achieve an ideological aim.

But for a working mom in Ashland, KY, a skyrocketing utility bill can mean the difference between an annual trip to Lake Cumberland and a tearful apology to her kids. It can mean choosing which bills to pay this month and which to put off just a little longer. It can mean birthday disappointments and missed credit card payments.

These types of consequences may not be a big deal to the President, but for many people in the country and many in Kentucky, they are a very big deal. Families have had to put up with enough in nearly 6 years that this administration has been in power: higher medical costs, stubborn unemployment, and the feeling of less opportunity.

What I am saying is middle-class families deserve a break. They deserve to have Washington battling in their corner instead of against them. That is why I keep fighting this war on coal.

Later this morning I will take my message to one of the administration's so-called listening sessions on these extreme energy regulations. The Obama administration may have been too afraid to hold a hearing anywhere near coal country, but that doesn't mean they will be able to ignore the voice of my constituents. I will be joined by Kentuckians who have had to travel hundreds of miles just to get here.

One of them is Jimmy Rose, the former coal miner from Pineville who rose to national attention with his song: ''Coal Keeps the Lights On.'' As Jimmy puts it: ''Coal keeps the bills paid, clothes on the backs, and shoes on the feet.'' And that is true for so many in our State.

I will note the irony that the administration's so-called listening session in Atlanta had to switch locations due to a significant power outage.

As one person put it, the power outage is either cruel irony or a glimpse of coming cruel reality; that is, of course, if the Obama administration and the EPA are successful in their quest to end the use of affordable, reliable coal. It is hard to disagree.

The point is the President's extreme energy regulations are little more than a political turnout strategy masquerading as a serious environmental policy. Not only could they end up making the environment worse rather than better but they threaten to hurt countless middle-class families in the process while shipping American jobs overseas.

So they need to be stopped. The administration needs to be stopped. Kentuckians aren't going to take this lying down. We are going to keep fighting back.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

BRING JOBS HOME ACT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 2569, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2569) to provide an incentive for businesses to bring jobs back to America.

Pending:

Reid amendment No. 3693, to change the enactment date.

Reid amendment No. 3694 (to amendment No. 3693), of a perfecting nature.

Reid motion to commit the bill to the Committee on Finance, with instructions, Reid amendment No. 3695, to change the enactment date.

Reid amendment No. 3696 (to (the instructions) amendment No. 3695), of a perfecting nature.

Reid amendment No. 3697 (to amendment No. 3696), of a perfecting nature.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be 1 hour of debate equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees.

The assistant majority leader.

Mr. DURBIN. I am going to be joined shortly on the floor by Senator JOHN WALSH of Montana and Senator DEBBIE STABENOW of Michigan, who are going to speak to the bill that is pending before us.

Until they arrive I wish to set the context here. We are trying to create incentives in the Tax Code to bring good-paying manufacturing jobs back to the United States, to incentivize companies that will bring jobs from their overseas facilities back into our country and put Americans to work. How we pay for it is we reduce the current subsidies which we give to American companies to ship jobs overseas. Pretty simple.

So the vote really comes down to the question of whether Democrats and Republicans in the Senate want to create an incentive in the Tax Code to keep jobs—good-paying jobs—in America, to build the workforce in America so that they have a future, and to discourage shipping American jobs overseas. I don't know what the debate is about. I don't know what Republican can go to a town meeting in any State in the Union and argue that this is not a good

idea. It is a very important idea, and it is one that we want to use to repopulate the United States with good-paying jobs and hard-working families getting the kind of money they deserve.

We are in the midst of a debate now—a national debate that has touched the State of Illinois—about something called inversion. Most people are not familiar with that term. It is a situation where, at least on paper, an American company moves its headquarters and operations to a foreign country to avoid paying American taxes. We have major companies that are doing that. Some are considering making that move. The President spoke to it last week, and I think the President hit the nail on the head. It isn't a question of whether it is legal; it is a question of whether it is right.

Is it right for a pharmaceutical company that is dependent on the Federal Government to build their company, build their products, and build their profitability, to walk away from their tax responsibilities in America? You don't put a successful drug on the market unless it starts with research, and most research begins with our government. The National Institutes of Health, for about $30 billion a year, does basic research that leads to new discoveries, new drugs. Those efforts of basic research are converted into pharmaceuticals and drugs that are then developed by these private companies.

When the private companies think they have finally found the right combination, they have to submit their drug to the Food and Drug Administration, which is a regulatory agency in Washington that tests their drug to make sure that it doesn't harm people and that it performs as promised. It takes some time. It takes a lot of taxpayer money. But when the Food and Drug Administration then hands down its decision that your drug is safe to go on the market, you have just received the most amazing endorsement possible in the world for a drug—that the U.S. Food and Drug Administration has approved it for sale in the United States of America. That is a ticket to success and profitability, but that isn't the end. You have to protect your right in that drug, and to protect it you go to the U.S. Patent Office and make sure there is a registration that protects your legal right to make a profit on that drug and keep others from duplicating it at your expense.

Look at the process that led to the profitability of these blockbuster drugs—National Institutes of Health research, taxpayer funded; Food and Drug Administration approval, taxpayer funded; Patent Office protection, taxpayer funded.

Now major pharmaceuticals are saying: Well, it sure would be nice to stay in America, but what we are going to do is move our corporate headquarters to a European country or perhaps to the island of Jersey—which I am not sure I could find on the map—and in doing so, we won't have to pay as much in Federal taxes to America.

Is that ingratitude? It certainly is. You have used all these Federal agencies to become profitable, and now you walk away from your Federal tax responsibility.

There is another side to this coin. When these companies invert and move overseas, the tax they don't pay is a burden shifted to other American companies and other American taxpayers. They are getting off the hook for American taxes, but they are pushing the burden on to others.

We have to come to grips with the reality that many major companies are using global commerce and global opportunities at the expense of America. We have to encourage good-paying jobs in this country and companies that stay in this country. In our Tax Code we need to reward American-based companies headquartered in America, with their jobs in America, paying a good wage, good benefits, and veteran preferences. Give them a break in the Tax Code. Don't subsidize companies that want to move their jobs overseas.

The bill before us gets to that basic question: Should our Tax Code incentivize bringing jobs back from overseas or should it incentivize and encourage shipping jobs overseas? It is a simple vote, and I hope it is overwhelmingly positive and bipartisan when it comes before us.

We know our country can grow with the right encouragement because we are lucky. For those of us who were born here, we were born into one of the strongest democracies in history. We were born into an economic system that creates opportunity for those who are educated and trained and strive to improve themselves. We also know we have a responsibility here in the Senate, in the House, and in the White House to create a tax climate and an economic climate for that kind of growth. That is what we are trying to do with this bill—give a fair shot for American companies so they can bring jobs home and be incentivized and rewarded to do it and discourage the companies that do just the opposite.

I think this is a front-and-center issue. Good-paying jobs are the key to restoring the middle class in America—something I think is long overdue to create an incentive for people who are struggling to see at the end of that rainbow the chance to raise a family in a good neighborhood and a good church and parish and a good State that really helps America.

I will be supporting this measure before the Senate this morning.

I yield the floor and suggest that during the quorum call the time be equally divided between Democrats and Republicans.

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

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican whip.

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

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

RETURNING AUSTIN TICE

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I wish to make some remarks about the ongoing humanitarian crisis that is occurring on our southern border in Texas. I have spoken on this subject a number of times. Before I do that, I would like to say a word about a decorated U.S. Marine Corps veteran, an award-winning journalist, and a courageous seventh-generation Texan by the name of Austin Tice.

In 2012 Austin went to Syria as a civilian. He went to report on the brutal civil war that has now claimed the lives of more than 170,000 Syrians, caused a huge refugee crisis in Turkey, Lebanon, and in other countries in that region and has destabilized that entire region. Austin was a strong believer in the freedom of the press and the importance of letting his fellow countrymen know what was happening in the Syrian civil war.

During his time in Syria his works were published in The Washington Post and the McClatchy News, among other news outlets.

On August 14, 2012, he was kidnapped and no one has heard from him since. His family is understandably concerned about his well-being and his whereabouts. It has been nearly 2 years and his family and friends still have no idea where he is, who is holding him or what they might want in exchange for his freedom.

I once again call on the Obama administration to do whatever they can, through the resources the Federal Government has, to locate and safely return Austin Tice to his family.

I say once again to Austin's family: We have not given up. We will never give up until we find your son and bring him safely home.

BORDER CRISIS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, 1 month ago President Obama gave an interview with ABC News in which he was asked about the massive influx of unaccompanied minors—mainly from Central America—who are crossing the southwestern American border, most notably into Texas where we have seen 57,000 unaccompanied children since October.

Unless any of my colleagues think this problem will just go away, let me remind everyone some of the projections are that if we don't do anything to deal with the causes or deal with the remedy to this growing humanitarian problem, it will get worse. Indeed, some estimates are that as many as 90,000 unaccompanied minors will come this year alone, and the number could well rise to 145,000 next year. That would tend to track the historical trend we have seen—both the combination of the impression that the Obama administration is less than serious about enforcing our immigration laws, as well as this loophole in the 2008 human trafficking law that is being exploited by the cartels which is helping

them make money. This is part of their business model because they charge by the head, by the child, by the person, and then they bring them through these smuggling corridors from Central America, through Mexico, into South Texas. It is a great business model for them.

The problem is it is a horrific experience for the immigrants who subject themselves to the tender mercies of the cartels that care nothing about them as human beings. They rape the women, kidnap the migrants, and then hold them for ransom. We know—because of the perils of that journey on the top of that train called The Beast—that many immigrants are severely injured, some losing limbs, and others are killed or die from exposure as a result of the process from Central America.

I say to my colleagues who think doing nothing is an option that people are losing their lives, people are being injured, and women are being assaulted. These migrants are being held for ransom and kidnapped. It is not compassionate to allow this to continue, but that is what illegal immigration looks like in 2014.

For those people who come into the country legally, they obviously don't have to turn themselves over to the cartels—these transnational criminal organizations that traffic in drugs and people. These drug cartels are despicable and they will prey on these migrants and those who want to come to the United States. As long as it happens outside of the legal system, they are going to continue to be victimized.

About 1 month ago the President said: ''The problem is that under current law, once these kids come across the border, there's a system in which we're supposed to process them, take care of them, until we can send them back.''

That is what the President of the United States said 1 month ago. Of course he was referring to a 2008 law that I referenced earlier and has been talked about a number of times. This was a law that was passed by essentially unanimous consent and acclimation. It was a human trafficking law, but unfortunately what we didn't know at the time is that the creative minds of the cartels would learn to exploit a loophole in the law, which treats migrants, particularly unaccompanied children, from contiguous countries differently than we treat migrant children coming from Mexico.

Specifically what happens is they are released after being processed by the Border Patrol, and they are given a notice to appear at a future court date. They are then released into the custody of a family member, many of whom are not legally present in the United States themselves. What we have seen from experience is that many of them don't show up for their court hearings. We don't have sufficient resources committed to make sure people do appear, so they melt into the great American landscape and have essentially succeeded in coming to the United States—outside of our legal immigration system—and staying here. As long as this loophole continues to exist, they will keep coming.

The President was referring to this human trafficking statute that has become an effective magnet for illegal immigration, and it is not just children who are taking advantage of it. I talked to the Secretary of Homeland Security yesterday morning. We have seen a huge surge in parents with young children as well. They are exploiting the same loophole because we don't have adequate detention facilities to keep them safe pending any court hearing and pending repatriation back to their country of origin unless they have a valid claim for asylum or some other claim for immigration relief.

The loophole that is in the 2008 law is effectively part of the cartel business model. We have colleagues who believe the compassionate response is to do nothing to close that loophole, and I hope they will come to understand it is the opposite of compassion to allow this loophole to exist and allow the cartels to continue to use these children and other migrants as a commodity by smuggling them into the United States.

This situation has also overloaded the capacity of many of our local communities that have big hearts and want to treat these migrants, particularly the children, with compassion, but they have become overwhelmed. We have seen, as these children have been warehoused in other parts of the country, many communities are starting to feel the backlash. While people have big hearts and believe we ought to try to help people in need, particularly children, they realize that ultimately they are the ones who will have to pick up the tab for health care, education, and the like.

They are also concerned about whether they will actually be able to assimilate these immigrants, which has always been the American way, and the way we have done that is through legal immigration and an orderly immigration process which complies with the rule of law.

We are a nation of immigrants and we should be proud of that, but we should not be proud of this uncontrolled flow of people coming into the country, exploiting this gap in the 2008 law, making money for the cartels, and exposing these migrants to horrific treatment, some of whom don't even make it here. We should not consider that compassion; it is not. It is the opposite of compassion. We ought to try to do something to fix it, and we have it within our capacity to do so.

Earlier this week the White House Domestic Policy Council Director Cecilia Munoz said the administration was ''absolutely interested'' in reforming this law to create an efficient repatriation process for the unaccompanied minors. Good for them. I hope that is the case, but unfortunately I get the sense that the people who understand this gap in this 2008 law—this flaw or this loophole—have not been able to win the argument with the political folks at the White House who don't want to be seen repatriating these children back to their home country because they are worried about the upcoming election.

Secretary of Homeland Security Jeh Johnson has repeatedly emphasized to me in private as well as publicly the need to change this law and to establish a more efficient system of removal to one's home country.

To be sure, there are going to be valid claims for asylum. If someone is a victim of human trafficking, they can get a T visa, they call it, so they can cooperate with law enforcement in the United States. If you are like the young boy whom I saw in McAllen, TX, 2 weeks ago—I asked him where his parents were. He said they were dead. That young boy could qualify for a special immigrant visa as a minor child having been abandoned or who is an orphan. So there are ways valid claims for relief can be processed, but right now these claims are not being made because people are just melting into the great American landscape, and they keep coming.

So Jeh Johnson understands this, Cecilia Munoz said she understands this, and the President has said he understands it, and it has also had bipartisan support. The senior Senator from Missouri Mrs. MCCASKILL has acknowledged this issue, the senior Senator from Delaware, who happens to be chairman of the Homeland Security Committee Senator CARPER, and the junior Senator from West Virginia Mr. MANCHIN have all publicly acknowledged it, as well as Democratic representatives in the border district in Arizona, and the No. 3 Member of the House Democratic leadership. All of them have acknowledged what the problem is and what we need to do to fix it.

Let's review: President Obama described the border situation as a crisis, and I agree with that; it is. He described the 2008 law, which I have talked about, as a problem, which it is. Some leading Republicans and leading Democrats and senior members of the administration believe that reforming this 2008 law is part of the solution and would help resolve the crisis, which it would. They called upon Congress to make the necessary changes, which we should.

At a time of intense political gridlock in Washington, we actually do have some bipartisan agreement on what we need to do to help address the problem. Yet none of these critical reforms can happen in the Senate unless the majority leader allows a vote on the bill I anticipate will come over from the House which will contain a solution to this problem. We have seen a bipartisan group of political leaders

contend it is necessary, if we are actually going to address it, but so far my impression is the majority leader is not going to allow us to have that vote.

Indeed, the majority leader, the majority whip, and the chairman of the Judiciary Committee have all said they reject the need for changing this 2008 law that I have described. The majority leader has gone so far as to say the border is secure. It may look secure from Nevada, where he is from, but it is not secure in Texas, where I live, and it just defies reality.

I wish the majority leader and the President would actually come visit the border. I wish they would visit these processing centers, meet these children, and congratulate the Border Patrol for doing a great job under very difficult circumstances, but so far they have declined. I hope they will reconsider.

Ms. COLLINS, the Senator from Maine, is getting a bipartisan codel to go down to McAllen on Friday, and I look forward to accompanying her on that trip. But if people can make that one trip—at least one trip—they would learn for themselves that the border is not secure.

This isn't a trick. Sometimes I get the feeling that some of my friends in the Senate think we are going to always claim the border is insecure, so we are never going to do the other parts of immigration reform that they want to do or that need to be done. As a matter of fact, in 2011 the President notably said: Well, people won't be satisfied until we create a moat and fill it full of alligators. He ridiculed those who said the border is not secure. Yet last year alone 414,000 people were detained on the southwestern border, 414,000 from 100 different countries—100 different countries—most of them admittedly from Mexico and Central America and South America.

But people should come visit in Falfurrias, TX. They have a Border Patrol stop there where many migrants are let out of the vehicle by their coyote, which is a human smuggler, and forced to walk around this checkpoint in 100-degree-plus weather. Colleagues will find that some of them die from exposure. People can imagine coming from Central America or South America and coming in that hot weather under those conditions. Some of them literally die. So the Border Patrol has established rescue beacons, they call them, where if the immigrant says ''I have to get some help,'' they can actually hit the button on this rescue beacon, and the Border Patrol will come and find them and make sure they get some medical care. Those rescue beacons are in English, they are in Spanish, and they are in Chinese. I assure my colleagues there are not many native Chinese speakers in Brooks County, TX.

The point is, to anybody who will listen, the border is not secure. It is a national security challenge in addition to our other issues.

I ask people to talk to GEN John Kelly, who is head of Southern Command, who says right now 75 percent of the illegal drug traffic coming from Central and South America into the United States—they have to sit and watch because they don't have the adequate resources to stop it. It is the same cartels that are smuggling those drugs that are the criminal organizations that are smuggling the people. They are trafficking in human beings, and they will transport any commodity, any weapon, any person, anything into the United States as long as they can make money off of it. It is just the way they do business.

It is enormously frustrating to hear the majority leader declare the border is secure in spite of the facts and in spite of the bipartisan acknowledgment that we need to fix this 2008 loophole in order to help solve this problem. But there are people who have shown some courage, people such as Secretary Johnson and others, other Democrats who have said, despite the majority leader's pronouncement that we should actually do something, we should actually solve the problem, and we have it within our ability to do that.

I wish to particularly acknowledge the courage of my friend and colleague HENRY CUELLAR from Texas. He is a proud blue dog Democrat, as he reminds me almost every time I see him, and he has partnered with me in bipartisan bicameral legislation that would actually fix this flaw in the 2008 law. If we could just get a vote on it here in the Senate, maybe we would have a chance to fix the problem and do what the President acknowledged was the problem in the first place.

I am hopeful we can achieve a breakthrough, but we have about 2 more days that we will be in session before the August recess. My constituents back home don't understand why in the world we would leave without fixing this problem, without addressing this humanitarian crisis, because they see the numbers as we see the numbers. They are going to continue to grow and the crisis will get worse unless we act in a sensible way.

The only way we are going to get that breakthrough is if we get some leadership here in the Senate and the majority leader allows a vote on either what the House is going to send us on Thursday or allow an amendment, which I am proud to offer, which has broad support here in the Senate.

But leadership requires more than just giving a speech or an interview and then heading off to the next fundraiser. It requires thoughtful, persistent engagement and a willingness to spend political capital.

We know all of this is controversial. We get that. But it strikes me that when you are getting attacked from the right and the left, that means you are probably doing something that could at least have the potential for being a bipartisan consensus, which, as we know, is the only way anything gets done here because none of us get everything we want. I would love it if I could get everything I want, but that is not democracy. That is not our system. That is not our constitutional form of government.

I hope the President would tell the majority leader that he believes this 2008 law is a problem, as he said a month ago on ABC News, and I hope he will offer support for his own Secretary of Homeland Security, who I know understands the nature of the problem, but unfortunately I fear he is being outvoted by the political advisers at the White House, not the people making public policy.

The folks in my State and particularly in the region of South Texas and the Rio Grande Valley are watching and waiting and hoping that Washington will act to resolve this ongoing crisis. But we can't act unless the majority leader allows us to act. That is the nature of this institution. He won't allow a vote unless President Obama steps up and leads in order to do what he has acknowledged is the right thing to do and what we must do in order to address this problem.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

MEDICARE ANNIVERSARY

Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, I wish to speak very briefly about Medicare.

Before 1965, as the Presiding Officer and many others in the Chamber know, nearly half of America's seniors had no health insurance at all. Medicare made certain that seniors had access to affordable health care, and it has lifted millions out of poverty in this country.

Seniors earn their Medicare benefits; they are not given to them. Seniors earn their Medicare benefits through a lifetime of hard work because, as we know, for all of our working lives a portion of every single paycheck is deposited and is guaranteed for benefits for when we turn 65. This is a bedrock commitment. We pay into it and it should be there for all of us when we reach the age of 65.

Today we celebrate the 49th anniversary of Medicare, but I encourage my colleagues to hold the balloons and cake because over the past few years what we have seen down the hall in the House of Representatives is a group of House Members who try to continually chip away at the promise of Medicare. They want to turn Medicare into a voucher system. They even tried to raise the eligibility age.

These proposals in effect shift the cost on to those who can least afford to pay it. They will increase out-of-pocket expenses for our seniors on benefits such as wellness visits, cancer screenings, and lifesaving drugs. These plans will allow insurance companies to cherry pick who they want to cover, setting off a premium spiral that would leave sicker seniors with higher premiums and higher costs, leaving many American seniors without the care they need and the protection they have earned.

These proposals we see coming out of the House of Representatives undermine the integrity of the program. I think it is important for us in the Senate to not allow them to put the health and financial security of our seniors in jeopardy. That is why I have introduced the Medicare Protection Act. It is a responsible commonsense solution. It prevents budget schemes that would reduce Medicare benefits and restrict eligibility, and it sends a strong message that Medicare should not be dismantled, privatized, or turned into a voucher system.

The promise of Medicare is one we must keep. The Senate should pass the Medicare Protection Act. I ask that we keep Medicare strong and affordable for today's seniors and for future generations.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I applaud and commend my friend the Senator from Arkansas. This is very visionary legislation. I support what he is doing, and we are going to do everything we can to move forward on this legislation. We would do it more quickly except we have a few problems with people over here. So we are going to do our best.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF JILL A. PRYOR TO BE UNITED STATES CIRCUIT JUDGE FOR THE ELEVENTH CIRCUIT

Mr. REID. I now move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 840.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Jill A. Pryor, of Georgia, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Eleventh Circuit.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. There is a cloture motion at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to report the motion.

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, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Jill A. Pryor, of Georgia, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Eleventh Circuit.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Christopher A. Coons, Sheldon Whitehouse, Patty Murray, Amy Klobuchar, Maria Cantwell, Jack Reed, Bill Nelson, Elizabeth Warren, Tom Udall, Mazie K. Hirono, Richard Blumenthal, Barbara Boxer, Tom Harkin, Benjamin L. Cardin, Charles E. Schumer.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived.

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. REID. I now move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

BRING JOBS HOME ACT—Continued

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that following my remarks, Senators COONS, SESSIONS, STABENOW, and WALSH be permitted to speak for up to 5 minutes each prior to the cloture vote on S. 2569, with Senator COONS being the first to be recognized.

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

The Senator from Delaware.

PARTNERSHIP WITH AFRICA

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I have never been more optimistic about Africa and about the potential for a U.S. partnership with Africa than I am today.

Every year I host a conference in my home State of Delaware called ''Opportunity: Africa'' that brings together Delawareans and Africans, leaders from across our country and from the continent interested in building and strengthening new ties. Every year it has grown in participation, in the scope of issues we have looked at, and in the number of Delaware businesses interested in the opportunities in this continent of 54 countries. At this past March's conference, President Clinton delivered the keynote.

The hunger to build new relationships between business, government, the faith community, and those in the African diaspora is undeniable. What is required of us is to think anew and dedicate ourselves to building partnerships of mutuality and that last. In this Chamber that will mean passing a reauthorized African Growth and Opportunity Act that does more to encourage and facilitate real two-way trade than the current law and to take up and pass the bipartisan Power Africa law that will strengthen investment in infrastructure and in electricity across the continent.

Next week it means coming together with Africa's government and business leaders to forge new relationships built on mutual respect and the opportunities we share.

I urge my colleagues and my friends throughout the business community to seize this opportunity and focus on the bright future it could create. An Africa that trades with us, that can defend itself, that can secure itself, and that empowers its citizens is the Africa we see, and that is an Africa which we in the United States are uniquely suited to help its people build. We have already built a powerful foundation for partnership through our investments in public health and education, clean water, democracy, and good governance.

After 50 years in the Peace Corp and more than a decade of PEPFAR—President Bush's groundbreaking commitment to combating HIV and AIDS—we are better regarded in Africa than in anywhere else in the world. From our universities, to our businesses, to our military training and partnerships, to the vibrant Africa diaspora community spread throughout this land, we have tools no other Nation has. The opportunity for progress is extraordinary. By helping to build a broad and sustainable middle class across this continent, American workers and businesses will have more people to sell their products to and more markets in which to invest. The more we partner with African businesses, the stronger they will become.

Genuine partnerships such as this must be the foundation for our relationships with Africa going forward, and we have a lot to gain as well.

As many have commented, in the last decade 6 out of 10 of the fastest growing economies in the world have been in Africa, and that number will only rise. Other countries have noticed the opportunity. China's exports to Africa, for instance, have outgrown ours 3 to 1 since 2000, and 5 years ago China eclipsed us as Africa's largest trading partner. So it is no surprise that since 2000, China has hosted five summits with African heads of state. Let's be clear, the Chinese, in seeking opportunities for this century, will not miss the ''next China.'' So we have a lot of ground to make up.

It is also critical we recognize that we should not just mimic the ways in which the Chinese are seeking opportunity in Africa. They bring a policy of nonintervention in domestic affairs. We bring American values—a focus on democracy, on governance, on human rights, as well as the attractiveness of our technology, our resources, and the relationship with our diaspora community.

This week we have had remarkable opportunities for our President, our Secretary of State, and several of us from this Chamber to meet with young African leaders as part of a program that brought 500 inspiring young African leaders to Washington.

Next week we will welcome more than 40 heads of state from across the continent—a summit that I hope signals the next big step in building strong and sustainable partnerships throughout the continent.

President Obama, leaders from this Chamber, leaders from the Cabinet, and from across America's corporate community will join for 3 days to allow us to refocus our efforts on the continent, to seize this moment, and to move forward. It is my hope that this Chamber, this Congress, will take advantage of

the opportunity to enact the African Growth and Opportunity Act on a longer reauthorization and to open it to truly balanced trade, and pass the bipartisan Power Africa Act to significantly improve our investment in infrastructure.

The opportunities are limitless. It is my hope that we will but seize them.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

IMMIGRATION

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, today's Wall Street Journal has an article that should send shivers through every Member of this body. The article reports on what the President is planning to do with regard to executive amnesty, using Executive orders to do that which Congress has refused to do.

The article says this:

> For months, President Barack Obama said there were limits to his power to protect people living illegally in the U.S. from deportation. Now, he is considering broad action to scale back deportations that could include work permits for millions of people, according to lawmakers and immigration advocates who have consulted with the White House.

The President has been meeting regularly with immigration activists and he has been promising them things that he has no power to promise. He has promised them things that constitutionally he is not able to do, and this Congress needs to say no to that. We can do that by simply barring the expenditure of money in the future to execute such a scheme.

Congressman BLACKBURN in the House has offered legislation, and Senator CRUZ in the Senate has offered legislation, which would do just that. But it is not in the bill we are being asked to provide cloture on that will come up in a few minutes.

The article goes on to say—just to stress the stark nature of what is being considered—

> The shift in White House thinking came after House Republicans said they wouldn't take up immigration legislation. . . .

So the President is saying: I have legislation and the House will not pass it, therefore, I am going to do it myself. It is one of the most pathetic excuses for abuse of power by a court or a President that you can imagine. Congress considered his legislation. He promoted it strongly. Members of both parties have advocated for it. But the House considered it and rejected it. That is an action. That is a decision by the House of Representatives. The President has no power to go beyond that, and I think this Congress—this Senate—has a responsibility to speak to that question and to avoid an issue. The Wall Street Journal goes on to say:

> An announcement is expected soon after Labor Day, an administration official said.

They are going to announce this within weeks. The article goes on to say that it could involve 5 million people or more, and the President said himself he would ''fix as much of our immigration system as I can on my own, without Congress''—without Congress. I will just use my pen. I will just order my officers, who work for me, you know. The Border Patrol, the ICE officers, they work for me. I will just tell them to do A, B, and C. We will just not pay any attention to the fact that plain law, section 274 of the INA, says that a person in the country unlawfully is not entitled to work.

Mr. President, how much time do I have?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has 1 minute remaining.

Mr. SESSIONS. He will just do that on his own.

So we are now being asked to move forward on legislation that provides no opportunity to even get a vote on this issue. Certainly its text does not fix this problem.

Let me be plain, colleagues. There are times when we have to rise above politics. Maybe somebody believes in amnesty, and they would like to see this happen, but we cannot acquiesce in having the President unilaterally do so in an unlawful fashion.

The truth is that the people who are refusing to bring language up of this kind and fix it—what they want is to see the President do this. They are for it, they are supporting it, and they have rejected any action, so far at least, to defend the rule of law, defend the Senate, defend the entire Congress's legitimate powers. It is just breathtaking to me.

So let me again say, colleagues, we need to take action. This Congress needs to speak. We cannot allow Executive orders to be issued by a President who eradicates plain law. To do so is wrong. The American people are watching this. They are not going to be happy that the Congress did not take action. Expressions of concern among Senators are not enough. We need to bring this up.

But Senator REID, I predict, is not going to allow that to happen, and he is going to be supported by every Member of his Democratic Conference. And every Member of the Democratic Conference, every Member who supports him in this plan, will be, in fact, involved and supportive of the President's plan.

I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, first I would ask the Presiding Officer if he could notify me after I have spoken for 4 of my 5 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator will be so notified.

Ms. STABENOW. I thank the Presiding Officer.

In a few moments we are going to be voting on a very fundamental principle and a very important bill that is literally about bringing jobs home to America. The question before us is, Are we going to begin to change the incentives in the Tax Code where instead of incentivizing jobs being shipped overseas, we are going to support our companies that are bringing jobs home?

This is a no-brainer. I think anybody listening to this debate, anyone across America who is focused in, would say: Why were you not even just having a voice vote and everybody voting yes and then go on to the next tax policy, like inversion, that we need to be dealing with that will keep jobs in America?

Unfortunately, we have had to go through a lot of procedures, motions to proceed. We are now having to go through a supermajority vote here to get to the final bill. I hope colleagues will join us in a bipartisan way to vote to get to the final vote on this bill so we can make it very clear we are on the side of American workers and American businesses.

Here is what we have seen in the last few years, as shown on this chart. In the last decade we have lost 2.4 million jobs being shipped overseas. Now that, by the way, does not count the ones that are leaving on paper right now, which is a whole other story. That is something we need to be deeply concerned about and speaking out about and calling people out on it. But these are the jobs where they are packing up shop and moving overseas.

To add insult to injury, not only does a worker lose their job, the community loses the factory or the business, but we as American taxpayers foot the bill for the move.

Now, that is shocking. When you explain to people that is in the Tax Code—yes, when you pack up shop, you do all the moving, you ship your jobs overseas, you can write that off on your taxes and we all pay for it—they probably look at us like we are crazy. And they are right. We have been trying to close this now for the last few years. This is the opportunity in just a few moments to have that vote to get it done.

What are we going to be voting on specifically? It is very simple: end the taxpayer subsidies that pay for moving costs of corporations to ship jobs overseas. On the other hand, if you want to bring your jobs home, we will gladly allow you to write off the costs of bringing jobs home. On top of that, we will give an additional 20-percent tax credit for the costs of moving production back to the United States.

The good news is we actually have companies, for a variety of reasons, that are moving jobs home. We want to applaud them. There are a lot of reasons for that in a global economy: shipping costs, low natural gas costs that we want to keep low so we have affordable energy and we continue to bring manufacturing back. We have the most productive, skilled workforce in the world. There are a lot of reasons why companies now are bringing jobs home.

But a lot of companies are right on the edge. They look at the Tax Code, and they are making decisions about whether they are going to move overseas or stay, whether they are going to

bring jobs home. The bill we are voting on—and I want to thank Senator WALSH for his leadership. He has been a passionate advocate in talking about it from a Montana perspective. And the two great M States are involved here—Montana and Michigan. We both understand deeply about the fact that you are not going to have a middle class unless you make things in America.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has now consumed approximately 4 minutes.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, thank you very much.

We have to make things and grow things, and this is about making sure it is in America when we make things and grow things so we have a middle class. But the reality is we have to start in the Tax Code by making it clear we are not going to incentivize moving your jobs overseas. We are not going to incentivize somebody packing up—and, by the way, oftentimes those workers end up having to train their replacement. We have many stories in Michigan where the replacement workers in another country are flown into our country and trained by our people, to take their jobs; and then, to add insult to injury, they pay for the move through the Tax Code. So it is very simple.

I am going to turn to Senator WALSH to close off this debate. But we have a very simple message. If you want to bring your jobs home, we are all in. You can write off the cost of that move and we will give you an extra 20-percent tax cut. But if you want to ship your jobs overseas, you are on your own.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HEITKAMP). The Senator from Montana.

Mr. WALSH. Madam President, I rise today to thank my Senate colleagues for joining with American workers and voting overwhelmingly to consider the Bring Jobs Home Act. I want to particularly thank my colleague from Michigan, Senator STABENOW, for her tremendous leadership and work on behalf of America's working families.

The vote last week was a procedural vote, but it was an important signal that job creation here at home can be a bipartisan issue. I am a strong believer in reaching across the aisle to promote good ideas. We are not here to represent our parties, we are here to represent our constituents. I made a promise to Montanans that I will support good ideas from anyone and any party as long as they grow our economy and create jobs.

Unfortunately, since I joined the Senate 5 months ago, what I have mostly seen in Washington is the opposite. What I have seen in Washington are people playing games. Washington is not broken because there are not good ideas out there; Washington is broken because not enough people reach across the aisle to find common ground. I have insisted from the start that the Bring Jobs Home Act is a bill that both Republicans and Democrats can get behind. We must not let partisan politics and gamesmanship jam up the process.

The American economy is recovering from the long and deep recession. Many Americans are still out of work and are desperately seeking the stability and security that comes with a job and a reliable paycheck. I am committed to leveling the playing field for American workers.

It is time for us to come together and show American workers we are fighting for them, for their jobs, for their families, and for a better economy.

I have heard from some of my colleagues who have commented on the floor that we should only consider the Bring Jobs Home Act in the context of comprehensive tax reform. That is not good enough. The answer to disagreements is not to do nothing, the answer is to start with manageable, commonsense reforms that everyone can get behind.

Montanans understand this. They know it is wrong that American workers subsidize corporations' decisions to pack up businesses in the United States and send our jobs packing. Imagine an American worker whose final task before being laid off is to help shut down operations so his job or her job can be sent overseas. That is baloney. If Congress cannot come together to end that subsidy, then we deserve the low approval ratings we are receiving.

Millions of American jobs have been sent overseas in recent decades. Too many large corporations have opened factories in countries such as China or Mexico while closing factories right here in the United States. We need to do what we can to stem the tide and reward companies that bring jobs back to America.

The Bring Jobs Home Act will help do that. My bill closes the loophole that some multinational corporations use to claim a tax deduction for the cost of moving jobs overseas. It also creates a new 20-percent tax credit for companies that bring jobs back to the United States. These two parts complement each other. The first ends the incentive for shipping jobs overseas. The second encourages the return of jobs we have already lost.

Our Tax Code should not reward outsourcing. What we need is more insourcing. Many companies are considering bringing jobs back home today. This is especially true in the manufacturing sector. The Bring Jobs Home Act could make a difference for some of those companies to reinvest in America and American workers. So today I urge my colleagues to stand with America's workers and pass this bill. Now is the time for leadership to embrace good ideas that help create jobs in Montana and all across America.

I yield the floor.

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, hereby move to bring to a close debate on S. 2569, a bill to provide an incentive for businesses to bring jobs back to America.

Harry Reid, John E. Walsh, Debbie Stabenow, Benjamin L. Cardin, Barbara Boxer, Patrick J. Leahy, Kay R. Hagan, Sheldon Whitehouse, Jack Reed, Christopher A. Coons, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Bill Nelson, John D. Rockefeller IV, Barbara A. Mikulski, Jeff Merkley, Mazie K. Hirono, Tom Harkin.

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. 2569, a bill to provide an incentive for businesses to bring jobs back to America, 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 bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) is necessarily absent.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN), and the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS).

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 54, nays 42 as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 249 Leg.]

YEAS—54

Baldwin	Harkin	Murray
Bennet	Heinrich	Nelson
Blumenthal	Heitkamp	Pryor
Booker	Hirono	Reed
Boxer	Johnson (SD)	Reid
Brown	Kaine	Rockefeller
Cantwell	King	Sanders
Cardin	Klobuchar	Schumer
Carper	Landrieu	Shaheen
Casey	Leahy	Stabenow
Collins	Levin	Tester
Coons	Manchin	Udall (CO)
Donnelly	Markey	Udall (NM)
Durbin	McCaskill	Walsh
Feinstein	Menendez	Warner
Franken	Merkley	Warren
Gillibrand	Mikulski	Whitehouse
Hagan	Murphy	Wyden

NAYS—42

Alexander	Enzi	McConnell
Ayotte	Fischer	Moran
Barrasso	Flake	Murkowski
Begich	Graham	Paul
Blunt	Grassley	Portman
Boozman	Hatch	Risch
Burr	Heller	Rubio
Chambliss	Hoeven	Scott
Coats	Inhofe	Sessions
Coburn	Isakson	Shelby
Corker	Johanns	Thune
Cornyn	Johnson (WI)	Toomey
Crapo	Kirk	Vitter
Cruz	Lee	Wicker

NOT VOTING—4

Cochran	Roberts
McCain	Schatz

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote the yeas are 54, the nays are 42.

Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn not having voted in the affirmative, the motion is rejected.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The assistant legislative 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, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 488, S. 2648, a bill making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes.

Harry Reid, Barbara A. Mikulski, Benjamin L. Cardin, Barbara Boxer, Patrick J. Leahy, Sheldon Whitehouse, Jack Reed, Christopher A. Coons, Jeff Merkley, Debbie Stabenow, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Bill Nelson, John D. Rockefeller IV, Mazie K. Hirono, Tom Harkin, Bernard Sanders, Richard Blumenthal.

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 the motion to proceed to S. 2648, a bill making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rules.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) is necessarily absent.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN), and the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS).

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 63, nays 33, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 250 Leg.]

YEAS—63

Ayotte	Gillibrand	Murkowski
Baldwin	Grassley	Murphy
Begich	Harkin	Murray
Bennet	Hatch	Nelson
Blumenthal	Heinrich	Pryor
Booker	Heitkamp	Reed
Boxer	Heller	Reid
Brown	Hirono	Rockefeller
Cantwell	Isakson	Rubio
Cardin	Johnson (SD)	Sanders
Carper	Kaine	Schumer
Casey	King	Shaheen
Chambliss	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Collins	Leahy	Tester
Coons	Levin	Udall (CO)
Corker	Manchin	Udall (NM)
Cornyn	Markey	Walsh
Donnelly	McCaskill	Warner
Durbin	Menendez	Warren
Feinstein	Merkley	Whitehouse
Franken	Mikulski	Wyden

NAYS—33

Alexander	Flake	Moran
Barrasso	Graham	Paul
Blunt	Hagan	Portman
Boozman	Hoeven	Risch
Burr	Inhofe	Scott
Coats	Johanns	Sessions
Coburn	Johnson (WI)	Shelby
Crapo	Kirk	Thune
Cruz	Landrieu	Toomey
Enzi	Lee	Vitter
Fischer	McConnell	Wicker

NOT VOTING—4

Cochran	Roberts
McCain	Schatz

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote the yeas are 63 and the nays are 33. Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF CYNTHIA H. AKUETTEH, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE GABONESE REPUBLIC, AND TO SERVE CONCURRENTLY AND WITHOUT ADDITIONAL COMPENSATION AS AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE

NOMINATION OF ERIKA LIZABETH MORITSUGU TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

NOMINATION OF RICHARD A. KENNEDY TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON AIRPORTS AUTHORITY

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations, which the clerk will report.

The assistant bill clerk read the nominations of Cynthia H. Akuetteh, of the District of Columbia, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Gabonese Republic, and to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United State of America to the Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe; Erika Lizabeth Moritsugu, of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Housing and Urban Development; and Richard A. Kennedy, of Pennsylvania, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority for a term expiring May 30, 2016.

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that all available debate time with respect to the nominations in this series be yielded back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

VOTE ON AKUETTEH NOMINATION

Hearing no further debate, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Cynthia H. Akuetteh, of the District of Columbia, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Gabonese Republic, and to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe?

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON MORITSUGU NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Erika Lizabeth Moritsugu, of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Housing and Urban Development?

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON KENNEDY NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Richard A. Kennedy, of Pennsylvania, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority for a term expiring May 30, 2016?

The nomination was confirmed.

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BALDWIN). The Senate will resume legislative session.

The Senator from Maryland.

MAKING EMERGENCY SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2014—MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

Ms. MIKULSKI. Madam President, I rise to speak on the pending business before the Senate.

The Senate just achieved cloture on the motion to proceed to the emergency supplemental funding bill. Let me explain to the people who are watching this either in the gallery or on C–SPAN.

The Senate has creaky rules, and these creaky rules are to make sure we can cool the passions that may be raging in the Nation at any given time so we can duly give consideration, that

debate can be diligent and we won't be gripped by the fire of the moment or the passion of the motion. I appreciate that. However, now these rules require us to take a lot of time to get to the meat of the matter.

We are now debating a motion to proceed to legislation related to supplementing existing funding to meet new emerging crises. The Senate votes on a motion to proceed not to the bill itself but on whether we should even go to the bill. So what we are debating now is whether we should proceed to the emergency supplemental funding bill. I want to say yes. Yes, vote on the motion to proceed. Let's get on with it. Let's have a real debate on real issues. Thirty hours has been set aside to debate whether we should proceed. I am here to say let's proceed, let's yield back our time, and let's get on the bill. We have a lot of things we need to get done in the next 48 hours. I want to see this emergency supplemental funding bill debated and voted on.

We have three elements in this bill that meet compelling needs—need for our neighbors in our country; need for our treasured ally, the State of Israel; as well as need for a crisis at the border where children literally are marching across Central America in search of refugee status. We need to deal with all three of these issues.

This emergency funding bill is about neighbor helping neighbor.

First of all, it is about our own country. Wildfires are raging in the West. Over the last year 39 States have faced wildfires. Right this very minute eight Western States are coping with unbelievable wildfires, some of the largest fires in their history. What happens? Vast amounts of territory are going up in smoke. We are losing towns, businesses, homes. Our firefighters are worn out, as well as our first responders, and they need help. This legislation will provide $615 million to the States facing this horrific Armageddon-like emergency.

In addition, this legislation includes $225 million to replenish the rockets that are being used by Israel, deploying technology called the Iron Dome. The Iron Dome is a missile defense system that is destroying the rockets being sent into Israel by Hamas. The technology is working, but they are using up the rockets and they need to be replenished.

Then there is the humanitarian crisis at our border. We have $2.7 billion to meet the needs of children seeking refuge, in order to be able to deal with placing them while we determine their legal status but also being able to fight the crime of the narcotraffickers and the human traffickers who are creating this surge of children.

This is a total emergency funding level of $3.57 billion. Why do we call it an emergency? Well, because under the law we can't just say this is an emergency. In order to get emergency funding, we have to meet the criteria of the Budget Control Act of 2011. The need has to be urgent. It has to be temporary. It has to be unforeseen. It is either to prevent the loss of life or in the interests of our national security. All three of these areas of funding meet this need.

Under emergency funding, there are no offsets. That means we don't take from another important program being funded by the U.S. Government to meet that need. So in order to meet the needs of Iron Dome, we don't take from other national defense money. It will replenish that. When we help with wildfires, we don't take from other important areas, such as agriculture or interior or from other bills. This will help to not only meet the need but also not place an additional burden on other communities.

Now I wish to speak about the urgency. This firefighting help is really needed now. We listened to the Senators from Western States. We see the photographs literally showing parts of our country going up in smoke. The Forest Service—the agency that actually is in charge of dealing with this—will run out of money in August. As I said, last year these wildfires burned in 39 States.

Then we look at Iron Dome. Hamas—this violent terrorist organization that actually rejects Israel's right to even exist—from its tunnels is showering Israel with rockets. Iron Dome, Arrow Head, and David's Sling are missile defense systems designed to help them. The up-close missile defense system is Iron Dome. This bill will make sure we replace the interceptor rockets that are being used to protect them against this showering of rockets. The Israeli Embassy spoke to my staff yesterday. There have been over 2,000 Hamas rockets fired in the last week. Israel needs to replenish these rockets.

Then there is the issue of the surge of unaccompanied children presenting themselves at our border, asking for refugee status. In order to really be able to meet this crisis—and they are coming in by the thousands; 59,000 kids have come this year. We know the immigration and customs service, if we don't meet this emergency funding, will run out of money in August. Border Patrol will run out of money in early September. That doesn't mean the Border Patrol agents or the Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents will stop working; it means the Department of Homeland Security—22 agencies—will take money out of existing funds to fund this. So it means they could take money out of Federal emergency management just as we are going into hurricane season, just as we are in high tornado season. We could be taking money out of FEMA to put it in Border Patrol unless we do this emergency funding. We have to do it.

Health and Human Services runs out of money in August. They are the ones in charge when the children present themselves while their legal status is being determined. The children must be taken care of in a humane way, the American way. We don't treat children in an abusive manner. It means we will feed them, we will clothe them, we will shelter them, we will meet any emergency health needs they have, and we need to do that while we determine their legal status.

My bill—the supplemental I am presenting—helps accelerate the determination of their legal status. My legislation and this supplemental spending actually provide more immigration judges and legal representation for the children. That is so we can quickly determine if they have a right to asylum while we are also taking care of them. We need to be able to do that.

I hope others will get the briefings that I had and visit the border the way I did to find this out. The reason we have a crisis at the border is because we have a crisis in Central America. This legislation provides the money to do this. People say root causes such as poverty have been going on for years. This doesn't only deal with poverty. We want to work with the governments of Central America to really go after the narcotraffickers, the human traffickers, and the coyotes engaged in smuggling.

Why do we want to do that? If we ask these children where are the home towns they are from, they will give us the names of little cities and little towns, and when we look at their poverty rate, we find the poverty rate in these communities has been consistent for a number of years. That is a sad circumstance. But when we look at the crime rate, the murder rate, the recruitment into violent gangs, the recruitment into human trafficking, with the threat of death or torture—that is where these kids are coming from.

We have to go after the criminals in Central America and not treat these children as though they are criminals. We cannot treat children in this country as though they are the criminals. We need to go after the real criminals in Central America using our assets and working with the assets in Central America. They have programs and they have plans. Honduras is a great example of what they are trying to do. They need our help. If we don't want the crisis at our border, we need to deal with the crisis in Central America.

That also deals with our insatiable, unending, vociferous appetite for drugs. The drugs have created the narcoterrorists. Once people start selling drugs, they are willing to sell women and children like commodities, and if they are willing to sell women and children like commodities, then that is where the vial, repugnant practice of human trafficking and human smuggling and even a new form of slavery—sexual slavery—begins.

These children are on the march. And when we talk to these children, we learn they are terrific children. They are brave and gutsy. When we talk to the boys, we learn they don't want to be part of the gangs. They want to get

out. They want to get out, so they start this long march from their home country to Mexico to make it on the Rio Grande on rafts and by swimming and so on so they can make it to our border. When we talk to the girls, we learn the girls want to go to school and get an education. They don't want to be recruited into these vial circumstances. These are earnest, hard-working children who want to have safety, who want to have a future, and we want to be able to see, by interviewing them, if they qualify for refugee status. If they don't, they will have to go back home, but if they do, they get to stay here. So they deserve the protection under law. We need to pass this legislation.

This bill is a funding bill. It does not include immigration legislation. We say those kinds of things can either be brought up in another way or another method, but this is a clean funding bill. When I say ''clean,'' it means it has no legislative language on it related to immigration. So I hope we can pass this legislation.

Now, I have listened to my own constituents, and many of them are saying to me: Hey, BARB, we are not against these kids. In fact, recent polling says 69 percent of the American people say if they are refugees, we should take care of them and they have a right to determine their legal status. But many of my constituents say: Hey, BARB, what about us? What does this mean? You are going to spend more money? What about my schools? When do we get help? My kids need help. They need schools; they need health care. You talk to families now. They are getting ready to go back to school. Many parents cannot wait for sales-tax-free day in Maryland, where you can get your backpack and your school supplies and your little clothes and shoes. My God, the cost of kids' shoes now is a small fortune, and they will outgrow them by the time they get to Thanksgiving. Parents are looking for bargains, for deals, to be able to do this. They are not hostile, but they wonder about them.

I want to say to them, I hear you. I was touched by a very poignant story over the weekend about how we have a food bank at Steelworkers Hall in Baltimore. Bethlehem Steel closed. It will never, ever, ever come back. The steelworkers of America, who contributed to the United Way, were always the first in line if a blood bank was necessary. Now many of those who lost their job are using the very food bank that they once donated to.

That story was so moving because we have lost our manufacturing. We have just lost a bill earlier today on bringing jobs back home—something I know the Presiding Officer is for, I sure am for, and so on. So I know American families are hurting. Yes, they are. But I want to bring out that the cost of this bill is the same amount of money as we are going to spend on training the Afghan National Security Forces. Did you know that? So we are going to spend $4 billion—that is ''billion'' as in ''Barb,'' not ''million'' as in ''Mikulski''—$4 billion to train the Afghan National Security Forces. I am not going to debate the merits of that. But we can spend money all over like that and we cannot spend money at our border and also for threats to our border because of narco terrorism that breeds other vile, repugnant, heinous behavior? I think we have to get real here.

The reason I want a supplemental—that is urgent and meets that criteria—is that we do not have to take the money from other important programs that do help America's families in education, in health, in job retraining in order to bring our jobs back home.

So I really do hope we pass this bill. Not spending money will not save money. It means we will just take out of existing programs and the American people will pay for it doubly. They will pay for it through inaction, which will ultimately cost more. They will pay for it because they will lose programs they thought they were going to have access to or there will be limited availability.

We have a chance here now to help our neighbors in our Western States. I know Wisconsin has been hit by it terribly, and we are so sorry for the loss of property and the danger to that community. It will help a treasured ally, Israel, which we must. Also, we will help our own country. The way to protect our border is two ways: fight it in Central America and also show what we stand for. If children are applying for refugee status, they should have their day in court and under the law proceed.

So, Madam President, we are now on this motion to proceed. Let's get on with it. Let's yield back our time. Let's get to the bill. Let's get the job done. I hope at the end of the day the vote will be ''yes.''

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BLUNT. Madam President, I want to talk principally in the next few minutes about a bill that Senator BOXER and I have introduced this week on Israel and talk about what is going on in Israel, but on the work that is the bill before us right now, I am always hesitant to disagree with the chairwoman of the Appropriations Committee, my chairwoman, my good friend, Senator MIKULSKI. I just think we are headed in the wrong direction here.

Providing money, and not trying to solve this problem, not sending the right message, I think is a mistake. People are leaving these dangerous countries—if they are dangerous to be in, they are also dangerous to travel through, they are dangerous to leave.

One of the concerns I have had during this whole debate is how many kids leave their home country and never get to the American border? What happens to those kids? We have heard stories in briefings that were not classified about kids who never get here because they get sold into some sort of terrible situation, even kids whose organs are harvested and sold that way. This cannot be something we need to continue to encourage.

In fact, if you do qualify for asylum in the United States, there is a way to do that. That is why we have embassies. That is why we have consulates. Surely, it is safer for someone in Guatemala City to go to the American Embassy in Guatemala City than it is to leave Guatemala City and try to come through their country, through other countries, through Mexico to get here, under the control of people who have tried to make the most of the President's announcement that if you get here, you can stay here.

This is not the Red Cross bringing kids here. This is not some altruistic group bringing kids here. These are people who are taking advantage of misinformation in their country about what happens if you get here. And some of these kids do not get here. Doing this in this way—money without policy; acting like somehow it does not cost anything if it is an emergency, and so we can continue to do everything the chairwoman mentioned that needs to be done in the United States, but we can also do this because it is a supplemental, it is an emergency, and it is more money we borrow from somebody else—life is full of choices, and for our government we have choices.

There are things that need to be done right now to send a message: Do not leave your home country. The door is not wide open, no matter what the President's announcement in 2011 led people to believe.

The law needs to be changed so that immigrants from all countries coming to our borders are treated just like immigrants from Mexico and Canada coming to our borders. They have an immediate hearing within 7 days or so. Almost all of them are told: You have to go back. Once that happens, almost all of them stop coming.

It would be a mistake to do this in this way, and I believe this bill never winds up on the President's desk. The House of Representatives does not share this view, even if a majority of the Senate does.

We need to send a message to Guatemala, to El Salvador, to every other country that the door is not open. Just getting here is not enough. This is not a safe ''Disneyland-type'' ride to the United States of America. This is a very, very dangerous thing for you to try to do, and you should not try to do it. When you get here, it is not going to be successful.

Again, let me say, if you have a case that you should have asylum in this country, there is a way you do that which is much safer than showing up at the border. We should not encourage the danger that these kids go through. I think the case is very dramatic on the side that cares for the lives of these

kids. We should send the message strongly and now: Do not come the way you are coming now. The kids who get to the border—we are concerned about what happens to them as a country because of who we are. We should be equally concerned about the kids who never get to the border because of this false message we have sent.

U.S.-ISRAEL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP ACT

But, Madam President, let me spend a few minutes talking about a bill that Senator BOXER and I introduced this week, the U.S.-Israel Strategic Partnership Act of 2014. This is an updated version of legislation we first introduced in March 2013.

This bill that was introduced this week is already backed by more than three-quarters of the Senate. I am hoping we figure out how to get this done and get this done this week. There has never been a more important time to send a message to the world and to Israel about this relationship, about what it means to us, about how committed we are to it.

This legislation reaffirms our unwavering commitment to Israel's security and the strong relationship that goes back to the founding of Israel. It supports deepened U.S.-Israel cooperation on defense, including continued U.S. assistance for the Iron Dome. By the way, the Iron Dome assistance in the Defense appropriations bill that the Appropriations Committee approved, that is the way to fund the Iron Dome. Do the work for the fiscal year that begins October 1. We are 2 months and a couple days from the time this fiscal year is over. We should be having bills on the floor that talk about the Iron Dome, but it should be the Defense bill. It should not be some bill that we are talking about because we are unwilling to go through the regular process.

But we do in this bill talk about the Iron Dome. We reiterate our support to negotiating a settlement, a political settlement that the Government of Israel is for where you would have two states, but both of those states have to recognize each other. You cannot have two states where Hamas and others that are significant parts apparently now of the coalition on the other side deny that Israel has a right to exist. But we do support the Israeli concept that we want to have two states peacefully coexisting. That is reiterated here. But it is also clearly understood that you cannot have one of those states say the other one does not have a right to exist.

We have a longstanding relationship here. Really it dates back to the very moment that Israel was founded. My fellow Missourian, President Truman, in great leadership, decided we would immediately recognize Israel, and that moment, that decision, that commitment from the United States continues today through security, through energy, through trade. We would like to make that clear and make that clear this week.

What does the U.S.-Israel Strategic Partnership Act do?

First of all, it authorizes an increase of $200 million in the value of U.S. weapons held in Israel, to a total of $1.8 billion. What does that mean? Does that mean we are spending $200 million more? No. It means we are putting more of our equipment in Israel, with the clear understanding that it is there for us to use in the time of a crisis. It is also there for Israel to have access to when they need it. And when they use it, they pay us back and replenish that stockpile that we have strategically placed in Israel for our future use and for an immediate challenge to Israel where they may need to look at that stockpile of our weapons there.

It requires the administration to take steps to include Israel in the top-tier category for license-free exports. The top-tier category of looking at the technologies we share with any other country we would suggest you should also be able to share with Israel. If they are uniquely held in our country, technologies that we do not want to share with anybody, they are not considered in that category.

It authorizes the President to carry out cooperation between the United States and Israel on a range of policy issues. They include defense; water, things like the water salinization efforts that Israel is, frankly, ahead of us in and we need to understand, as we look forward to water needs; homeland security, alternative fuel technologies, more cooperation in cyber security. All those things are authorized in this bill.

There is new language that encourages the administration to work with Israel to help the country gain entry status in the Visa Waiver Program, which would make it easier for Israeli citizens to travel to the United States without first having to get a waiver, but it would also make it easier for people in our country to go there.

It requires the administration to provide more frequent and more detailed assessments of the status of a qualitative military advantage that we have committed that Israel would always have. This bill that Senator BOXER and I have introduced just says we are going to check that even more often and in more detail to be absolutely sure in that troubled part of the world that Israel's adversaries look at Israel and can clearly understand that Israel has an advantage that makes up for the difference in its size.

It strengthens the collaboration between the United States and Israel on energy development. It encourages increased cooperation in academic, business, and governmental sectors.

This legislation amends previous legislation related to how people can travel between our two countries. We do have a unique situation. In the recent fighting in Israel, two American citizens, members of the Israeli Defense Forces with dual citizenship in this country and in Israel, were killed in that fighting. This is one of the unique relationships we have in the world where people actually leave our communities, go to another country they also care about, fight in the uniform of that country, because this country is our ally. We need to look for ways to continue to emphasize that.

It authorizes but does not require the Secretary of Homeland Security, in consultation with the Secretary of State, to waive the nonimmigration refusal rate requirement for Israel, but only if Israel meets all of the other program requirements, and then it is still authorized but not required.

This is a particularly important time to send this message. This is an important time to send this message of continued support between our two countries. Israel—we see, looking at the Gaza situation today, during recent months uncertainty in Egypt, support from terrorist groups all over the world, weaponry, missiles taken into Gaza, money that could have been spent on concrete that could have been used to build houses, schools, hospitals, and places for jobs, was used to build tunnels so that people could come into Israel and attack Israel.

Certainly the Government of Israel and the citizens of Israel look at this moment and think: No time to quit now with this job partially done. Some of the messages that have been sent from our country have not been helpful and encouraging in regard to what has to happen in the middle of this conflict.

But this kind of legislation sends a message, the message we should send. I hope we can get to it this week. I am pleased that three-quarters of our colleagues—I think that number is right at 80—have cosponsored this legislation. The legislation was just introduced this week. So if there is any question to our friends in Israel, and maybe more importantly others around the world, where the Senate, and hopefully by the end of the week the Congress, stands, this action sends that message. I cannot think of a more critical time to send that message. I hope we see this bill on the floor and send that message this week.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam President, I rise today to speak in favor of a critical issue for Coloradans; that is, fighting, mitigating, and recovering from wildfire. Recent history has shown my State that there is no greater threat to our communities, water supplies, and our special way of life than wildfire. Successive megafires over the past few years have broken records faster than they can be written down.

Even today's flash floods in recently burned areas are a reminder that after the embers of wildfires have cooled, their destruction lingers for months and years. I used to joke that Coloradans were strong and prepared for anything, come hell or high water. But I had no idea that the past several years would bring both, with modern

megafires and floods devastating thousands of households and businesses. We have endured these tests, and we have communities all over the State, such as Black Forest, that are rebuilding. But these recent disasters and the fires burning today in Colorado, California, Washington, and across the West show that the status quo is unacceptable. The cost of inaction for homeowners and first responders alike is too high to not act. That is why I have come to the floor today to speak in favor of a few smart, bipartisan, and fiscally responsible bills that are in front of our Congress right now.

These bills, taken together, address wildfires in a comprehensive way by attacking the problem before, during, and after a fire. So if I might, I want to share some of the elements in these important pieces of legislation.

First, I want to focus on what we can do before a wildfire at the individual and community level to reduce risk. There are many studies, numerous studies, that single out the most important factor in protecting homes. That is, if you do mitigation work. You involve yourself with ignition-resistant construction techniques. You reduce hazardous fuels around your home.

That is one of the reasons I introduced the commonsense legislation that is entitled the Wildfire Prevention Act of 2013. It will help homeowners in communities better reduce the risk of wildfire damages upfront. I am very pleased that the bill is moving forward in a bipartisan fashion. I am working with Senator INHOFE as my Republican partner. In the House, two Members of our delegation from Colorado, Congressmen POLIS and TIPTON, have joined with their California colleagues to lead this bill through the House. That is what Coloradans expect from their elected representatives, collaboration for the good of our State and country.

This bill is a game changer, not just in my State but across fire-prone communities in the West and increasingly in other parts of our country, the upper Midwest, the Northeast, Florida. You name it, wildfire has continued to be a threat more broadly across our country.

What this act will do, the Wildfire Prevention Act, is it will allow the Federal Emergency Management Agency, FEMA, to provide hazard mitigation grants to States and localities to implement these mitigation projects. These mitigation projects will help put Colorado communities and public lands managers on the offensive. We put our communities and our public lands managers in front of the threat of megafires. We can head them off before they even start. It is an idea that came from Colorado. It is more than just a commonsense idea; it is a fiscally responsible approach to dealing with the threat of wildfire.

Why do I say that? Well, studies show that for every dollar you put on hazard mitigation upfront, it saves an average of $4 down the line if you have to fight a fire. For that reason, and the other ones I mentioned, I am going to keep doing everything I possibly can to move this bipartisan bill to the President's desk this year.

The second point I want to make and discuss with colleagues is that we must fundamentally change and modernize how the Federal Government funds wildfire-suppression operations. That is another way of saying fighting fires, wildfire-suppression operations. The rising severity of modern fires has caused land management agencies to divert resources away from the critical fire prevention efforts I just described to fight fires that are already burning. This is a vicious self-perpetuating cycle that is called ''fire borrowing,'' which then only increases the risk of catastrophic fires later.

It is a backwards way of budgeting. It is classic robbing Peter to pay Paul and leaves us all to bear much larger costs, most notably our communities in Colorado. That is why I joined Senators Wyden and Crapo on their bipartisan bill that would finally separate wildfires like other natural disasters and help make sure that we are not fighting fires that could have been prevented. This is a sensible approach for many reasons. It has been cosponsored by 120 Members of Congress in the House and the Senate. It has been endorsed by over 150 groups, ranging from the timber industry, to the environmental community. That speaks volumes about the utility of this and the broad support, obviously.

My hometown State newspaper, the Denver Post, put it this way earlier this month, ''Using disaster fund money for wildfires could solve a lot of problems long-term, and we hope Congress sees it that way.'' I also hope my colleagues see it that way. If we are serious here about helping prevent future wildfires and reducing the threats to lives and property, we all join together and pass this legislation.

Proper wildfire budgeting and the use of disaster relief funds would help break this vicious cycle of fire borrowing and allow our natural resource agencies to manage healthy forests, instead of fighting megafires. I have the great privilege of chairing on the energy committee, which the Presiding Officer serves on, the National Parks Subcommittee. I know all too well the problems this bill could solve. If we adopted this measure, this new way of wildfire budgeting, we could ensure that the resources are available for our national forest supervisors to reduce hazardous fuels, provide quality recreation experiences, and provide the timber supply to sustain a diverse forest products industry. It would be there for the uses we need them to be there for.

We could do this also while upgrading our safe, modern air tanker fleet in such a way that would keep our communities and firefighters safe. So this legislation I just described is in the emergency supplemental appropriations measure before the Senate here today. We really need to pass it. It is crucial. It is an opportunity we have to grab. In the supplemental appropriations act before this body, there is $615 million to prevent fire borrowing this year, get resources on the ground fighting these blazes, and help our resource agencies plan unto the future.

I know House Appropriations Chairman ROGERS. The Presiding Officer and I both know Chairman ROGERS. He did say that he did not include wildfire funding in their supplemental because, in his words, ''there is no urgency for such money.'' I have to respectfully disagree with my friend Chairman ROGERS. I know Coloradans, as well as people in Washington State, California, and many States across the West would not only disagree, they would strenuously disagree. I would invite Chairman ROGERS to come out to the West and see firsthand how urgent the situation is for our communities.

Let me finish with a couple of remarks about other elements in this supplemental.

My colleague Senator BLUNT from Missouri, just spoke of the Iron Dome system. The supplemental includes emergency funding for Israel's Iron Dome system. It has intercepted hundreds of Hamas rockets targeting civilian areas over the last several weeks. It has literally been a lifesaver for our Israeli allies many times over.

I chair the Strategic Forces Subcommittee, which has responsibility for the Iron Dome and working with Israel and the Israeli Defense Forces. I heard today from an Israeli who said the system is miraculous. As Hamas continues to rain rockets down, we need to ensure that this system continues to protect our friends and allies in Israel.

Finally, this supplemental includes critical resources to help address the root causes that have led to the humanitarian crisis at our southern border. So, in summary, I am glad we have moved forward on debating this crucial supplemental appropriations bill. Let's move to an up-or-down vote as soon as we possibly can. This is a timely debate. Passage of this bill is too important to allow partisan gridlock to interfere. So let's come together, let's show the American people we can meet our obligations and rise above partisanship.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

POLICIES FOCUS

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, I rise today to talk about the disturbing leadership failure we are seeing out of the White House. Over the past year the President and his administration have seemed increasingly out of touch with the many challenges facing our country at home and abroad. Two weeks ago the President's spokesman told reporters, ''I think that there have

been a number of situations in which you have seen this administration intervene in a meaningful way that substantially furthered American interests and substantially improved the tranquility of the global community.'' Let my repeat that. ''Substantially improved the tranquility of the global community.''

Well, fighting is going on right now in Israel and the Gaza Strip. Russia is actively involved in a war in Ukraine and recently played a role in bringing down a Malaysian airliner with 298 people onboard.

Iraq is virtually in chaos. Much of the country is under the control of a terrorist organization considered by al Qaeda to be too extreme.

Those are just some of the most serious trouble spots that we face right now. Yet the President's spokesman claims that ''there have been a number of situations in which you have seen this administration intervene in a meaningful way that have substantially improved the tranquility of the global community.''

Not only can I not think of a number of situations in which the President's action has substantially improved tranquility, I find it hard to think of one. We are actually looking at more points of serious instability than we have seen in decades.

Writing in the Washington Post over the weekend, the paper's editorial page noted that during the President's administration: ''we have witnessed as close to a laboratory experiment on the effects of U.S. disengagement as the real world is ever likely to provide.''

Disengagement is a good description of the President's attitude because right now the President doesn't even seem to be paying attention. Obviously America can't fix all of the world problems, but strong American leadership can help, as we have seen many times over the past century.

Strong American leadership, however, requires a President who is fully engaged and this President is anything but.

Tens of thousands of children are arriving at our southern border. The President is playing pool. When a plane is shot down in Ukraine, the President keeps right on with his campaign schedule.

Earlier this month, as thousands of unaccompanied children were making their dangerous trip across the southern border—because of the President's statement if they got here they could stay—the President traveled to Texas, but he didn't go to assess the situation himself. He was, as the Associated Press reported, ''primarily in Texas to raise money for Democrats.''

Weeks later, despite taking multiple trips to fundraise for Democrats, the President still hasn't visited the border, despite calls to visit from members of his own party. Indeed, the President has largely stopped even discussing the crisis. This is the same President whose spokesman described him as having substantially improved the tranquility of the global community.

Our world is facing a number of very serious crises now, and the President seems completely unaware of it. Unfortunately, when it comes to domestic issues, the President seems equally out of touch.

The President has recently taken to telling his audience that ''by almost every economic measure, we're doing a whole lot better now than we were when I came into office.''

Try telling that to the American families who are doing worse. Average household income has dropped by nearly $3,000 on the President's watch. Meanwhile, prices have risen. Food prices are higher. The price of gasoline has almost doubled. College costs continue to soar.

Health care premiums which the President promised would fall by $2,500 have increased by almost $3,000, and they are still climbing.

Combine high prices with declining income and we get a whole lot of families who were once comfortably in the middle class are now struggling to make ends meet. The Obama administration's economy provides few opportunities for these families to improve their situation.

In 2009 the President's advisers predicted that the unemployment rate would fall below 6 percent in 2012. Two years later unemployment still hasn't fallen below 6 percent. The only reason the unemployment rate is as low as it is is because so many Americans have given up looking for work and dropped out of the labor force altogether. If the labor force participation rate were as high today as it was when the President took office, our unemployment rate would be about 10 percent.

Even when jobs do become available, too often they are low-paying jobs, not the kinds of jobs that help middle-class families achieve financial security or move low-income families into the middle class.

Take the most recent jobs report. Under the President's policies, the economy lost 523,000 full-time jobs and gained 799,000 part-time jobs last month, which is the largest 1-month jump in part-time employment in 20 years.

I will give the President this, he does talk. He talks about helping middle-class families, but he has steadily opposed measures to help them.

Republicans have proposed numerous measures to create good-paying jobs and increase opportunity. We have urged the President to approve the Keystone Pipeline and the tens of thousands of jobs it would support. In fact, Democrats have urged the President to approve it too. The President said no.

Republicans have proposed fixing the 30-hour workweek provision in ObamaCare, which is cutting workers' hours and wages. The President has said no.

Republicans have proposed repealing the medical device tax, which has already eliminated thousands of jobs in the medical device industry and will eliminate many more if it isn't repealed. A lot of Democrats agree with that position. The President said no.

The President hasn't just said no to measures that would help the middle class, he has implemented policies that have hit the middle class with tremendous financial burdens. Chief among the President's burdensome policies of course is ObamaCare. The President told an audience in Wilmington, DE, the other day that thanks to his administration, millions more now have the peace of mind of having quality, affordable health care if they need it.

Try telling that to the Americans who lost their health care plans as a result of the President's law and were forced to replace them with plans that cost more and offered less. Try telling that to the Americans who obtained health care plans under the Affordable Care Act only to discover their plan didn't cover the doctor they wanted it to cover. Tell it to the families paying thousands of dollars more each year in premiums, deductibles, and copays thanks to the President's health care law. That does not even mention the drag the health care law is having on the economy.

Part of the reason there are so few opportunities for American families to get ahead is because the President's health care law is making it more difficult for businesses to afford to hire new workers.

Now the President is piling up his budget-busting health care law with a national energy tax that will drive up energy bills for American families and put hundreds of thousands of Americans out of work.

Nero may have fiddled while Rome burned, the President fundraises.

The Washington Post reports:

> In his two presidential terms combined, Bush hosted 318 fundraisers. Obama has already smashed that number with 393 events to date.

And he still has 2½ years to go in his administration.

Instead of urging the President to focus on crises at home and abroad, Democrats have taken a leaf from the President's book and spent the past several months focused on elections. Rather than taking up legislation to provide real help for struggling middle-class families, Senate Democrats have spent months—months—on political show votes and designed-to-fail legislation they hope will win them a few votes in November.

Our country is facing challenges at home and abroad. Campaigning has its place, but in Washington Members of Congress and the President should be focused on solving the problems facing our country, supporting middle-class families, and restoring America's economic vitality.

It is time for Democrats and the President to stop focusing on politics and start focusing on the policies we need to create jobs, to grow the economy, and support freedom and opportunity at home and around the world.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

AFRICAN GROWTH AND OPPORTUNITY ACT

Mr. CARDIN. Next week, between August 4 and August 6, the United States will welcome leaders from across the African Continent to Washington, DC.

I first wish to acknowledge the work of our colleague Senator COONS, the chairman of the Subcommittee on African Affairs, Foreign Relations Committee, for the work he has done on behalf of the Senate to make this opportunity a real chance to strengthen the economic ties, to strengthen the strategic ties between the countries of Africa and the United States.

We expect there will be robust discussions that will be encouraging economic growth, unlocking opportunities, and fostering greater ties between our country and Africa.

One of the areas that I hope will get some debate and discussion during next week's meetings will be a key government trade initiative that makes these ties possible; that is, the African Growth and Opportunity Act, AGOA.

AGOA provides qualifying sub-Saharan countries duty-free access to the U.S. market for a wide variety of products. It was first signed into law in 2000 by President Clinton and has been strengthened and extended by Congress and both President Bush and President Obama.

AGOA enjoyed broad bipartisan support throughout the years because its advocates recognize the crucial role Africa plays in the global economy.

The African Continent is one of the world's fastest growing regions. For instance, by 2035, it is estimated that Africa will have a larger working-age population than China. I mention that because it is certainly in our interest to have stable partners who develop their economy and can work in strategic partnership with the United States, but it also means we are going to have stronger markets for U.S.-produced goods and products. As we have a growing middle class in Africa, it represents a market for U.S. manufacturers, producers, and farmers, which creates more jobs in the United States.

AGOA allows the United States and Africa to both take advantage of this dynamism. Since the act was fully implemented in 2001, U.S. imports under AGOA have tripled. Nonoil AGOA trade has increased fourfold.

Some of the sectors that AGOA has helped open are apparel, textiles, jewelry, handicrafts, and electronics. AGOA has created hundreds of thousands of jobs in those sectors, most of those in the apparel sector, where women comprise 75 to 90 percent of the industry.

In sub-Saharan Africa women are at the highest risk of being poor. AGOA has tackled barriers to poverty reduction by eliminating tariffs on goods that come from many sectors in which women are employed.

Modern trade agreements and initiatives are much more than just lowering tariffs. It also involves dealing with good governance practices.

In an increasing global economy, we can no longer consider issues such as labor rights, human rights, and good governance as issues that are separate from trade.

Trade with our country is a benefit with deserving nations that share our values. Strong commitments to the rule of law and human rights are an essential part of those values and level the playing field between the United States and our partners in the global marketplace.

AGOA is no exception. The Act has been encouraging these commitments since it was first enacted. In other words, this is not only an opportunity by lowering barriers to our markets, it is also about expectations and enforcement that the African countries will improve their good governance and their labor rights so we have a more level playing field.

To qualify for AGOA benefits, countries must establish or make continual progress on measures that promote good governance and a fair economic system. These include fundamental rights, the rule of law, a system that combats corruption, and policies that increase access to health care, education, and expand physical infrastructure. In other words, the African countries involved that take advantage of AGOA must have continuing progress on the good governance key issues.

For example, as part of the annual AGOA review process, the U.S. Department of Labor examines AGOA countries' efforts to implement and enforce workers' rights, including the right of association, the right to organize and bargain collectively, prohibitions on forced or compulsory labor, a minimum age for the employment of children, and acceptable conditions of work.

These are the International Labour Organization standards. The ILO standards are very much a part of the progress we made under AGOA in the African countries. Improvements in these areas have been shown to foster the kind of inclusive economic growth and opportunities that raise families and nations out of poverty.

We understand that by developing stronger economies in African countries, we are building more stable African countries, countries that are more reliable to be partners with the United States in dealing with global issues.

We understand that by doing that we are going to have a stronger partner sharing U.S. values. This is just one of the tools we use. We also use our transparency initiatives. We included in the Dodd-Frank legislation transparency on extractive industries that operate globally but also in Africa so we could find and make sure the wealth of a country is actually going to its people. That requires good governance. AGOA is one of our tools to accomplish that good governance.

So these countries that have mineral wealth, the wealth is not a curse but truly benefits the people of that country.

AGOA helps, the transparency initiatives that we passed help, but this is the issue: The current authorization of AGOA expires on September 30, 2015. Once again, Madam President, as you know, as you worked so hard, we need predictability in our law. Short-term extensions don't do much good. What we need is a long-term economic commitment with the continent of Africa.

A bipartisan effort in Congress to extend and improve this important legislation is already underway. The U.S. Trade Representative has been reviewing AGOA's successes as well as the areas that can be improved. Later today in the Senate Finance Committee we will be holding a hearing on AGOA, and Ambassador Froman will be one of the witnesses at that hearing. So we will have a chance to work together, bipartisan members of Congress with the administration.

One of the areas we are looking at is strengthening the eligibility criteria to further incentivize improvements in human rights, and I will be talking about that in the Finance Committee. Another area is providing coordinated technical assistance and capacity building. This is very important. Too often trade and development policies operate on separate tracks. Granting trade preference means little without providing countries with the ability to take advantage of those benefits. We have development assistance that we provide to countries. We have trade that we do. Let's combine it and recognize that these trade opportunities can only be taken advantage of if the country has the capacity to deal with the issues we are talking about.

Capacity building is already underway in Africa. For instance, the Department of Labor provides capacity-building assistance to AGOA countries to improve workers' rights through partnerships with a broad range of organizations, from NGOs, to health organizations, to social and economic researchers. By providing this aid in a more efficient and clearly measurable fashion and seeking more input from local cooperatives and groups, we can help foster more sustainable growth in Sub-Saharan Africa.

The time to develop consensus on AGOA improvements is now. I hope my colleagues will join me in supporting and strengthening the AGOA Act so we can maintain this important tool to increase the trade relations between the United States and Africa and fight global poverty. I look forward to seeing the results of next week's meetings with the African leaders. It is my sincere expectation that these meetings will produce concrete ways we can improve the ties between Africa and the United States, and I certainly expect it will help us lead to the improvement and reauthorization of AGOA.

Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

USA FREEDOM Act

Mr. FRANKEN. Madam President, I rise today to talk about the transparency provisions in the USA FREEDOM Act. I am a proud cosponsor of Chairman LEAHY's bill, and I am particularly proud to have written its key transparency provisions with my friend Senator DEAN HELLER of Nevada. As I said yesterday, both of us are indebted to Senator LEAHY for his leadership on this issue.

For over a year now there has been a steady stream of news stories about the National Security Agency's surveillance programs. Yet right now, by law, Americans still cannot get very basic information about these programs.

Americans understand that we need to give due weight to privacy on the one hand and national security on the other. But when they lack an even rough sense of the scope of the government's surveillance programs, they have no way to know if the government is getting that balance right. There needs to be more transparency.

The controversy unleashed by Edward Snowden's disclosures has been going on for over a year. Yet Americans still don't know the actual number of people whose information has been collected under these programs. They don't even know how many of these people are Americans, and they have no way of knowing how many of these Americans had their information actually looked at by government officials as opposed to just being held in a database. This lack of transparency is pretty breathtaking.

I believe the provisions Senator HELLER and I wrote will go a long way toward addressing and fixing this. It will give Americans the information they need to judge the government's surveillance programs for themselves.

Three programs are at the center of this debate: the telephone call records program, the collection, through 2011, on Americans' Internet communications records, and the so-called PRISM Program that targets the communications of foreigners abroad.

Our provisions would require detailed annual reports for each program. The government will have to tell the public how many people have had their information collected and how many of those people are likely American. For the call records program and the PRISM Program, the government will also have to say how many times it has run a specific search for an American's data.

By creating these reporting requirements, the government will have an incentive to also disclose the number of Americans who have actually had their information reviewed by government officials, and we give the government authority to do that too.

We don't just require the government to issue more detailed transparency reports. We are also helping American Internet and phone companies tell their customers about the government requests for customer information they are receiving. For years those companies have been under gag orders. As a result, people around the world think the American Internet companies are giving up far more information to the government than they likely are. Those companies are losing billions of dollars because people think they are handing over all of their customers' data to the NSA.

Our provisions expand the options that companies have to issue their own transparency reports, and they let companies issue those reports more quickly. Our provisions give the public two ways to check on the government—government transparency reports and company reports as well.

Like all major bills, this bill is a compromise, and we didn't get everything we wanted, but our provisions will go a long way toward giving the American people the information they need to evaluate the government's surveillance program.

After 9/11, our Nation faced a security crisis. Most Americans had never lived through anything like that. We are now experiencing a crisis of trust where a big part of the American public now thinks our intelligence agencies are out to spy on them, not on foreign countries.

The administration has committed to end the bulk collection of Americans' data, and Congress has written a bill to ban the bulk collection of Americans' data. But unless we pass these transparency provisions, Americans have no way to know if the government is making good on those promises. Our transparency provisions will force the government to prove annually and publicly that bulk collection is over. This is an unprecedented level of transparency and accountability which will allow the American people to decide for themselves whether the government is striking the right balance between privacy and security.

We should take up this bill as soon as possible so that Americans are not in the dark a single day longer. We should take it up so that American companies stop losing business because of misperceptions about their role in domestic surveillance. We should take this bill up so that Americans can get the information they need to hold their government to account.

TRIBUTE TO ALVARO BEDOYA

Before I yield the floor, I wish to take a moment to recognize and thank Alvaro Bedoya, my chief counsel, who is to my left. This is Alvaro's last week on my staff. Alvaro has been a member of my team since my very first day in office, and I have relied on and trusted his counsel on so many things in the 5 years since.

He has been instrumental in helping me launch and set the agenda for the Subcommittee on Privacy, Technology and the Law that I chair, and we would not have reached this point in working to make the NSA more transparent and accountable to the American people if it were not for Alvaro.

Alvaro's counsel has also been crucial as we have sought to improve our Nation's broken immigration system, as we fought for marriage equality and LGBT rights, including the right of all children to be free from bullying in schools, and as we work to ban apps that allow domestic abusers to stalk their victims.

Alvaro was even at my side during my very first week in office when the Judiciary Committee held confirmation hearings for Sonia Sotomayor to serve on the Supreme Court. That was my fifth day in the Senate, and I remember pulling some late nights preparing for that.

Alvaro's departure is bittersweet for me. I am, of course, sad to see Alvaro leave, but I am very excited for him as well. He will soon become the founding executive director of Georgetown Law School's new Center for Privacy and Technology. I have no doubt the folks at Georgetown soon will learn what I already know—that Alvaro is one of the most talented, intelligent, hardest working, decent, good-guy lawyers I know.

Thanks, Alvaro.

And I thank the Presiding Officer.

I yield the floor and note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

CORPORATE INVERSIONS

Ms. WARREN. Madam President, our Tax Code is tilted toward the rich and the powerful. Huge corporations hire armies of lobbyists and lawyers to create, expand, and protect every last corporate loophole. That is how we end up with a tax code that makes small businesses and restaurants and construction companies pay, that makes teachers and truckdrivers and nurses pay, but that allows huge American corporations to make billions of dollars in profits and not pay a single dime in taxes.

The Tax Code is rigged. Apparently, even this rigged game does not go far enough for some corporations. Those companies are taking advantage of a new move—a loophole that allows them to maintain all their operations in America but claim foreign citizenship so they can cut their U.S. taxes even further.

Here is how the loophole works. An American company merges with a

much smaller company located in a foreign country, usually a tax haven such as Ireland or Bermuda. As long as the shareholders of the foreign company own 20 percent of the newly merged company, our tax laws allow that new company to claim foreign citizenship. That means American companies can hire a bunch of Wall Street bankers and a bunch of lawyers, fill out some paperwork, keep everything the same in their operations, and dodge their U.S. taxes.

Tax lawyers call this process a corporate inversion, but do not let that bland name fool you. These companies are renouncing their American citizenship, turning their backs on this country simply to boost their profits. They are taking advantage of all the good things our government helps provide—educated workers, roads and bridges, a dependable court system, patent and copyright protections—and then running out on the bill.

If a person did that, we would call them a freeloader. We would insist that they pay their fair share. That is exactly what our tax laws do for people who renounce their American citizenship. Even if they do not sell their property in the United States, when they renounce their citizenship, we treat them as if they had sold it. If they try to send money back to a U.S. citizen, we tax that amount too. And if someone attempts to evade their tax obligations by renouncing their American citizenship, we bar them from coming back to this country.

For a person who does not want to pay a fair share, our message is clear: You can renounce your citizenship but do not come back and expect the rest of us to pick up the tab. But we do not do that for corporations. Corporations can renounce their American citizenship—and make absolutely clear in legal documents that they are doing it to avoid their U.S. tax obligations—and not suffer any consequences.

In this corner of the Tax Code we have gone way past treating corporations as people. In this corner of the Tax Code we are treating corporations better than people. That is not right. That is why I have teamed up with Senator LEVIN and more than a dozen of our Democratic colleagues to introduce the Stop Corporate Inversions Act. The bill is simple. It allows American corporations to renounce their citizenship only if they truly give up control of their company to a foreign corporation and truly move their operations overseas. The bill would help protect $17 billion in tax revenue—money we could spend on Head Start Programs, on fixing our roads and bridges, on investing in medical research.

President Obama and Secretary Lew have spoken in favor of the proposal. I commend their leadership, and I join them in urging the Senate to pass this bill right away.

Some say wait. They say we should address this loophole in the context only of broader tax reform. I am all for a major overhaul of our tangled tax system, but make no mistake, more and more companies are rushing to renounce their citizenship to take advantage of this inversion loophole before we can get to full tax reform. We cannot allow the larger fights over tax reform to stop us from holding these freeloaders accountable.

I believe the Senate should act on this, but I am also realistic. Even if the Senate passes this bill today, we know that, like so many good Senate bills before it, it will face a tough road in the House. If we have learned anything from the past few years, it is that House Republicans will claw, scratch, whimper, beg or do whatever else it takes to defend every last corporate tax loophole.

But the administration does not need to wait for Congress. It can use its existing authority to slow down and reduce the attractiveness of these sham inversions right now. According to a paper published this week by Steve Shay, a Harvard Law School professor and former senior tax policy official at the Treasury Department, the administration could take action today to reduce the tax benefits of corporate inversions.

It could use its authority under section 385 of the Tax Code to prevent companies that renounce their citizenship from using any other loopholes to shield themselves from additional taxes that they would otherwise be required to pay. This will not totally solve the problem, but it would significantly reduce the benefits of corporate inversion. It would be an important first step toward treating companies that renounce America the same way we treat people who renounce America—as freeloaders who get cut off from other benefits.

America is a great place to do business because of the investments we have made together. In Massachusetts and across this country, we invest in public education, and our colleges and universities produce millions of skilled workers. We invest in infrastructure, in our roads and bridges and ports, making it easier for our companies to move their products across the country and beyond. We invest in scientific and medical research, giving our companies access to the most innovative and cutting-edge technology. We invest together to make America a place where any kid will have a chance to come up with an idea and turn it into the next great American corporation.

The companies that are pursuing these corporate inversions know all of this. That is why they are not actually leaving America behind. They just do not want to pay for it. Our achievements are not magic. They did not simply happen on their own or through dumb luck. America works, our government works, our democracy works because we all pitch in and do our part to build that which none of us can build alone, giving everyone a chance to succeed.

If these companies want to leave all of that behind, well, that is their right. But if they exercise that right, if they leave America behind, then they should not get to turn around and claim all of the privileges of being an American company. We have had enough of rich corporations taking whatever they want and expecting everyone else to pick up the pieces. The time for freeloading is over.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that I be recognized for up to 20 minutes as in morning business.

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

ISRAEL

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, it has been 22 days now since Hamas began its most recent campaign of terrorist attacks against the innocent citizens of Israel. Since the operation began, 32 tunnels have been uncovered that would have been used to attack Israel. On Saturday and Sunday—this past Saturday and Sunday alone—almost 100 rockets were fired at Israel. In the Gaza strip, since the beginning of Operation Protective Edge—that would have been July 8—there have been over 2,000 Hamas rockets fired into Israel, with Tel Aviv and Jerusalem both targets.

Israel has responded, as any nation protecting its people would, with air strikes and ground troops to silence these Hamas terrorists. Israelis are tough. I have to remind people all the time that since their independence back in the 1940s, they have been attacked—Israel has been attacked—six different times.

Remember how they were outnumbered in the Six-Day War in 1967. They won. They prevailed. Then again, the same thing in Yom Kippur—that was in 1973. Again, they prevailed. I have often kidded with them—I have told Prime Minister Netanyahu this, that the Israelis consider a fair fight being outnumbered two to one. So they are a great bunch of people. We have got to continue to support them.

The Hamas terrorists are not only killing Israelis; they are killing their own people too because they place their rocket launchers—we see this is happening, just yesterday we saw a picture of this—in the middle of their own population centers. We are talking in homes, in hospitals, in mosques. Like the cowards they are, they use civilians as human shields. Despite Israel's extensive precautionary behavior and measures to avoid collateral damage, casualties, unfortunately, have occurred. Hamas bears complete responsibility for the civilian deaths.

As Prime Minister Netanyahu said: Israel is using missile defense to protect our citizens, and Hamas is using their civilians to protect their missiles. To date, the Israeli missile defense system, called the Iron Dome, has

successfully intercepted over 400 Hamas rockets headed toward the populated areas in Israel. I was just in Israel last month. I visited the Iron Dome battery. You see, there has to be a place where they initiate these protective devices. Here they are over there. I was so impressed with the young Israeli troops who operate it in the southern city of Ashkelon. The same battery you see on TV every night intercepting Hamas rockets comes from the Gaza Strip, 13 kilometers away.

I have a picture here I want the Presiding Officer to look at. This beautiful young first lieutenant in the Israeli Army I met. She is the one in charge of the Ashkelon battery down there. She is doing her duty right now as we speak, bravely protecting her fellow citizens. Her name is Lee Shmulevitch. I salute her.

It gives people an idea of the commitment that is being made by the Israeli people and the successes they are having. As ranking member, which I am, of the Armed Services Committee, I am proud to say I have been a constant supporter of the Iron Dome, which we have done on a nonpartisan basis. We have put in the authorization for $175 million in this last authorization bill. Then we added another $176 million that would take care of not just the Iron Dome but also other systems that we have such as David's Sling and Arrow 3.

These are jointly developed by the United States and Israel. I think it is important that people understand. I have heard people say: Well, you are just sending all this stuff over from us to Israel. If that were true, it would be worth doing it anyway, because they are looking out after our interests. Those things which they are not able to do in the Middle East we would have to be doing with our equipment, with your young people.

This is not the case. They have a lot of brave people over there. In the case of the Iron Dome, of David's Sling, of Arrow 3, and of a lot of the UAVs, their technology is technology that we use. So it is not something that we are doing for them. We are doing it mutually for each other.

I think it is important also to note at this point that—and nobody seems to put this together—Hamas would not have the rockets and capability of trying to kill all of these Israelis if it were not for Israel's greatest threat, and that is the country of Iran. Quite frankly, I think Iran is the greatest threat to the United States also. A lot of people do not realize this, but back in 2007 our—at that time it was classified—Our intelligence said that by 2015, Iran would have the weapon and a delivery system. Well, that is only 6 months from now.

That has been reconfirmed in our unclassified intelligence starting in about 2010. So right now it is really Iran that is responsible for what Hamas has been able to do. I might ask the question: What is President Obama doing? His rush to reach a nuclear agreement with Iran has undermined years of bipartisan sanctions that were working. We have sanctions, not just by us but by European countries and other countries that have really brought Iran down—not to their knees, because they are still developing their weapons. But nonetheless, they were working.

As part of the President's agreement—this is what he is doing right now. His agreement is to reduce Iran's sanctions, as he announced in January. He has endorsed Iran's right to enrich uranium. So let's stop and think about it. This is a deal he has cut. He said: All right. We will pull off our sanctions so you will be able to receive the benefit of that. At the same time we are going to let you go ahead and continue to enrich uranium.

He has allowed Iran to keep 19,000 centrifuges while unlocking $7 billion in assets. These are assets that were held which they can now use to their benefit. He has just extended the deal by agreeing to provide Iran with an additional $2.8 billion in frozen assets. That brings the $7 billion up to almost $10 billion. While Iran is building a bomb, Obama is releasing sanctions.

I believe the Iranians are using negotiations to buy time as they are developing their nuclear weapon. Again, Netanyahu called the President's agreement a ''historic mistake'' that is making the world a much more dangerous place. History is going to prove that he is right. Obama should demand Iran dismantle its nuclear program, but he will not do it. We should reinstate full sanctions now and consider additional sanctions. But President Obama will not do it.

Does anyone really believe Iran is not involved with Hamas and its attacks?

Today, Obama is rewarding Iran by releasing more financial assets to Iran, funding that will be used to support more terrorism against Israel. There is little to show for the administration's reckless gamble for Israel. President Obama is negotiating with an Iranian regime that has repeatedly deceived us and concealed its nuclear program for over 2 decades.

I see nothing different in this deal. Israel lives in a dangerous neighborhood, surrounded by terrorists who refuse to even acknowledge the Jewish state's right to exist. They need all the friends they can get. I keep hearing people talk about the two-state solution. The two-state solution between Hamas and Israel is kind of interesting because Hamas does not consider Israel to be a state. So how can you have a two-state solution if you only have one state? That is the situation.

That is why I want to salute the country of Egypt. There are some other friends that we have over there. I have been upset with some of the Members here in this body because they do not have an appreciation for what Egypt does and the part they play in the Middle East and their support for Israel. Let me tell you, this started a long time ago. The Camp David Accords was in 1979. In the Camp David Accords they made a deal with Israel. Now, you have to keep in mind that this was the military of Egypt. It is hard for people in this country to see that sometimes there is a difference between the administration in a country and the military.

So it is the military here that has said: We will be protecting Israel. We had, not too long ago, an effort from this body to try to stop the shipment of some F–16s that Egypt had already bought. Now, granted, that was back during President Morsi and his radical Muslim Brotherhood. But nonetheless, these were going not to him but to the military. The newly elected President Sisi has destroyed—he is working right along with the Israelis. He has been involved, and his people and his military, in destroying over 90 percent of the tunnels that are going from the Sinai to Gaza.

So I only mention this because those individuals who do not understand this might consider punishing Egypt. If you punish Egypt, you are punishing, to the same degree, Israel.

The turbulent times we face serve as a reminder why the United States and Israel have to continue to work together. The same enemies that threaten the existence of Israel also want to destroy America. Over the years the United States has greatly benefited from the cooperation with Israel on missile defense technologies. We have to continue that critical partnership. Israel is our most faithful ally, our most critical partner in the region, and acts as a roadblock against terrorism, terrorism that would be hitting the United States of America.

The United States stands shoulder to shoulder with Israel and supports its right to defend itself.

Since his first budget, President Obama has been degrading our military while also making the world more dangerous through an apologetic and reactive foreign policy of appeasement. I often quote Hiram Mann, who said:

No man escapes
When freedom fails,
The best men rot in filthy jails;
And they who cried: ''Appease, Appease!''
Are hanged by men they tried to please.

We have to get out of that system. We have to stand by Israel and hang tough with our best friend. We can't survive without them.

I often look back wistfully at the days of the Cold War. That was back when they had two superpowers in the world, the USSR and the United States. We knew what they had, and they knew what we had. We knew what their capacities were, they knew ours.

They had a system called MAD, mutually assured destruction. It meant: You shoot at you, we will shoot at you. You die, we all die, and everyone is happy.

That doesn't work anymore. Now we have these rogue elements out there

that are developing weapons that can wipe out an entire U.S. city. I am about not just the Middle East but about North Korea also.

So we are looking at the Middle East. We are looking at our only way of defending our allies there and working to stop the capabilities of countries such as Iran to have a weapon that would reach the United States of America. So we have to hang tough with our best friend Israel, and I pray that we do.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

49TH ANNIVERSARY OF MEDICARE

Mr. KAINE. Madam President, I rise in honor of a birthday.

Forty-nine years ago, Medicare was signed into law. Every year, the trustees prepare a report about the fiscal health of Medicare and Social Security, and that report was issued earlier this week. On this 49th birthday of Medicare, I wish to talk about Medicare's health because there is some good news.

The 2014 trustees' report released earlier this week looks at the trust fund financing for Medicare hospital coverage and indicates that trust fund, under current projections, will remain solvent until 2030. Last year the 2013 report indicated that solvency period would go to 2026. So in 1 year the fiscal projections for Medicare and Medicaid improved by 4 years—solvency until 2030.

In addition, the projected Part B premiums, the Part B portion of Medicare, which is the prescription drug premium program for seniors, for the second year in a row the premiums will not increase one penny.

This improved health of Medicare is significant. The health of it has improved dramatically, even in the last year. But where the improvement truly looks significant is if we compare the 2014 report with the 2009 report, the report that was done on Medicare's 44th birthday 5 years ago. The 2009 report said the hospital insurance trust fund was not adequately financed for the next 10 years, and it would be exhausted in 2017.

Again, just to compare, 2009 Medicare trustees' report, the trust fund will be exhausted by 2017; 2014 Medicare trustees' report, the trust fund will be solvent all the way through 2030. There is a difference of 13 years of additional solvency in Medicare, according to the projections and the change just from 2009 to 2014.

I think we know where I am going with this subject. What explains the improving solvency of the Medicare trust fund? Why would it have changed so dramatically from the 2009 to the 2014 projection and added 13 years of solvency to the trust fund?

The Congressional Budget Office and others have indicated it was not the 2009 recession that was the primary driver for Medicare spending reduction. Instead, the CBO and others are indicating that a large part of the improved solvency of Medicare is because of the reforms that were included by Congress when Congress passed the Affordable Care Act in 2010. When it comes to reducing costs, bending the cost curve, the Affordable Care Act is working.

That is not the only reason Congress passed the Affordable Care Act. Coverage is expanding. Certain health care indicators are improving. More people have access because they are not denied insurance because of preexisting conditions. Kids can stay on family policies. Businesses can get tax credits if they are small.

But one of the areas—and that was why the first day the ACA was affordable. It was to try to do things that would control health care costs.

This Medicare trustees' report on Medicare's 49th birthday shows on cost reforms the ACA is working. The innovative systems of changing the payment model from pay-for-procedure to pay for quality, paying for value over volume, for reducing costs and improving health care delivery systems are extending the solvency of Medicare.

Not only is this cost containment good for the Federal Government, for the Federal Treasury, it is also good for Medicare recipients: 8.2 million Medicare recipients saved more than $11.5 billion on prescription drugs thanks to closing the Medicare Part D doughnut hole.

In Virginia, people with Medicare saved $254 million on prescription drugs because the Medicare Part D doughnut hole was closed just since the ACA was enacted—$254 million since the 2010 enactment. In 2013 alone, 37.2 million Medicare recipients received free preventive benefits, including more than 900,000 in Virginia, because of the Affordable Care Act.

The work obviously needs to continue to bend the cost curve the right way, but the trustees' report from Monday is not the only evidence of the improving health of our fiscal expenditures.

Just this month CBO again revised downward its 10-year estimate for spending on Medicare and our Nation's major health care programs. Since 2010 CBO has lowered its estimates for Medicare and Medicaid and other health care programs by $1.23 trillion—lowered projections of health care spending since the Affordable Care Act was passed.

The CBO said in a recently issued long-term budget outlook that the government will spend 1.6 percent of GDP less on health care programs than estimated in 2010 before the ACA was passed. A report released this week by the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation at HHS reported essentially no growth in Medicare expenditures on a per capita basis last year.

That report also said Medicare spending between 2009 and 2012—for beneficiaries in the traditional program—was approximately $116 billion lower than it would have been if the average growth rates from years 2004 to 2008 had been projected forward.

So there are many reasons we should be thankful the Affordable Care Act passed, that we should be absolutely committed to maintaining it, and that we should also be committed to maintaining it wherever we can. But as we celebrate the 49th anniversary of Medicare today, one of the reasons we should be thankful is it is clear that the ACA is helping us make health care more affordable.

To conclude, the report that was issued this week was not all good news because it also had challenges with respect to Social Security. The Social Security trust fund will be exhausted in 2033, and that represents no change from last year. The solvency of the trust fund was not changed at all in the interim year.

But in the area of Social Security disability income, that insurance program—at current projections—will be completed by 2016.

Secretary Lew indicated this week that measures need to be taken to make sure that program—which is of critical importance to millions of Americans who are on disabilities—requires that we take action to fix that program so they can count on it.

So what we see is when Congress in the Affordable Care Act acted in a smart way to deal with Medicare, we have improved the area of Medicare costs and we are saving money. Congress has not acted with respect to Social Security and the Social Security disability insurance program, which is critical to folks with disabilities. It is going to need some quick fix.

I conclude and just say it is good for Congress to act. We can filibuster. We can debate. We can consider nominations. We can do a bill in one House and send it over and wait—as with immigration reform for 1-year-plus—for the other House to do something about it. None of that is action. None of that will fix any of the challenges that face us.

But when we do act and we are willing to tackle tough problems such as Medicare cost growth, we do it in both Houses and take the risk, we will find we will be better off than if we don't act. Social Security needs to have the same kind of focused and careful attention to it, especially the disability insurance program, as we paid to Medicare in 2010.

Medicare is one of the best programs this Nation has ever embraced. I wish it a happy 49th birthday today and congratulate those who were in the Senate in 2010 for being willing to risk action and thereby found a way to save costs and make Medicare work better.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COONS). The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. I rise to speak on the urgent supplemental bill, and I rise as the chair of the full Committee on Appropriations that is actually trying to move the urgent supplemental.

''Supplemental'' is an important word. It means it is in addition to fiscal year 2014 funding. There are elements where we make requests for an urgent supplemental because of unexpected emergencies, either within our own country or affecting a treasured ally—such as the State of Israel—or the crisis at our border because of what is going on in Central America. Remember, it is the crisis in Central America that is creating the humanitarian surge at our border.

Although I rise now to speak about one element. I have spoken about the fires in our Western States and later today I will speak about the children and actually try to paint a picture for people about what is going on in Honduras, El Salvador, and other countries that are also affected, but now I am going to speak about Israel.

Israel is under attack, and it is under attack by a terrorist group that denies its very right to exist. It is under attack by an organization called Hamas that is sending thousands of rockets to Israeli cities and towns targeting innocent civilians. Its very survivability is being defended by missile defense technology. The most crucial for short-range missiles is a technology called Iron Dome. This missile defense technology has saved hundreds of lives.

I can speak to this—when I say personally, not because I am in Israel and see the horrific attacks, but because I have a classmate from college, a very dear friend, and we have stayed in contact over a number of years. She is a psychiatric nurse. When she married, they made aliyah and moved to Israel, where she has taught at Hebrew University and her husband is a distinguished psychiatrist. They live in a town called Ashkelon.

She sent me the most poignant of emails. I will not read it to my colleagues, but she did tell me what is going on. Every day there are these rockets going on. They spend their lives going to shelters. They can only move around in a small patch because they have to be, under safety rules, within 2 or 3 minutes from a shelter. She said in her email to me that it is literally Iron Dome that is saving their lives.

Iron Dome is a technology that needs to be replenished. It needs to be replenished, and the State of Israel has discussed this with our government. Secretary Chuck Hagel wrote to our committee asking that this be in the supplemental essentially because of this war or terrorist attack against Israel.

The committee has responded by placing $225 million in there, but in order to replenish it. There are many who say: I don't know if I am going to vote for this. What is Iron Dome, and is this an attack technology?

Let me say what Iron Dome is.

Iron Dome is a high-tech defensive system. It is not an offensive system. It is used as a missile defense system. How does it work? Approximately 10-feet-long missiles intercept rockets. Their rockets aren't designed to shoot out; they are designed to shoot rockets at rockets that are being fired on Israel from a range of between 2.5 and 43 miles. Each interceptor missile—remember, they intercept another rocket—costs about $50,000. Stunning, isn't it? Israel has invested over $1 billion of its own money in Iron Dome. Our government has worked with them on Iron Dome so they can maintain their qualitative edge. But just think. In order to protect themselves, every rocket going off costs $50,000.

As of July 30, over 2,730 rocket launches have been directed at Israel itself. Iron Dome has sent over 515 interceptions; 9 batteries have been deployed; more than 4,100 targets were attacked since the beginning of the operation.

But remember, over 2,700 rockets have been directed at Israel. Iron Dome has deployed 515 at the cost of $50,000 apiece. Now what they are saying is, help us replenish our interceptor rockets because we are using them up. Essentially, it is bullets—not directed at people—it is rockets in the air.

Israel has a 90-percent success rate in intercepting these rockets coming from the Gaza. What they are asking for is help from us, the ability to replenish these rockets. I hope we do this in order for them to continue to be able to defend themselves. It is absolutely crucial that Israel has the opportunity to defend itself while others are working on cease-fires or political solutions. Those are excellent diplomatic and humanitarian goals, but right now we have to make sure that Israel can defend itself.

This is important because Israel is a treasured ally. It is important that we enable them to guard themselves against a terrorist organization.

We all know that the long-range solution is that the Hamas infrastructure must be eliminated. That is absolutely so. These so-called—well, they are not so-called. As a member of the Intelligence Committee, I have had many briefings on this. I can't go into detail, but there are tunnels that go right through Gaza and into the edge or, actually, in some instances into Israel itself. During this conflict Israel has discovered 31 tunnels. This is extremely disturbing. And they are big. When we think of a tunnel—this isn't like a little pipe for water. This is a tunnel where as many as two people could cross side-by-side going through and, in some instances, actually weapons being able to be put through. These tunnels are a very threat to Israel's existence.

In addition to the tunnels, the rockets that are pummeling Israel continue to be fired every single day.

We believe, for our allies, in the right to self-defense. We have signed memorandums of agreement to enable them, with their missile defense system, to maintain their qualitative edge.

Now, when they are in the very struggle for their safety and perhaps their future, we need to be able to pass this important legislation.

We also know that when we pass this legislation, Iron Dome should stand alone. Many people who support the Iron Dome legislation, such as myself, want to also support those people who are also under threat.

That takes me to the children, because right now the children in Central America are under threat. And what are they under threat of? Well, I will talk more about that around 5:00. But what are they under threat of? They are under threat because of the narco drug dealers who have created the most vicious and violent gangs that have now almost taken over some of these Central American countries. They want to recruit the young men to be part of the gang, part of the drug trade, part of the couriers, part of what is involved in doing a drug trade. Then, when they refuse, they either threaten them with death or the most grisly and ghoulish of torture.

There are reported incidents, not in our classified briefings but in public media, of children being tortured to death because they refused to join a gang. They are literally fighting for their lives. These children coming to our border are fighting for their lives, and the way they fight for their life is to flee. They are fleeing the violence.

I know people are dismissive of some of this and they say: Oh, there you go. You are a soft-hearted social worker, you are a liberal, you love children. The answer is: Yes. Yes to all that. Yes, you betcha, I claim it; I own it; that is who I am.

But I don't do this because of some ''gushy-poo'' feeling here. I am doing this because of the actual documented violence in these countries, and I believe we need to respond to the needs of the children. Let them tell their case not only to a social worker—which is a good step, in my mind—but also to an immigration judge, and using the laws of our country, the legal criteria for asylum and refugee status, let's listen to the stories of the children. And if those children qualify for asylum and refugee status, then they should remain in this country. If they don't, there are other avenues for them to return home. But for gosh sakes, could we stop punishing the children for the crimes of the drug dealers and the human traffickers? Don't punish the children.

There are those who want to further militarize our border by calling out the National Guard. Well, what are they going to do when the children present themselves with little strips of paper saying what their name and their hometown is, and where their aunt is living in Langley Park, MD? That is not the job of the National Guard.

And if we want to use guns at the border, yes—don't use them about the children, use them about the drug dealers. And by the way, it is our insatiable, vociferous desire and appetite for drugs that has fueled this whole economy in these countries.

I am going to say more about this, but I do want to say that what is in this supplemental is the tools for people to defend themselves. For our friends in the Western States, this is money to protect themselves; and for firefighters—and gosh knows our local communities need that help; it is for a great nation such as Israel, our treasured ally, to continue to have the interceptor rockets to be able to defend itself; and it is also here that we take a look at the border, we honor our law in terms of determining refugee status for those fleeing from violence in their home country; and then we go after what is creating the violence which is right there in Central America against the narcotraffickers, because remember—and the Presiding Officer is very knowledgeable in this—if someone is willing to trade in drugs, they are also willing to view everything like a commodity. So they view drugs as a commodity and they view women and children, girls and boys, as a commodity, and they are then moved into human trafficking in the most vile, repugnant sexual trafficking.

We need to get some of our darker appetites under control, and we need to be able to fight. If we want to fight with guns, join with Central America and fight against the narcotraffickers.

I hope that clarifies the intellectual underpinnings of this bill, the compelling financial necessity, and humanitarian issues that are facing people in our own country, at our own border, and with a treasured ally.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

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

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

INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON DISABILITY RIGHTS

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I come before the Senate to call again for the ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

I would like to give a little history. We passed the Americans with Disabilities Act here in 1990. It was signed into law by President George Herbert Walker Bush on July 26, 1990—24 years ago last Saturday. That changed the face of America. Anywhere you go, you can see ramps and curb cuts and automatic door openers and accessible bathrooms and in education kids being integrated fully into schools under the IDEA and ADA. It really did change accessibility and also opportunity in the workplace, for example, for people with disabilities.

Some years after the Americans with Disabilities Act was passed, the United Nations set up a committee to study whether there should be a treaty, an international convention on the rights of people with disabilities. That committee drafted it after consultation with us here in the Senate. In looking at the ADA, in fact—I was told by one of the persons instrumental in this that the Americans with Disabilities Act, which we refer to as ADA, informed them on what they needed to put into the convention. That convention was sent out to member states for ratification in 2008. Since that time, 148 nations have ratified it, with one exception—well, there has been more than one exception, but one glaring exception is the United States.

Under our constitutional system, this treaty was sent to the President. The President sent it to all of his Departments to find out what laws we had that needed to be changed. So it goes to the Department of Commerce, the Department of State, the Department of Agriculture perhaps, and everywhere else to see what laws we would have to change to comply with this treaty. Well, it came back after about a year, and because the Americans with Disabilities Act was so good, we didn't have to change any of our laws—none—because we are the best in the world on it. It was sent to OMB to see if there would be any budget implications, and OMB said there were no budget implications either.

After that, the President sent it to the Senate for ratification under our Constitution. It was sent to the Committee On Foreign Relations. Senator John Kerry of Massachusetts was then the chairman of the committee. They had hearings. In fact, the first two witnesses at the hearings were Senator JOHN MCCAIN and I. There were a lot of other people who testified, both Republicans and Democrats, disabilities leaders, disability rights advocates, and others. This was in 2011.

Then it was brought to the floor in December of 2012, and that was a lameduck session. It turned out that 38 Senators—all on the Republican side—had signed a letter that we should not vote on a treaty in a lameduck session. There were some other issues raised, but that was the big one. So we brought it up for a vote. In the Constitution, a treaty requires a two-thirds vote of those present and voting, and so we fell five votes short.

That Congress ended, so the treaty had to be resubmitted from the administration to the Senate. It went through another hearing process. I spoke with the ranking member on the Foreign Relations Committee about what we could do to advance it, and they wanted more hearings. So we did that. Senator MENENDEZ from New Jersey is now the chair of the Foreign Relations Committee, and he had more hearings on it.

Thanks to the leadership of Senator MENENDEZ, the bill was reported out of the committee last week and it was put on the Executive Calendar yesterday. There has to be 3 days before they can send it to the floor. They sent it to the floor on Monday, 24-hour layover, and it is now on the Executive Calendar ready to be brought up.

I understand we have a busy week this week and there are a lot of things happening. I suppose people could look around and say: What? There is not much happening around here today.

But we are in postcloture, and under the rules there is 30 hours of postcloture time unless time is yielded back, and evidently—I don't know if that is going to happen. I am hopeful that sometime today or late today maybe or tomorrow, we will have a unanimous consent request in terms of bringing up this treaty, this convention on the rights of people with disabilities.

So that is what I wanted to talk about today, but I wanted to give a brief history of where we are and why we are at this point.

During the past week we have seen extraordinary efforts to move forward with this treaty. As I said, Senator MENENDEZ, the chair of the Foreign Relations Committee, has marked up the treaty and brought it out with a 12-to-6 bipartisan vote. The committee added new reservations, understandings, and declarations that thoughtfully addressed the concerns that have been raised, including the matter of a parent's right to decide how their children are schooled as well as issues related to federalism and sovereignty.

This week we are hearing from disability advocates from across the country. Yesterday afternoon there was a big rally on the Mall calling for passage of the treaty. Many of our offices have been flooded with calls and visits from people with disabilities, veterans groups, and business leaders asking us to vote on and pass this treaty. Businesses such as Walmart, AT&T, Sprint, and Coca-Cola have urged passage of this treaty. In the days ahead we will hear from many more calling for its passage.

Now let me talk about a few of the issues that have been raised. First, I will talk about the issue of sovereignty. Some of our colleagues continue to express concern about some aspects, particularly with regard to sovereignty and reproductive health. Let me talk about sovereignty first, but I want to say this first of all: It is important to address these issues thoughtfully and respectfully. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee in a bipartisan fashion did so last week when it approved a series of new reservations, understandings, and declarations.

For those who don't know what that means, every treaty we adopt has what are called RUDs—reservations, understandings, and declarations. What are those? Those inform other free nations on how we will adopt this treaty, how under our laws and the Constitution we will comport with that treaty. Just about every treaty we have has some reservation or understanding or declaration.

So the Foreign Relations Committee adopted new reservations, declarations, and understandings, but concerns remain.

Last week my good friend the senior Senator from Utah spoke eloquently about his genuine concerns about the loss of or possible loss of U.S. sovereignty. In answering my question as to why this convention is different from the Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labor treaty, he expressed his fear that the disabilities convention would ''threaten American sovereignty and self-government.'' The Senator from Utah stated that the child labor convention we passed in 1999 is the Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labor. The Senate adopted it in 1999. So the Senator from Utah says that convention gives authority to ratifying countries to determine whether they are in compliance with the convention while under the disabilities convention—the CRPD, as it is known—the U.N. determines whether ratifying countries are in compliance with their treaty obligations. On the Senate floor, my good friend from Utah stated that ''the Disability Treaty gives the last word on whether a nation is in compliance to the UN, the child labor treaty leaves that entirely up to each nation.''

Well, the fact is that the review process of compliance is essentially identical in both the Worst Forms of Child Labor treaty that we adopted in 1999 and the CRPD that we are discussing right now.

Let me further explain that. When an ILO member—that is the International Labor Organization, under which that treaty was signed—when an ILO member state ratifies this convention, it is required to submit regular reports. Those reports are reviewed by the ILO's independent committee of experts. Keep that phrase in mind—''committee of experts.'' It is reviewed by them on the application of conventions and recommendations, and they are known as the committee of experts. The task of the committee of experts is to assess the extent to which the ratifying member's legislation and practices are in conformity with the ratified treaty. This is an external review committee, and the United States has always supported this type of review. The process guarantees fairness and openness in the implementation of treaty obligations.

While it has been suggested that the United States should conduct its own compliance with treaty obligations, I ask my colleagues, would we be comfortable with all countries assessing their own compliance with important international standards? I don't think so.

For example, take any treaty—take the START treaty, the arms control reduction treaty. Would we be content to say to Russia ''Tell us how you are in compliance with that'' and just accept their word for it? We wouldn't do that. We wouldn't do that with any country with which we have a treaty. That is why there is always an external review process to see whether country A, B, C or D that has signed on to any treaty is in fact in compliance with it. You wouldn't make a treaty and say: OK, Country X, tell us whether you are in compliance and we will just accept that. No one would do that. It goes back to Ronald Reagan's phrase: Trust but verify. We will trust, but we want verification.

The Worst Forms of Child Labour treaty, the one we adopted here in 1999, has the same conclusions and recommendations as this committee of experts as far as external reviews. It is the same in the CRPD, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and sets up a ''committee of experts,'' just as it is under the Worst Forms of Child Labour treaty, to review whether a country is basically in compliance. Are they really implementing the treaty as they said in the treaty?

Again, we have the two committees of experts—the one in the CRPD and in the Worst Forms of Child Labour treaty, which was adopted here unanimously in 1999. The Senator from Utah supported that. The recommendations and conclusions of that committee of experts under the Worst Forms of Child Labour treaty that was set up in 1999 are not legally binding on the United States or any other country. Although these recommendations often have great moral weight and persuasive value, the findings cannot be imposed on any government. It is up to each ratifying member to determine whether and to what extent it will act upon those recommendations. That is the same as the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

This committee of experts will certainly go in and do external reviews of whether a country is in compliance or working to be in compliance. They may issue findings and conclusions and recommendations, but they are not binding on any country. They are not binding on the United States. Let me repeat: It is up to each ratifying member to determine whether and to what extent it will act upon those recommendations.

A review of practices is common whenever a nation undertakes an international obligation, whether it is by treaty or any other international agreement. This does not equate to forfeiture by the American people of our right to govern or of our sovereignty. It does not relate to any abandonment of our cultural and social values in America.

In terms of this external review of compliance, there is no substantive difference between the child labor convention we passed in 1999 and the U.N. disabilities convention that we hope to bring up. Both treaties have much the same reporting requirements, oversight mechanisms, recommendation process, and ''committee of experts.'' And just as in 1999 with that earlier treaty, the United States is in no danger of losing any of its sovereignty with the disability treaty—none whatsoever. If we weren't before, we aren't now. These are recommendations.

Why should we be afraid of an external review by a committee of experts to see whether we are in compliance with this treaty on the rights of people with disabilities? It was modeled after the Americans with Disabilities Act, for crying out loud, and we were already in compliance. We are far ahead, quite frankly, of any other country. Why should we be afraid of any review of our laws and practices in terms of people with disabilities? We should not be. We ought to be proud of it. In fact, we ought to be proud of exporting the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Given these facts, I ask my colleagues: Why is it acceptable to have sufficient reservations to protect our sovereignty for a treaty about the worst forms of child labor and a treaty on torture and a treaty on degrading punishment and not be able to have sufficient reservations that protect our sovereignty when it comes to a treaty regarding people with disabilities? What is the difference? From my review of this issue, and the review of legal experts, there is no substantive difference to the threat to our sovereignty. As I have stated previously here, scores of Republican policymakers agree with me.

I have heard that some of my fellow Republicans are concerned about losing our sovereignty under this treaty. I will point out that former President George Herbert Walker Bush, who signed the Americans with Disabilities Act, is in strong support of this treaty. Are you telling me he doesn't care about our sovereignty? I don't think so. Former President Bush was a strong supporter. I kind of think he cares about our sovereignty. Since the Americans with Disabilities Act was passed, every former Republican leader of this Senate—I am talking about Senator Dole, Senator Lott, and Senator Frist—supported this treaty. I kind of think they care about our sovereignty a lot too. I know every one of them.

Dick Thornburgh, former Attorney General of the United States under George Herbert Walker Bush, is in strong support of this treaty. Don't tell me he doesn't know what is in the treaty. He knows every legal part of it. He cares deeply about our sovereignty, and he says this is no threat to our sovereignty whatsoever.

The American Legion is a big supporter. Are you telling me the American Legion commander and all of those veterans are not concerned about our sovereignty? You bet they are. They know this treaty and have read the treaty, and they said it doesn't affect our sovereignty. Every veterans group supports this bill, and they do care about our sovereignty.

I hope we can lay that issue aside. This does not impinge or threaten our

sovereignty any more than other treaties. Every treaty we have signed has a reservation that basically says a treaty shall be applied in the United States in accordance with the Constitution as interpreted by the United States. That is in every treaty we sign, and it says, basically, we are sovereign and our Constitution is sovereign.

There was a court case called the Bond case which was recently decided, I think in May, by the Supreme Court. A lot of people wondered whether that would affect this treaty. It was a case that was brought up by the United States against a woman for violating the chemical weapons ban treaty because she had been trying to poison one of her husband's lovers or something like that. The Supreme Court said: That is nonsense. Get out of here. Those laws are covered by the State of Pennsylvania, not by a treaty. So that kind of put to rest any idea that somehow this treaty overrode our Constitution—our federalism—and the fact that these criminal laws are State laws. That just happened in May.

The other issue that has come up is reproductive health. Some of our colleagues have also voiced concern regarding the provision on sexual and reproductive health of women with disabilities as it was mentioned in article 25 of the treaty. For those not familiar with this provision, the treaty simply says ''persons with disabilities have the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health without discrimination on the basis of disability.''

The article goes further and says that those countries ratifying the treaty shall ''provide persons with disabilities with the same range, quality and standard of free or affordable health care and programmes as provided to other persons, including in the area of sexual and reproductive health . . . ''

Critics of the treaty say this phrase ''creates and expands rights to abortion.'' That is not correct. This phrase has nothing to do with abortion. What it is about is equality and access.

Historically, people with disabilities have been disproportionately discriminated against when it comes to health care—especially women with disabilities around the world—because they are blind or have cerebral palsy or autism or any number of physical or mental impairments. They were often viewed as not being able to be mothers or wives or partners in a family.

In fact, because of this prejudiced attitude—which still exists in so many places around the world, and probably some places here in America too—women with disabilities were, and in many cases still are, denied such vital services as Pap smears, gynecological exams, breast cancer screenings, and cervical cancer screenings simply because they are disabled. Denying women with disabilities the same health prevention, screening, and intervention services that are provided to women without disabilities is blatant discrimination, prejudicial, and unethical.

The entire purpose of article 25 of the U.N. convention is to address this prejudiced view of the world that has led to thousands of unnecessary deaths of women because they have not been afforded the same access to reproductive health care as women without disabilities. That is why that was put in there. It has nothing to do with abortion. Article 25 simply reflects the underlying principles of the treaty: equality and access for all. These same principles are the bedrock of our own Americans with Disabilities Act. It has nothing to do with abortion, but some people have whipped it up and said it does.

In some countries women with disabilities have been the most preyed upon. It is women with disabilities—physical and intellectual disabilities—who are the subject of maltreatment, mistreatment, and sexual abuse. All we are saying is they have to be treated the same as any other woman without a disability under the laws of that country. So if a country banned all abortions, that is their right to do so. They cannot then say: Oh, you may have an abortion if your unborn child is disabled. They can't do that. They can't make exceptions.

If they provide any kind of services, they can't say to one woman: Because you are not disabled, you get this service, but if you are disabled, you don't get it. No, no. Equality of access.

There are 71 countries that have absolute prohibitions, or significant restrictions on abortion, that have signed the treaty without reservations about reproductive health. Imagine that—71. They felt no harm would come from a reservation because they correctly determined that the treaty is no threat whatsoever to their sovereignty and their national laws limiting access to abortion.

Poland, a country with strict abortion limitations, was not going to sign this treaty because they were concerned about article 25. I will read the exact language of the reservation put in by the Nation of Poland:

> The Republic of Poland understands that Article 23.1(b) and Article 25(a) shall not be interpreted in a way conferring an individual right to abortion or mandating state party to provide access thereto, unless that right is guaranteed by the national law.

Well, when they adopted that reservation, Poland signed it on the treaty. Poland's reservation states exactly what this treaty is about, a guarantee that women with disabilities will have access to the same health care services guaranteed to all other citizens by their national law. To say the treaty is about creating and expanding abortion rights is just plain wrong, and to make such a claim is utterly unfounded and unfair. It is unfair to women with disabilities around the globe. It is creating a false claim out of thin air with no other purpose but to prevent ratification of this important treaty.

Most of the concerns raised by my colleagues are serious concerns. They are also concerns that can be addressed by thoughtful reservations, understandings, and declarations to the treaty. Indeed, they have been addressed by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. They have acted, and now it is time for the full Senate to act.

Let us bring the treaty to the floor of the Senate. Listen to Senators' concerns, address those concerns, and then vote on the treaty. We owe this to millions of Americans with disabilities—our veterans and others who want the same rights and access afforded by our own Americans with Disabilities Act. They want it to apply to the globe. We owe this to our veterans who want to be able to travel and pursue opportunities in other countries, knowing they can enjoy the same rights and access they have here in America.

Senator MARK KIRK from Illinois said it very eloquently in a press conference we had with the veterans groups last week. He said: ''Our veterans fought for freedom around the globe. They ought to be able to move freely around the globe.''

We owe this to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the Business Roundtable, and countless companies that know that not only is this the right thing to do for veterans, it is the right thing to do for business. There are all kinds of markets opening all around the world for people with disabilities—new software, new kinds of equipment, new devices that are helping people with disabilities live more full and meaningful lives. A lot of that was developed here in America. I know our businesses would like to be involved with this treaty, to be able to be involved in raising the level of accessibility and opportunity for people with disabilities around the globe. Scores of religious groups want to see this treaty ratified.

In closing, it is time to bring this to the floor. As I say, I know Members have serious concerns and those concerns should be addressed. I believe the Foreign Relations Committee has addressed them. If not, then let's have a discussion about how we meet those reservations. We shouldn't just say I don't like the U.N., so therefore we shouldn't adopt it.

I think there are some people who maybe don't like the U.N. OK, fine. I remember when we passed the convention on the worst forms of child labor. I was in Geneva with President Clinton when he signed it. We came back, resubmitted it to the Senate, and I went to see Senator Jesse Helms to ask him to move this. There was probably no one in my 30 years of history in the Senate who disliked the United Nations more than Jesse Helms of North Carolina. So he went on to tell me just how bad the United Nations was but he would bring the treaty to the committee and have hearings and a markup. He called me as the first witness. I always appreciated that.

So Senator Helms, the chairman of the committee—the Republicans were

in charge of the Senate at the time—brought the convention to the committee and reported it out. I remember him saying one time he didn't like the United Nations, but if this makes them do something good for a change, he would be all right with it, and it passed the floor unanimously.

I say to those who maybe don't like the United Nations: Fine, that is their right; perhaps they have good and sufficient reasons not to like the United Nations. I have some problems with the United Nations myself at certain times with some of the things they do or don't do. But I see this in the same light as the convention on the worst forms of child labor. This makes countries change for the better through persuasion, not through mandate. No country has to change their laws because of what the committee on experts says, but through moral weight, through persuasion, through working with other countries under this umbrella on the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities. If this causes countries to change their policies and make life better for people with disabilities around the globe, shouldn't we do it, even though we may not like the United Nations? As Jesse Helms said, if this makes them do something good for a change, we ought to be for it.

So I hope colleagues will listen to the veterans groups who are for it. All business groups I have met with support it strongly. Religious groups and disability groups are united behind this. Listen to our former Republican leaders, including former President George Herbert Walker Bush, President Bush; former Senator Bob Dole, the majority leader of the Senate, worked his heart out on this. He cares about sovereignty. He knows this is not going to take away our sovereignty. Every former Republican leader of the Senate—Senator JOHN MCCAIN—colleagues tell me Senator JOHN MCCAIN doesn't care about our sovereignty? I happen to think he cares a lot about our sovereignty. He gave a lot of his life protecting our sovereignty. MARK KIRK, Senator KELLY AYOTTE, Senator JOHN BARRASSO, Senator MURKOWSKI, and Senator COLLINS are all strong supporters of this.

I have been involved in disability policy since I first got here in 1975, starting in the House. Everything I have ever worked on, including Education of All Handicapped Children Act, the Television Decoder Circuitry Act, the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the ADA Act Amendments later on in 2008—these were all nonpartisan. They didn't devolve into any kind of partisan issue. Now, that didn't mean that everybody voted for it, but it passed overwhelmingly with both Republican and Democrat support. That ought to be the case with this too. Yes, we should address the legitimate and honest concerns people have about home schooling, abortion, and sovereignty. I believe we can do that with reservations, but I want every Senator to know that nothing this committee on experts will ever do under the CRPD takes precedence over our Constitution or over our laws. It does nothing to take away our sovereignty, and we can spell that out just as we have in every other treaty we have signed in the past.

So I hope we can bring this to the floor, and I hope we can have a discussion. I hope we can work these areas out and have strong support from both sides to pass this treaty and help change the face of the globe as we have changed the face of America for people with disabilities.

I see the Senator from Wyoming is on the floor. I was listing all the people who support the treaty, and one of the strongest supporters of this treaty from the very beginning has been Senator JOHN BARRASSO from Wyoming. I inadvertently, going through the names, left it off, but I see him here, and I apologize because he has been such a strong advocate for people with disabilities in this country and a strong advocate for people with disabilities in the world. I personally want to publicly thank Senator BARRASSO for his great leadership on this issue.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. BARRASSO. I thank my colleague from Iowa for his kind comments. We have worked on this issue, and I do this as a physician who has taken care of patients in Wyoming for a quarter of a century. I have so many friends and there are so many folks who have had extra challenges in life, and I was happy to stand with Senator Dole and Senator MCCAIN and others in this effort. So I thank my colleague for his comments.

HEALTH CARE

As a physician, I come to the floor today as I have week after week since the President's health care law was passed because I have many concerns about the way this health care law is impacting families in my home State of Wyoming, as well as across the country—people who find out their rates are going up, they are paying higher deductibles, higher copays, higher premiums. They feel the government is in control, Washington is in control rather than them, when Washington decides if the insurance policy they have had and that worked for them is something they will be able to keep, and many times they weren't because the President's law said no, it wasn't good enough for them, even though the families in Wyoming are better able to make the decision about what is better and more important for them. They don't like it when the President tells them they need to buy insurance they don't want or need or can afford, in many ways, with a long list of provisions that Washington mandates be included.

I hear every week, as I did last weekend in Wyoming, from folks who have had work hours cut, resulting in lower take-home pay because of the impact of part of the law that resulted in bipartisan opposition that says the work week is 30 hours. So people who are working part-time have had their hours cut to below 30 hours and have lower take-home pay.

I talked to ER doctors at home and around the country where I have trained and where I have gone to medical school. The Wall Street Journal even wrote about it last month: ''ER visits rise despite the law. Health act isn't cutting volume.'' On the front page the lead paragraph said: ''Early evidence suggests that emergency rooms have become busier since the Affordable Care Act expanded insurance coverage this year, despite the law's goal of reducing unnecessary care in ERs.'' It says: Democrats who designed that law hoped it would do the opposite, but that hasn't been the case.

I heard last weekend in Wyoming the story about all of these fake applications that—actually I guess the Government Accountability Office said let's see how well this works; is the Obama health care law working? So they made up 10 fake applications, sent them in, and they found out that actually a dozen fictitious applicants, online or by phone, using invalid or missing Social Security numbers—this is the Washington Post writing about this, but it was in stories across the country—invalid or missing Social Security numbers, inaccurate citizenship information—all but one of the fake applicants ended up getting subsidized coverage.

So here we are, a health care law that is supposed to provide a number of things, including integrity, and we find out that when the Government Accountability Office says, let's just put in a number of applications and see what happens, it is not working.

The administration set up the Health Insurance Marketplace in ways—we are hearing from the Government Accountability Act—that leave it vulnerable to fraud and a waste of taxpayer money. That is what we are dealing with in this health care law.

I know many Senators are preparing to head home, and they will be traveling around their home States in the month of August. I expect every Senator who goes home will hear from people in their State about very damaging side effects that so many people across America are feeling from the President's health care law. I hear it every weekend, but I hear it when I travel as well. As chairman of the Republican policy committee, one of my responsibilities is to study how policies that come out of Washington, such as the President's health care law, affect people all across America, and that is what I try to look at. So in looking around the country, here is what I found in Louisiana.

Last month, the Shreveport Times in Louisiana had an op-ed written by a Dr. Regina Fakner. The headline was: ''Washington ties doctors' hands''—not

the doctor, not the hospital, not the patients—''Washington ties doctors' hands.'' The doctor who wrote this op-ed says she has practiced pediatric medicine in Shreveport since the early 1990s.

We need pediatricians. We need people to take care of children. We need primary care physicians. There is a gross shortage of nurses, of physicians, of additional health care personnel.

She says health care was and is impossible to navigate because it is wrapped in layers of red tape and government regulations. This doctor knows America's health care system needed reform. We needed to do something.

That is what Republicans here in the Senate have been saying too: We need to do something. The American people wanted reform that gave them access to high-quality, affordable care. That is not what people got.

As this doctor writes in the Shreveport Times: ObamaCare only adds to the mess, she said. This is a pediatrician who takes care of lots of children. She says ''patients and health care providers suffer for it.'' The government does not suffer. The Senate Democrats who voted for it do not suffer. Patients and health care providers are suffering. She puts patients first, which is what doctors do.

The President's health care law has added tens of thousands of pages of redtape and Washington mandates—thousands of pages of redtape and mandates. The doctor says in her op-ed that ''this one-size-fits all approach limits patient freedom, while picking their pockets.'' This is a doctor who talks to her patients every day. She says she has seen for herself in Louisiana how Washington is standing between her and her patients. Nothing should be between a patient and that person's doctor—nothing—not a government bureaucrat, not an insurance company bureaucrat, no one. The doctor-patient relationship is one that is sacred.

This doctor's experience is typical of what I am hearing and what we are hearing from all across the country from doctors.

Every Democrat in the Senate voted to pass this terrible health care law. President Obama says Democrats who voted for the health care law should, as he said, ''forcefully defend and be proud of'' the law.

Is the President proud that patients and health care providers such as this pediatrician are suffering because of his health care law and all of its dangerous side effects? Where are the Democrats ready to forcefully defend standing between Louisiana doctors and their patients? Where are they? I do not see them coming to the floor.

Democrats in Washington were so eager to pass the President's health care law that they made a lot of promises, and they were not true. They said people could keep their insurance. That was not true. It seems as though 5 million people received letters saying their insurance had been canceled, in spite of what the President had promised them.

People in Wyoming, people in Louisiana, people all across the country lost the insurance they had because it did not include all the unnecessary coverage the President's health care law mandated.

Democrats said people could keep their doctor. That was not true. People in Wyoming, Louisiana, all across America lost their doctor because the new, narrow provider networks made people lose the doctor they had worked with, who treated them, who treated members of their family, whom they knew and trusted.

The President said the American people would save $2,500 per year, per family on insurance premiums. Democrats in the Senate who voted for the law promised the same. I remember them standing here. I can see one after another saying that. It was not true.

People all across America are paying more than ever because of the health care law. Well, people in Louisiana specifically, where this pediatrician lives and works and takes care of patients, are paying a lot more.

There is an article from the Associated Press newspaper in Lake Charles, LA, last Thursday: ''Health insurance price increases could top 10 percent for thousands in Louisiana.'' That was the headline on the front page above the fold.

According to the article, Blue Cross—that is the largest health insurer in Louisiana—is planning to raise rates by more than 18 percent next year.

Is President Obama ready to forcefully defend these premium increases because of the law? He is the one who said premiums were going to go down. The American people see what has happened. The President did not say, well, they are just not going to kind of go up as fast. He said they were going to go down $2,500 per year, per family. So we are seeing large increases all across the country.

Are the Democrats in the Senate proud that families in Louisiana are getting hit with another 18-percent premium increase in some locations? Higher premiums, higher copays, higher deductibles—all to pay for coverage that people do not want, do not need, cannot afford, but were mandated to have.

People in Louisiana were already paying more because of the President's health care law. There is a recent study which found that health insurance premiums for an average 27-year-old man in Louisiana are over 100 percent higher this year than last year—double, double this year from last year. That is before they were forced into the ObamaCare exchange. Premiums for an average 64-year-old woman are $2,000 more this year than they were last year. These are very expensive side effects for families in Louisiana as a result of the President's health care law.

What does the President have to say about these outrageous rate hikes that he caused because of his health care law? What does he have to say to the people suffering from the costly side effects of the health care law?

Well, the President went to Kansas City, MO, in the last couple days. I think when he travels outside of Washington, the President should actually meet with doctors who live in those communities, doctors such as this woman, this pediatrician, who practices in Louisiana. He should sit down with the women whose children are patients of doctors such as this one, talk to the parents of these children about what the impact of his health care law has been on them.

The President should hear directly—directly—from these people about the devastating side effects of his health care law and how it is hurting them and hurting their families.

Every Democrat in the Senate voted for this health care law—every one of them.

Where are the Democrats willing to forcefully defend these costly and damaging side effects of their health care law? Democrats do not want to defend this terrible law and all of its devastating side effects.

Republicans are going to keep talking about this law. We are going to keep standing for American families who are being hurt by this law. We are going to continue to come to the floor to talk about stories that we hear from back home, what we hear from families in our home States, people who have lost their insurance and end up having to get insurance they do not need or do not want or are never going to use that is much more expensive than what they had before because the insurance that worked for their families the President said was not good enough.

We are going to continue to come and talk about the families who have seen their take-home pay go down because instead of being able to take that money home and working the hours they want, they have had their hours cut, not because they were not needed at work, not because there was not a demand for their services, but because of the health care law that says anybody working over 30 hours a week is then considered full time, and by the President's mandate, they have to be supplied with health insurance at work.

So what happens? Businesses—and it is not just businesses—what we are seeing are school districts, counties, county governments, the whole State of Virginia—the different governing bodies—as to any part-time workers, they are saying: Well, we have to keep them below 30 hours because we cannot afford the insurance for these folks. So these folks are saying: Well, I lose my take-home pay. And the reason is the President's health care law. School districts are having to say: Well, we can keep them above 30 hours and then have to pay for their insurance, but

then we are going to have to fire a number of reading teachers, fire the coach, fire the bus driver, fire someone else who works in the school.

That is not a way to help people in a community. That is not good for anybody's health. But those are the side effects of the President's health care law—a bill that so few people actually read before they voted for it because, as NANCY PELOSI famously said: First you have to pass it before you get to find out what is in it.

So we are going to continue to talk about patient-centered reforms, reforms that get people the care they need from a doctor they choose at lower cost. We are going to talk about restoring people's freedom, freedom to buy health insurance that works for them and their families because they know what is best for them. It is not Washington controlled; it is local decisions, families making decisions for themselves. And we are going to talk about giving people choices, not Washington mandates. Republicans are going to keep offering real solutions for better health care without all of these tragic side effects.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MURPHY). The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, there is a long list of items on the Senate agenda that are important to our country, including reforming the VA health system, addressing the crisis at our border, and ensuring funding is available for improvements to our roads and bridges.

While it may seem as though other issues are on the back burner, they are not. I want Arkansans to know I hear you loudly and clearly about your dislike for ObamaCare. Recent court rulings confirm ObamaCare is unworkable. Americans understand how the law infringes on our rights. The Supreme Court reserved the right for business owners to object to overbearing government mandates that would violate our religious beliefs.

The promises that were made were not true—like the law will lower our premiums. The reality is ObamaCare drives up health insurance premiums and copays, and that is what hurts our wallets.

Sean from Hackett, AR, wrote to me about a blood test his fiancee needed to help diagnose her illness. In the past, she had a copayment and the rest of the bill was paid by her insurance. But Sean wrote:

> Normally it would only cost $25 for a copayment. Now she received a $200 bill.

You remember the other promises, such as you can keep your doctors and Medicare will not be cut.

Cyndi, who lives in rural Arkansas, detailed the problem she is having with Medicare because of ObamaCare. The changes made through ObamaCare have cost her both time and money. ''Not everyone lives in the big city where clinics, doctors and hospitals are easily available,'' she wrote. ''Many of these facilities have closed their doors or the doctors are not accepting Medicare patients.''

Connie, a registered nurse in Arkansas, told me that she is sick of ObamaCare and sees the problems her patients and family have to deal with under the law, which includes losing their doctors and the use of the local hospital. She wrote that the cost of the insurance payments increased and customers have to pay such high deductibles that they cannot afford to go to the doctor.

These failed promises are negatively impacting Arkansans. The ugly reality is people are struggling under this law. Amanda's story is what so many middle-class families are experiencing. Her family is already trying to make ends meet, but she says ObamaCare is not affordable. ''There is no way humanly possible that my family can afford a monthly fee of $654,'' she wrote.

ObamaCare costs American taxpayers more than $2 trillion, but like in the case with Amanda's family, health care is more unaffordable.

I believe we need to start over by creating real reforms that lower costs, increase choice, and eliminate Washington's control of our health care. We need health care reform, but ObamaCare is not the answer. We need to transition the employer-based private insurance market toward one that allows for flexibility, choice, portability, and fairness.

Let's allow small business owners to pool together to purchase group insurance. Let's allow individuals to purchase insurance across State lines to increase competition. Let's expand health savings accounts and flexible savings accounts. Let's address medical malpractice reform and prevent lawsuit abuse.

I want you to know that unraveling ObamaCare and starting over is at the top of my agenda because health care needs to be much more affordable than it currently is under ObamaCare.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I join my colleagues here to talk about some of the stories we are hearing from the people we work for. I have been to the floor many times talking about the stories we are getting from families, from moms, from people trying to get that first job, from people who suddenly are no longer working the 40 hours they used to work because of the impact this has had on the 40-hour workweek.

Let me mention, as I am here between Senator BOOZMAN and Senator JOHANNS, just two recent contacts we have had. We have had one from Joanne in Fulton, MO. She said her premiums went up from $110 a month to $311 a month—an increase of $201 a month. She said:

> Our monthly premium has gone up to $311 a month. It is a large increase for us—it is nearly triple of what we paid before my husband's retirement. It really takes a bite out of our budget.

She believes this would not have happened without what is happening in our health care system. I had a list of employees from one of our counties in Missouri the other day. Because it is a small county, they rate their employees. Each one of them pays a different premium, even though the county helps some with that premium. Everybody who is over 50 had their premium—that is going to be the premium next year—at least doubled. If you were 19, 20, 21, your premium was about what it had been the year before. If you were 51 or 61, your premium was twice what it had been before.

Then we got a letter from Jerrold of Kansas City, who said he has seen significant increases in his out-of-pocket costs, both for what he pays in premiums and what he pays for prescriptions. Jerrold said that instead of retiring at 65, he has had to keep working to help pay for his medical and prescription costs. Jerrold says:

> I started paying $131.00 a month for health and $31 for prescriptions. As soon as ObamaCare was phased in my premiums went up to $149.00 for health coverage and my prescription plan went to $49.

Like many other people, he expects his plan to go up even more next year.

So these are real impacts on the lives of families, people who are paying more for the care they get and finding the choices they have as to where they get their care are less than they have ever been before. These stories keep coming. This is affecting the health care needs and the health care of individuals and families. We need to do something about it.

I thank Senator JOHANNS for letting me tell those two stories before he took time to speak.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

Mr. JOHANNS. Mr. President, I was here during the days when the Affordable Care Act was being debated, if you could call it that. I was here during the time when the effort of Senate Democrats was simply to keep 60 together so they could pass this bill under any circumstances. There were all kinds of promises made as to what this bill was going to do.

President Obama himself, when he talked about his plan for health care, said: My plan is going to reduce your premiums by $2,500 a year.

But I could go on and on. I could spend the whole afternoon talking about the promises that were made. Now it is time though to take stock and determine whether those promises were in fact kept. The people of our States tell that story. A Nebraskan from the central part of the State wrote to me recently and said this: He and his wife are losing the health insurance they have had for over 21 years. Their premiums had doubled, threatening their retirement savings.

He went on to say, ''ObamaCare has ruined the lives we planned and we

worked so hard for.'' So let me compare what this gentleman from Central Nebraska has seen with the promises that were made. Remember that promise the President made over and over again. Members on the Democratic side of this body made the same promise. The promise was, if you like your plan, you are going to get to keep it—and the promise that your health insurance premiums would go down.

This gentleman from Central Nebraska is living proof that those promises were not kept.

Another Central Nebraskan wrote to me about the effect of the health care law on his wife's job and on his family: ''Because of the ACA she was cut back to less than 25 hours a week and lost our health insurance.''

He went on to say that their new premium is twice as much as the plan they liked and the one they lost because of ObamaCare.

So you see again we have a situation where we can compare reality with the promises that were made. The promises that your premium would go down, that you could keep the plan you had if you liked it went out the window for those two families.

A small construction company from the western part of Nebraska shared this with me: They will be paying an additional $5,000 in ObamaCare fees this year. They expect to dedicate over 52 hours to report and comply. To them this is incredibly frustrating because these fees and hours of compliance have no direct benefit on their employees, their employees' benefits or their business mission. It is just the Federal Government has now taken this small company and forced upon them additional costs and additional compliance requirements.

One of the most compelling stories comes from the mother of a family in Omaha, NE. She explained in her letter that they qualify for a subsidy on the exchange, but the options on healthcare.gov were still unaffordable for this family. The lowest cost plan had a $9,600 deductible. Does the Presiding Officer know what a $9,600 deductible means to most Americans and to most Nebraskans? It means that if they have the kind of illness or accident or whatever it is that requires significant medical care and if they have to eat through a $9,600 deductible, that means bankruptcy.

When considering this massive deductible, she wrote to me and said, ''It makes more sense to put more money away in savings and just pay for the whole doctor's visit.'' Due to the high cost of plans and their other expenses, she said, ''We are forced to make the choice to go with no insurance.''

I was on the floor during this debate. Democrat after Democrat promised: You are going to have insurance now, promised that premiums would go down, promised that if you liked your plan, you got to keep it. Unfortunately, that has not been the case.

With the new enrollment period on the horizon, the stories will of course continue to roll in. The supporters of ObamaCare, just as when this bill was being debated, would like us to believe their train wreck has been cleaned up, the train cars are no longer lying next to the tracks, and this law is finally on track. But that is not consistent with recent headlines, reality, court decisions, inspectors general reports or just the average American who takes the time to write to us.

Politico reported earlier this month: ''Most state health insurance rates for 2015 are scheduled to be approved by early fall, and most are likely to rise.''

This law should have never been passed, but now it is time to scrap this law and its Washington-knows-best mandates; instead, work toward solutions that truly do address the cost of care and give Americans the flexibility to choose a plan that makes sense for their families.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, we are now several months into the implementation of ObamaCare. The dust has settled. People from my State, Hoosiers, continue to see the reality of this law. Unfortunately what they see is not what they had hoped for. Earlier this month a news report revealed that health insurance rates will increase fairly dramatically in ''most States''—not just a few, not some but most. They said they are likely to rise in the coming year.

Unfortunately, my State is one of those States. Unfortunately, ''likely to rise'' is an understatement. ''Dramatic increase'' would be a better phrase. The recent headline from the Indianapolis Business Journal reads, ''Indiana's ObamaCare rates for 2015 are all over the map.'' The first sentence of the article states, ''Initial 2015 premiums filed for the ObamaCare exchanges in Indiana range from as high as a 46-percent hike to as low as a 9-percent cut.''

The article continues: ''Those are the average changes in premiums proposed by the four health insurers that sold plans on the ObamaCare exchanges for 2014.'' One of those insurance companies providing health care to the State exchange we now learn is requesting rates that range from a 31-percent to a 59-percent increase in premiums. So the picture ahead for those who have been incorporated into ObamaCare in my State is the shock of double-digit and significant double-digit increases in their health care costs, not to mention that under their current plans they are paying higher deductibles, which result in higher costs they first have to put out before they are reimbursed. But now there is an increase of significance for their premiums going into next year.

I know the majority leader said all the stories we have been telling about real people and their reactions to the Affordable Care Act, ObamaCare, are fiction. I was on the floor when he said that. We all did a double take because we have been receiving thousands—literally thousands—of emails, physical mail, and phone calls. The phones are ringing off the hook about people alarmed over what they were experiencing signing up for ObamaCare, and, secondly, what the terms were going to be.

So we collected all of these. We have hundreds if not thousands of real live examples, not made up, not fiction, basically describing the impact on them and their families as Obamacare was put in place. Let me state one of those incidents. I will use just the first name. I do not want to put this person at risk for some kind of pushback. But Charles from Auburn, IN, emailed me and shared that his wife had just received a cancellation notice from her insurance provider. Charles said the notice indicated that the wife—he said:

> They said my wife's policy did not comply with the requirements of ObamaCare and the replacement policy—

Which she would have to take if she wanted the coverage.

> —would be $695.38 a month as compared to her current policy premium of $316 a month.

By my math, that is over a 100-percent increase. That is more than a doubling of what he had paid before. Also, the notice said, ''Your deductible will be $6,000.'' That is every medical expense that she has will have to be paid for before Charles and his wife can get any reimbursement. Now I wish these stories were fiction, but unfortunately I receive emails such as this on a regular basis.

Thousands of Hoosiers have lost their coverage that they liked, that they chose and relied on because of the implementation of Obamacare.

We have been talking about replacing this act with something far more sensible and something far more reasonable. Yet we have been denied the opportunity to go forward with offering any kind of amendments, modifications, repeal or any other process. That is unfortunate but not just for us. It is unfortunate for the country and unfortunate for all of those people whom we represent who would like to see modifications and a much more affordable and much better range of choices for the provisions of health care.

The 2,000-page ObamaCare law was sold to the American people on what now has turned out to be false pretenses. I believe we owe it to them to replace this law with some commonsense solutions that increase access to quality care without increasing costs. It is doable if we had the opportunity to do it. Unfortunately, we have been denied that, but the American people are speaking. I think they will continue to speak about the need for those reforms that will have to take place if we are going to provide affordable care for Americans.

I yield the floor and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

WILDFIRE DISASTER FUNDING

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, today there are wildfires burning across the West. I wish to speak for a few moments about some very important work that Chair MIKULSKI and her colleagues have done on the Appropriations Committee that is really built on a bipartisan proposal that Senator CRAPO, our colleague from Idaho, and I, with a large group of bipartisan Senators, are proposing to change the way in which forests are managed and reduce the likelihood of some of—what I call—these infernos. These are fires that are bigger, hotter, more damaging, and they act like a wrecking ball pounding at the rural West.

What has happened over the years is that the preventive efforts in the West in terms of our forests are underfunded. There isn't enough effort that goes to hazardous fuels management and thinning and programs that reduce the huge load of fuels on the forest floor.

Just this past weekend I was in Medford in rural southern Oregon and in Portland, meeting with the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management. They told me about the problems that Senator CRAPO and I are trying to address in bipartisan legislation that Chairman MIKULSKI has included in her appropriations bill.

The heart of the problem is that these prevention efforts are underfunded. When it gets very dry and very hot, and particularly when there is a lightning strike or a series of lightning strikes, what we have is an enormous fire in a hurry. All through the West there is an effort to try to share resources, and communities work together and try to share efforts—aerial resources and others—but the reality is there is not enough money in the agency's budgets to put out those huge fires.

What happens then is the bureaucracy borrows from the prevention fund in order to have funds to put the fire out. Then we are on our way to two bigger problems. We are on our way again to a lack of preventive dollars because of this fire borrowing. Some of our colleagues call it fire robbery, but I am trying to be diplomatic. It is fire borrowing, I guess, if we want to be diplomatic. But we underfund prevention. Then, of course, we don't have enough money needed for suppression as well.

This trend that I have described is getting more and more pronounced and more and more serious. So what Senator CRAPO and I are proposing to do in order to put the focus on wildfire prevention is in effect to say that the most serious fires, especially in the West—the kind of fires that are dominating our TV screens night after night—1 percent of those infernos ought to be treated like the major natural disasters they are and would be funded in the same way as other natural disasters, such as floods and hurricanes.

Specifically, the legislation that Senator CRAPO and I and others are advancing would move any spending above 70 percent of the 10-year rolling average for fire suppression outside of the Agency's baseline budget by making these additional costs eligible to be funded under a separate disaster account.

So far this year, more than 33,000 fires have burned a total of 1.6 million acres nationwide, and the numbers are growing by the minute.

Just this past weekend, visiting with our wonderfully talented folks at the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management in Medford, they were telling me that their concern is that in southern Oregon it is very hot and very dry and there can be lightning strikes. They were concerned about the prospect of another Biscuit Fire, which we had at the beginning of the century and which burned 500,000 acres—really, our most destructive fire ever. That was what was on the mind of the firefighting professionals when I visited with them in Medford last Friday.

This year the administration already expects to exceed its firefighting budget by more than $600 million, and that isn't going to surprise anybody in the West. In 8 of the past 10 years, the Forest Service has spent more than its wildfire suppression budget, requiring the Agency to engage in what I have just called ''fire borrowing'' to cover these wildfire suppression costs. The reality is that, in many cases, the borrowed monies are not repaid. In the cases where the funds are repaid, it is only through costly supplemental spending bills that Congress has to enact or by taking money out of future years' budgets.

So what we have is this kind of borrowing that is extraordinarily disruptive to the ongoing work the Forest Service and their contractors are in the middle of performing. And, I might add, what all this does is it makes it more expensive in the future and makes it less likely that we are going to get the important prevention work that is so necessary.

In our part of the world, I think it is fair to say that westerners are coming to consider that the Forest Service charged with managing the Nation's forests for multiple uses and users has really become something that more appropriately should be called the U.S. Fire Service, because in effect that is what this agency is month after month using more of its resources on.

What I was told in Portland last Saturday, having visited rural Oregon on Friday and Portland on Saturday—the specialists in Portland on Saturday told me that the fire season is 70 days longer than it was until recently.

So we have this challenge of more fuel load built up on the forest floor, drier conditions, lightning strikes, and fire seasons lasting longer. That is a prescription for trouble in the rural West, and in fact that is what we are seeing.

My hope is that, as a result of the work that Senator CRAPO and I and others are seeking to do, we can have more hazardous fuel treatment, more preventive work that will be effective at reducing fire risks and lowering costs.

A fire in central Oregon this year slowed to a halt when it reached treated areas outside the city of Bend. I saw that when I was in Bend looking at the difference between treated areas—this preventative kind of approach—and areas that were untreated.

A study published by Northern Arizona University's Ecological Restoration Institute concluded that treatments ''can reduce fire severity'' and ''successfully reduce fire risk to communities.''

Based on Department of the Interior and Department of Agriculture analysis, 1 percent of wildland fires represents 30 percent of firefighting costs. That is what Senator CRAPO and I want to address in our bill.

What we are saying is, for that 1 percent, the 1 percent that is really driving up costs, let's handle those fires as what they are, which are natural disasters. And then, instead of raiding the prevention money to put the fires out, we will be able to cause less problems in the future because we will have the kind of preventive work that is so effective that I saw in Bend and elsewhere.

It seems to me, as we see in a lot of parts of government, there is a choice. We can spend modest sums up front on prevention in order to generate significant savings down the road. If we have $1 to spend, we ought always to try to put it in prevention and then target scarce resources to fight fires. To the greatest extent possible, we must target disaster money on those infernos that are bigger and hotter and more damaging and cost about 30 percent of the overall budget.

In summary, the legislation that Senator CRAPO and I and others are pursuing would fund the true catastrophic fire events under separate natural disaster programs. Routine wildland firefighting costs would be funded through the normal budget and appropriations process.

Oversight hearings, letters, and numerous discussions with the administration and colleagues helped to produce the approach that Chairman MIKULSKI has included. I remember not long ago being in Idaho, being hosted by our colleagues Senator CRAPO and Senator RISCH. We had Members from across the political spectrum. Congressman LABRADOR from the other body was there. We had progressive Members. This is something that is common sense. It just makes sense to make sure that the small number of

fires, these infernos which are dominating our news accounts, that we handle them from the natural disaster fund. Then let's put most of the money and allow the Forest Service, BLM, and professionals to put their focus and their resources where we can prevent as much of the problem as possible—and prevent it early on.

That is the point of our legislation. We are very grateful to Chairman MIKULSKI for her effort. I thank Senator CRAPO for his support. He and I have been at this with Senator RISCH, Senator MERKLEY, Senator CANTWELL, Senator MURRAY, Senator BENNET—Western Senators and others such as Senator BALDWIN and MANCHIN that understand the importance of national forests. Senator UDALL has been doing important work on this in the Energy and Natural Resources Committee. All of the Western Senators are of like mind here. Chair MIKULSKI recognizes what we are looking at and the prospect that we would be leaving this week without this change to make better use of our resources. I call it legislative malpractice because we have an opportunity in a bipartisan way to make a real difference here. If our colleagues are outside the West, I would say it is a chance to spend scarce dollars more effectively. For us in the West, it is nothing short of survival.

Mr. President, I yield the floor

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BROWN). The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. HEINRICH. Mr. President, I say to my colleague from Oregon, his leadership, along with Senator CRAPO, on this firefighting budgeting and fire borrowing issue—that is really what it is—is critical to all of us in Western States. Every single one of us has seen communities touched by these catastrophic wildfires as our climate is changing and we see fires get bigger and bigger. But we have solutions, and the solutions are bipartisan and common sense.

I can only hope that we are able to move quickly to make these budget changes. They will make a real difference for all of us up and down in the Intermountain West.

BORDER CRISIS

Mr. HEINRICH. Mr. President, I thank all of my colleagues who have been vocal about their commitment to address the Central American refugee crisis along our southern border.

We have heard the stories of unimaginable violence, of corruption, of instability in places such as Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala—factors that are driving many children to the United States and to other neighboring countries in Central America. In some cases these children are literally fleeing for their lives.

Our Nation has responded with a spectrum of attitudes toward immigrants ranging from hostile to downright hospitable. It is my hope that our attitude as a nation continues to be defined by the image of the Statue of Liberty and not by shouting protesters holding signs labeled ''Return to Sender'' as they stand in front of buses full of Central American children.

I recently received a letter from a constituent in my home State of New Mexico whose grandmother, as a result of extreme poverty, left her family and emigrated by herself to the United States from Ireland at the age of 14 at the end of World War I. Brendan said that when he was growing up, his grandmother frequently shared this Irish proverb with him. She said, ''Courage is the trust that your feet will bring you to where your heart is.'' Brendan asked that I continue to remind my colleagues that the immigrants who arrive at our borders come by foot following their hearts and do so in the hope of building a better life.

Last week I sat down with Ambassadors from Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala, and we discussed how our Nation's approach to stemming the influx of unaccompanied children to the United States must be collaborative and get at the root cause of the dire situation in these countries. With out-of-control drug cartels and nearly 90 murders for every 100,000 persons annually, Honduras now has the highest murder rate in the world. Similarly, El Salvador and Guatemala have the world's fourth and fifth highest murder rates. There is no easy solution to these problems, but Congress has an opportunity and a responsibility to act on pragmatic measures before time and resources run out.

Secretary Johnson has warned that Immigration and Customs Enforcement will run out of money in August and Customs and Border Protection will run out of money in mid-September if nothing is done. With resources already running scarcer by the day, Customs and Border Protection won't have any other choice but to direct border agents away from other sectors of our southern border and into the Rio Grande Valley.

So let's be clear. Those who would choose not to support this emergency supplemental are putting our border security at risk. New Mexico, California, Arizona, and West Texas will all see fewer agents and fewer resources on our border if the House and Senate do not act.

This is no way to address a crisis. We must pass the Senate's emergency supplemental funding bill introduced by Senate Appropriations Committee chairwoman BARBARA MIKULSKI. This emergency funding bill includes important resources to help stem the current refugee crisis while continuing to treat these refugee children humanely as required by the law. This situation is an emergency, and we need emergency funding.

Passing the emergency supplemental would also allow the Departments of Homeland Security and Justice to deploy additional enforcement resources, including immigration judges, Immigration and Customs Enforcement attorneys, and asylum officers, as well as expanding the use of the alternatives to detention program.

Instead of ensuring that we provide these necessary resources to address this crisis on our border, some of our colleagues are actually proposing that the solution is to actually weaken Federal child trafficking law and to roll back protections for unaccompanied child refugees seeking asylum. The proposal introduced by our colleague from Texas Senator CORNYN would weaken the 2008 William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Act and short-circuit justice in order to deport refugee children faster and without the due process afforded under our law.

According to a poll released Tuesday by the Public Relations Research Institute, 69 percent of those surveyed believe that U.S. authorities should treat the children as refugees and allow them to stay in the country if it is determined it is not safe for them to return to their home country.

Some would use this crisis to eliminate crucial child trafficking protection, punish some of our Nation's brightest DREAM Act students, and promote a narrow border-enforcement-only agenda. I believe we are a better nation than that, frankly.

Let's step back and remember that just 1 year ago the Senate passed a comprehensive immigration reform bill that included provisions to further strengthen the border but that would also protect refugee children and crack down on smugglers and transnational criminal organizations. Notably, the bill was widely supported by both Democrats and Republicans in the Senate. Public support and good economics have not been enough to convince House Republican leaders to hold a vote on immigration reform, but they cannot turn a blind eye to the current humanitarian crisis along our southern border.

The bipartisan Senate bill that passed more than a year ago includes provisions for family reunification and for the protection of children who have been the victims of human trafficking. The bill also includes measures that would address refugee and asylum laws.

The public, including faith-based organizations, educators, local elected officials, small businesses, and many others, overwhelmingly supports this balanced approach to immigration reform. However, here we are more than 1 year later, and House Republicans are still unwilling to even hold an up-or-down vote on the Senate's proposal. Each day the House fails to act on serious solutions to our broken immigration system is another day our Nation and our economy suffer.

The Congressional Budget Office reported that last year's bipartisan immigration reform bill that passed this body would reduce the budget deficit by $197 billion—billion with a ''b''—over the next decade and about $700 billion in the second decade. In a companion analysis, CBO also estimated

that fixing our broken immigration system would increase our country's GDP—our economic output—by 3.3 percent in 10 years and 5.4 percent after 20 years.

The evidence is clear. Immigration reform is good for our economy, good for our workforce, and it is good for the future of the American middle class.

I am familiar with the promise America represents to its families. My father fled from Nazi Germany in the 1930s as a young boy. As the son of an immigrant, I know how hard immigrants work and how much they believe in this country and how much they are willing to give back to our Nation. Those of us who represent border communities understand the difficult challenges we face, but there are solutions before us that are pragmatic, bipartisan, and that uphold rather than compromise our American values.

In the short term we must approve the Senate's emergency supplemental bill, and in the long-term we should partner with Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador to stabilize their nations and end the cycle of gang violence we see there. A key part of our long-term solution is for House Republicans to finally put the Senate's immigration reform bill on the floor for an up-or-down vote.

We in Congress have a historic opportunity to pass comprehensive immigration reform and to address root causes rather than just symptoms for a change. I believe we will have failed if the only immigration legislation we pass as a body in this Congress is to weaken legal protections for refugee children. With this in mind, I will continue to work with my colleagues to ensure that we address this humanitarian crisis and fix our immigration system once and for all. Let's seize this opportunity.

Mr. President, I see that I have been joined on the floor by the Senator from Florida, and I would ask unanimous consent to engage in a colloquy with Senator NELSON.

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

The Senator from Florida is recognized.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I thank my colleague for his leadership, and I wish to ask my colleague if he is aware of the testimony the commanding general of U.S. Southern Command, General Kelly—a marine four-star general—gave to the Armed Services Committee and to the Foreign Relations Committee recently, in the last couple of weeks?

Mr. HEINRICH. Mr. President, I am aware of the testimony of General Kelly, but given his role at SOUTHCOM and in particular its location in Florida and the fact that the Senator from Florida was there for the testimony, I would ask him to remind us exactly what General Kelly had to say about how we are or in some cases are not interdicting and dealing with the flow of narcotics and particularly cocaine that has been at the root of so much of the instability and violence we see in these three Central American countries today.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, the Senator from New Mexico has put his finger on exactly the root cause of the problem. It is the substantial loads of cocaine that are coming into these three Central American countries; that because of the violence, because of the killing, the parents have three choices when their child gets on up toward their teenage years. Their first choice is to let their kid join the gang.

These gangs are criminal gangs, and they are tied in with the drug lords. The drug lords have taken over the country because of all the money that is being made from these big shipments that come in.

The parents have three choices: No. 1, let their kid join the gang; No. 2, go to their child's funeral; or No. 3, they become subject to the subtle and direct plea by the coyotes: Oh, for $1,500, $5,000, we can get your kid to the border and your child will be safe in America.

Why those three countries? Why are the children who have been showing up in the last several months at the border not coming from Belize, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama? They are coming from three countries—El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras—because that is where the big shipments of drugs are coming from—from South America into those areas in a boat with 1 to 3 tons of cocaine. Once they get on land, they break them down into small packages, and they go through a very efficient distribution system that is drugs and criminal elements—they can distribute just about anything they want, including trafficking in humans. And they are going north.

So if Honduras is the murder capital of the world and if El Salvador and Guatemala are not far behind, how do you get at that immediately to stop the flow of children going north? You more effectively interdict the drug shipments. That is why the United States has been so successful.

General Kelly, the commanding general of Southern Command, tells us that sadly he has to sit there with his Joint Interagency Task Force—all the agencies of the U.S. Government arrayed together and headquartered in Key West—and they have to watch 74 percent of primarily these boats—not so much the flights; primarily boats because they can carry big loads of cocaine—get through.

If it gets to the point of voting for the supplemental, I would certainly vote for it, but it doesn't get to the root cause of the problem. What we have done—and I have shared this with as many people as I can, consulting with General Kelly. They boiled this down to $122 million out of the President's request of $3.7 billion, and the Senate Appropriations Committee has pared that down to $2.7 billion.

This Senator is asking for $122 million, and it will cover such things as $31 million for U.S. Government interagency task force maritime patrol craft; $40 million for maritime patrol requirements to deploy U.S. Coast Guard law enforcement detachments; $15 million for intelligence surveillance and reconnaissance by putting up contractor-owned Predators 24 hours a day, 5 days a week. That contract is being drawn up. If we did this, General Kelly could execute that contract immediately, and then you would start to see some results.

Mr. HEINRICH. If I understand the Senator from Florida correctly, General Kelly simply does not have the resources to do the job we have done historically in terms of interdicting cocaine moving north for the market that, frankly, is in North America—

Mr. NELSON. That is correct.

Mr. HEINRICH. —in the United States and Canada. They have to literally sit there and watch these narcotics go by without having the resources to stop them in their tracks.

Mr. NELSON. The Senator is correct. Whereas General Kelly—and I am just using him as the symbol since he is a four-star general. It is the Joint Interagency Task Force in Key West that is actually headed by a Coast Guard admiral. They can interdict, and do interdict, about 25 percent of those big shipments coming from South America. They go through the Caribbean on the east and also through the Pacific on the west. And because they have been effective at 25 percent of the shipments, what we are seeing is a shifting of those shipments. They are now actually sending more of them to the east—not only to the Dominican Republic and Haiti, but now to Puerto Rico, which is a U.S. territory. When they get those drugs into Puerto Rico—and that is American territory—they can ship them by mail from there to the rest of the United States and avoid detection.

Mr. HEINRICH. My understanding is that the resource situation in Southern Command has changed so dramatically in recent years that not only is this interagency task force limited, but they have literally canceled more than 200 engagement activities and multilateral exercises with our partners in the region who can multiply that effect and interdict even more narcotics as they are moving forward.

Mr. NELSON. The Senator is correct. As a matter of fact, the staff of the Senate Appropriations Committee, with whom I have consulted, is very familiar with the great operation of the Joint Interagency Task Force to go after these drugs. As the Senator from New Mexico said, you can imagine their frustration when they know about the boat shipment, and sometimes they can watch it from their overhead assets, and they can't do anything about it.

As a result, look at what has happened over the last several months. We are trying to solve the problem on the border. We have all of these children

showing up at the border. We ought to solve that problem. We need to go back to the very beginning and stop what is causing this problem.

Mr. HEINRICH. The Senator from Florida also brought up another issue that I think is worth exploring. It is my understanding that he was recently briefed on the relationship that exists between these drug cartels and the entities that are actually engaging in human trafficking and moving people, for a fee, through Central America and Mexico and to the U.S. border. Can the Senator tell us a little bit about the nature of that relationship?

Mr. NELSON. The Senator is correct on how all of these things are interlocked. You can imagine how a sufficient quantity of drugs, which is worth so much, is a corrupting influence on any kind of law and order. As a result, the systems of governments—and Senator KAINE and I both met with the President of Honduras. He is trying as hard as he can. He has a bounty on his head by these drug lords because he is opposing them. The judicial system is corrupted. The local police are corrupted. When that happens, then you can imagine when other criminal activities occur, in addition to other drug activities, such as human trafficking, and terrorists potentially being utilized in these efficient delivery networks, then it is all the more a threat to the national security interests of the United States.

I think the U.S. Congress and the U.S. administration better wake up to the fact of what is happening right under our nose and get at this, in addition to solving the problems that we see that are a symptom, ultimately, of the root cause—the creation of a whole criminal network that is, in large part, fueled by the drug trade.

Mr. HEINRICH. If the Senator from Florida will yield for a minute, the sad thing is it didn't used to be that way in this part of Central America, and I know that for a fact because my wife and I traveled there 15, 16 years ago. We traveled extensively in Honduras, and at that time these gangs simply did not have the influence. They did not have this level of destabilization and they did not have this murder rate.

I always joke about trying to drive into Tegucigalpa, and I would not recommend it to anybody who has not had time to acclimate to the speed and crush of cars in that capital city, but it was a completely different country at the time. We traveled extensively in urban areas in San Pedro Sula and rural areas such as Santa Rosa de Copan, and it was an economically challenged country.

For those folks who have claimed that all of these immigrants are simply heading north out of economic desperation, the economic situation has not changed all that much. It is worth looking at the rest of Central America. The surrounding countries, such as Belize and Costa Rica and other countries in Central America, are also seeing refugees from these countries.

Nicaragua, which has substantial economic challenges right now, is losing economic immigrants, and those immigrants are not making it to our southern border in any substantial numbers. In fact, less than a year ago, I was in Costa Rica and many Nicaraguans are working in Costa Rica because the economy is better there. Yet we don't see them showing up—especially the unaccompanied minors, 7, 8, 12-year-olds—at our border by themselves. They are not being driven out by the extreme violence we have seen in these three nations where the drug cartels have such a disproportionate influence on their country's stability.

Mr. NELSON. If the Senator will yield, to underscore his point, we can look at the extraordinary success of Plan Colombia. Outside of Central America—if you go a little further south, you are on the continent of South America. And lo and behold, 15, 20 years ago, a large part of Colombia was controlled by elements that were controlled by the drug lords. With the assistance of the United States and extraordinary heroism on the part of the Government of Colombia, we have seen the Government of Colombia take back control of most of its country. Even though cocaine is still grown there and the FARC is still operating, their criminal element is a diminished insurrection of what it used to be. If you visited a place like Bogota, the capital city, it was not safe to go out alone and walk on the streets. Now you can easily walk on the streets. The situation there has changed.

We are seeing the same replicated now in Central America where the drug lords have basically taken over by buying off people with considerable money, and therefore it makes it very difficult to have the rule of law in those struggling governments, as it is for the President of Honduras, who is trying so hard to bring back his country.

Mr. HEINRICH. If the Senator from Florida will yield for a moment, having formerly served on the House Armed Services Committee, I know the Department of Defense budget is somewhere in the order of $550 billion. Surely SOUTHCOM must have a substantial amount of resources to be able to meet this, right?

Of that $550 billion, does the Senator from Florida know how much actually goes to Southern Command?

Mr. NELSON. What this Senator knows is that before the sequester started hitting the defense budget—even though we were conducting a war in two countries, Afghanistan and Iraq—with all of the multiplicity of threats that are around in the region, including what we see now with ISIS between Syria and northern and western Iraq, the Department of Defense had to make some hard choices. They had to cut back because of this mindless budgetary meat ax called the sequester, and as a result they had to set their priorities.

When they came down to it, they had to support the troops out in the field and had to cut back on other commands. The U.S. Southern Command is one of those commands that was cut back. But now we are seeing the lack of wisdom to these budgetary policies—sequester—and the scarcity when you cannot allocate the defense resources to other agencies. Remember, this is a Joint Interagency Task Force. We are now seeing the effects of that in what has been on the front pages of the newspapers which is reporting all of the children coming to the border.

By the way, the children are just a diminutive percentage of the total people still coming to the border. I can't remember if it is 20 percent or 40 percent, but it is something well less than half of all of the people who are still coming to the border. But, of course, the children, because of the humanitarian crisis for them, are the ones who have received the attention.

If we know there is a problem, how do we fix the problem? Well, we need to go back to the root cause, and that is the case I have been making on that side of the aisle and on this side of the aisle. Yet we are at this point of impasse, and needless to say, it is very frustrating to this Senator.

Mr. HEINRICH. I thank the Senator from Florida for continuing to be an advocate for this cause. I know that Southern Command's annual budget now is about $1 billion—literally $1 billion out of $550 billion in the Department of Defense. Given the necessity of engaging with Central and South America on these issues, I think it is time to reevaluate, in terms of resources but also in terms of priorities, how we look at Central and South America, to reengage with our neighbors and try to address some of these issues at the root level instead of always at the symptom level.

I see we have been joined by our esteemed chair of the Appropriations Committee, Senator MIKULSKI of Maryland. So I thank the Chair for allowing the Senator from Florida and I to indulge in this colloquy. And, once again, I wish to say how much I hope we take this opportunity to do something, not just about the symptoms of the current crisis which has to be dealt with, but also the underlying causes of this crisis.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I think we have just heard something really interesting and I think—excuse me. The way the Senator from New Mexico concluded—was the Senator from California scheduled to speak next?

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. I believe so.

Ms. MIKULSKI. I thought I was at 4:52. I didn't mean to jump the line. I really do want to hear from the Senator from California, the chair of the intelligence committee, as well as the chair of the Subcommittee on Immigration, Refugees, and Border Security of the Judiciary Committee. She is a Senator with a lot of experience, and I look forward to her remarks.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. I thank the Senator. I wish to begin by saying the Appropriations Committee is in very good hands. Chairman MIKULSKI has done an excellent job, and I strongly support this supplemental that she has put together.

I wish to give my colleagues just some brief background of my involvement in the unaccompanied alien children issue. It began around 1999. On Thanksgiving Day, a 5-year-old in an inner tube off the coast of Florida, 3 miles out, was picked up by a fisherman. His name was Elian Gonzalez. The fisherman rescued him and he was taken to a hospital, but his mother and 11 others on the raft had drowned in their attempt to come to the United States from Cuba. That launched in this country a major debate about an unaccompanied alien child, whether he goes back to his father or whether he remains with his uncle in Miami.

Then, secondly, I am home one day and I turn on the television set, and I see a 15-year-old Chinese girl who had been placed on a container ship from China by her parents to flee China's rigid family planning laws. She came to this country. She was alone. She was desperate. She was picked up.

I saw her asylum hearing. She was unrepresented. She was shackled, her wrists were bound, and big tears were rolling down her face. She couldn't understand a single word that was spoken. She was held in a jail cell for eight months and in another detention facility for another four months after that. She eventually received asylum in our country, but she unnecessarily faced an ordeal no child should undergo.

At the time, she was only one of 5,000 other foreign-born children who were apprehended in the United States in need of protection. I remember thinking that that such treatment was terrible, and I had to do something.

In 2000, I introduced the Unaccompanied Alien Child Protection Act. I also pushed for the change in the Homeland Security Act of 2002, which successfully transferred the responsibility for the care of unaccompanied alien children from the former Immigration and Naturalization Service to the Department of Health and Human Services.

However, that change by itself was not enough to ensure that unaccompanied children were properly treated. Therefore, over the next 6 years, I continued to consult with relevant Federal agencies, children's advocates, immigration attorneys, House Members such as ZOE LOFGREN on the House Judiciary Committee, and fellow Senators.

Finally, in 2008 the legislation was included, amazingly enough, by voice vote in both Houses, as part of a larger trafficking bill, the William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act. It was signed into law by President Bush on December 23, 2008. It took effect 6 months later. That year, the number of children was in the vicinity of 8,000. It provided the framework for how unaccompanied children would be treated while in the United States and for their safe and orderly return to their home countries without undue delay if they did not qualify to stay.

We now have a dramatically escalated situation that was not foreseeable at that time. Last fiscal year 2013, 24,000 unaccompanied children arrived in our country. This year more than 62,000 unaccompanied children have arrived in our country, and the Department of Homeland Security is preparing for as many as 90,000 such children to arrive in the country by the end of this year.

The numbers are so great and so unprecedented that our Federal agencies understandably are having difficulty carrying out the procedures and timelines in place. I have sent members of my staff in California to every Office and Refugee Services shelter in the State, and they have sent me photos and their impressions. I wish to take a moment to thank all our people, whether it is Border Patrol or ICE of Homeland Security or anybody else—such as Health and Human Services—for the excellent job they are doing. I saw 8 to 10 facilities through pictures and reports, where children were in bright rooms, had beds with covers, and a day program. So, every effort has been made.

But the numbers are so great and unprecedented that the difficulties continue. When we run out of money, there is going to be a different story.

But we must remember that the children at issue, who are unaccompanied, are primarily from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras, three Central American countries which are deeply troubled. Many have entered as victims, I am sorry to say, of rape, abuse, poverty, and above all, violence.

They are alone, subject to abuse and exploitation. Many are young and unable to articulate their fears, their views, or testify about their needs as accurately as adults can. Considering this, there is no other option but for us to help and continue to treat them humanely, with compassion and due process. That is what this supplemental does.

I have met with Secretary of Homeland Security Jeh Johnson, and the head of the Department of Health and Human Services, Sylvia Burwell, and both tell us their agencies run out of funds by September. We must responsibly fund these agencies, for not only are they managing the current humanitarian crisis at our border, but they are also charged with protecting human life and our homeland security.

With this funding, not only can we preserve our commitment to treat children as the children that they are, we can improve the way that the current law is being administered and more efficiently put our resources to work.

Earlier today, I met with immigration judges from the U.S. Department of Justice's Executive Office of Immigration Review. They informed me they are desperate for increased resources with which to handle not only the influx of children's cases but also a current backlog of 375,000 cases. Due to there being only 243 immigration judges across the country, immigrants today wait 587 average days for a hearing. That is one year and 7 months before they have the opportunity to come before an immigration judge.

With adequate funding from this supplemental, which provides for immigration judge teams, legal representation and services, government immigration litigation attorneys and courtroom equipment, among other things, this crisis can be managed and make the processing of children more efficient.

One of the judges who sits in Miami told me that through her court where a child has representation, a voluntary return to the country of origin was able to be achieved in a majority of her cases. So the majority of children actually took voluntary departure and returned to their countries. A judge can't make a phone call, but a counsel can—the attorneys could make the calls to do the necessary preparation and see that a safe home could be arranged. Because of this representation, cases are processed more quickly and children could safely return.

I understand there has been concern that unaccompanied children will not appear for their immigration court proceedings. That is simply not true. The fact is, whether represented or not, 60.9 percent do appear, and the number increases to 92.5 percent when represented by counsel. So these children do get before a judge—60.9 percent of them, and if they have a lawyer, 92 percent.

With this supplemental funding, the immigration courts, with help from legal representatives, would be able to hear more quickly immigration cases and determine with justice who may stay and who must go.

I was contacted recently by Winston Lord, a former U.S. Ambassador and Assistant Secretary of State, who is all too familiar with managing situations of international crises while preserving our national interest. In reflecting on the current crisis, he acknowledged the need for effective border control and immigration enforcement to ensure national security and a comprehensive solution. However, he also identified the heart of the matter here: ''These challenges . . . need not be met by using ineffective and indiscriminate approaches that harm innocent children.''

He is right.

We are a great Nation, capable of safeguarding our national security while simultaneously proceeding with humanity in addressing this crisis, and any future challenges that this country faces. This problem demands action now to provide these agencies with the funds they need to meet this crisis.

Now, if we don't pass this, and if these departments run out of money, and if facilities have to be closed, and if there is nowhere for these children to go, let us think for a moment what happens to them. Should they experience the same thing in this country they have back home? What will they do? And what does that do to our conscience?

I think this supplemental is well put together. The chairman of our committee has gone through it with a fine tooth comb. She has reduced it in size. I think it is well representative of the situation that dramatically needs funding. So I really hope there is a heart in this body and that this supplemental appropriation is approved.

I thank the Chair, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, to the Senator from California, I thank her for her excellent statement. She brings such experience and expertise. It is very much appreciated. Has the Senator looked at my supplemental recommendations where we have actually added money for judges and then support to pro bono lawyers willing to represent children?

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Well, that is exactly right. The chairwoman's supplemental does that. That is really what makes the difference for the child. If a child can't speak the language and if a child is held in a jail cell and if a child is shackled and handcuffed before a judge, and a child has nobody to help them and no one they know in this country, what can they do except cry? That is what I saw directly myself, and that is what sort of awakened me then to a problem, which was just 5,000 a year in the start of this. Now we are at 54,000, and probably 90,000 before the end of the year.

Ms. MIKULSKI. That is right.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. So I thank the Senator for her support and her energy and effort that she has put forward.

I hope this body does the right thing.

REMEMBERING ADMIRAL CHUCK LARSON

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I would like to continue the discussion on the urgent supplemental. But before I do, I want to say that the senior Senator from Arizona is on the floor, and I want to say something heartwarming to my colleague. I say to the Senator from Arizona, you are a graduate of the Naval Academy, class of 1958. We both have a very dear friend who has passed away, ADM Chuck Larson.

Admiral Larson served with distinction in the Navy. He did many tours of duty in the defense of our country but also did two tours of duty at the U.S. Naval Academy, where I came to know him, and then subsequent to that there was the wonderful role that he played in education and transformational leadership.

I know he was a good friend of the Senator from Arizona too. So I would like to express my condolences to you and to the—of course, then it was guys only at the Naval Academy—class of 1958. I was the class of 1958 at Mount Saint Agnes College. We probably saw each other at a tea dance or two. I was the chunky one over there, not in the corner, though. But I just wanted to express my condolences. What a great class that seems to be. I hope we can work together on something that would truly recognize Chuck Larson and the great transformational leader he was.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have a colloquy with the Senator from Maryland.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BLUMENTHAL). Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. I would say first of all to the Senator from Maryland, on behalf of all Naval Academy graduates and all of us who love the Naval Academy, your support of the Naval Academy has been consistent, unswerving. You have been probably the staunchest supporter of the U.S. Naval Academy I have ever had the privilege of encountering. I want to also tell the Senator that the devotion she has extended to the Naval Academy is reciprocated by the Naval Academy and its graduates to her. I thank her for that.

Yes, Mr. President, I say to my colleague from Maryland, a dear and beloved friend, ADM Chuck Larson passed away. I would be honored to join with her in any way that we could to honor his memory. I would just like to point out that the Senator from Maryland was heavily involved when there was a very serious cheating scandal at the Naval Academy. Senator MIKULSKI led the investigation and demand for correcting that situation, and Admiral Larson was called back from retirement to be the Superintendent of the Naval Academy, on the recommendation of the Senator from Maryland—the only naval officer in history who served as Superintendent twice. And he put the Naval Academy back on the right track.

I would like to say, again, that he mentioned to me often the consistent support for reform, for the institution, and they are incredibly proud of her representation not just of the people of Maryland but specifically of that wonderful institution. I know I speak for Chuck Larson when I say that.

I thank you.

Ms. MIKULSKI. I thank the Senator very much. I love our U.S. Naval Academy. But when you have great leaders, we want to in some way be able to memorialize them in a way that they inspired this ongoing, this next generation, and the generations to come about really what a great leader is and what value-driven leadership is all about.

So I look forward to working with the Senator from the Naval Academy and the State of Arizona.

Mr. President, I would also like to continue the discussion on the urgent supplemental and the crisis—many people call it the crisis—at our border. Well, we have a surge of children at our border because of the crisis in Central America. The crisis is in Central America, creating a surge of children desperately coming across our borders to seek political asylum.

I would hope that when we look at this urgent supplemental, we understand what we are trying to do. Yes, provide humane care for the children, real support for judges and other legal assistance to determine their legal and asylum status and, at the same time, to do the prevention in Central America, by going after what the surge is all about. The surge is about the escalating narco criminal-driven violence in these countries.

People will say: Well, what does that mean? It means that when you look at where the children are coming from, they are not coming from every country in Central America. They are coming from three countries in Central America. They are coming from Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador, but they are not coming from Nicaragua and they are not coming from Panama and they are not coming from Costa Rica. Why is that? The reason is because the violence rate is not as high. Yes, in these countries, particularly in Nicaragua, the poverty rate is the same as the other three. So why are they coming? They are coming because of the violence, and this is what we need to be able to deal with.

Last week, along with many Senators, I met with the Ambassadors from the three countries of Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador. At the invitation of Senator MENENDEZ, the chair of the Foreign Relations Committee, I met with the President of Honduras, the President of Guatemala, and the President of El Salvador to talk about these issues, to say: What is it that we need to do to deal with these issues?

This is what they talked about. They talked about the violence coming from the drug cartels and organized crime—organized crime—drug cartels fueled by America's insatiable demand for drugs. They have worsened in these three countries.

Then there is the recruitment. The narco criminals have gone after the children to recruit them, either for their profit or for their pleasure. I have to talk about this in a way that civilized people should not have to hear that this is going on against children in our own hemisphere. This is our own hemisphere. When I talk about the recruitment of children for profit or for pleasure, that is exactly what they are talking about—to recruit the children to be part of gangs, violent gangs, gangs to engage in narco trafficking, to engage in extortion, to engage in murder, to engage in intimidation. This is the particular targeting of boys—the particular targeting of boys to recruit them for the gangs. And if the boys do not want to join the gang and they resist, they hide, they try to run away,

they are often grabbed, many sometimes are kidnapped, threatened with torture or their mother or their grandmother or their sister is threatened with either death or violent sexual attack. All sexual attack is violent, but they talk about it in ways that I will not discuss on the Senate floor.

Then there is the recruitment for profit—yes, to make sure that maybe they are couriers for the drug trade, but also to recruit, nab or force young children to be involved in human trafficking and sexual slavery.

But we have to deal with this. We have to stop the violence with a tough battle. We have to go after the cartels, and we have to also really begin to deal seriously with our addiction to cocaine and to heroin.

When you talk to the President of Honduras about the drugs in his own country bound for the United States, he talks about how they smuggle drugs, and they smuggle children along the same trade routes. It is good trade to traffic in drugs and it is also good trade to traffic in women and children. You see, to the drug dealers, to the narco traffickers, to the seven organized crime units—and, yes, we know who they are and where they are; we just need to marshal the resources of our country and the hemisphere to go after them. We know who they are, where they are, what they do, and how they do it. They look at women and children, boys, as well as girls, as commodities to be sold across countries and across borders. My God. And we want to blame the children?

We hear: Let's send them back. Send them back to what? This is why these children are on the go. This is why these children are on the march. And the children do not care how they get here, as long as they escape the violence.

This is why we have included money of over $112 million to the Department of Homeland Security for enforcement—no, not National Guard at our border, but really moving assets to Central America to deal with law enforcement, to strengthen the courts, and to be able to deal with the issues of narco trafficking and organized crime in their own country.

We also know that while we are doing this type of intervention down there to go after the smugglers, coyotes, and human traffickers, we also need to deal with the fact that when these children are here, they have the right to seek legal asylum. Now, as Senator FEINSTEIN pointed out, there are only 240 immigration judges in the country. The fact is there is a backlog of over 100,000 cases. These kids move to the front of the line, but even if they move to the front of the line, it could be as much as 2 or 3 years before their cases are heard. This is not right. It is not right for them and it is not right for our country.

So I have more money in this bill for more immigration judges to resolve the asylum cases, additional legal representation for the children, including bilingual representation, and the kind of backup and support where pro bono lawyers are coming to the aid to be able to do this.

I hope we pass this supplemental so we can do this.

Second, I made the trip to the border. I will talk about this on another day. I know my time is exceeded, but what I wanted to emphasize today is why these children are coming, the legal services we need to present here, and I look forward to talking more about this. I know my time is up, and I do want to be courteous to my colleague from the other side of the aisle.

So let's pass this bill. Let's do the interdiction in Central America. And let's enforce our laws here and provide the legal representation the law requires.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to address the Senate as in morning business for as much time as I may consume.

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

SYRIA

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, quite often—on numerous occasions—I have come to the floor of the Senate to talk about the ongoing tragedy of Syria, not in the belief that any action may be taken of any real impact, although it has always been my hope and prayer, but because my conscience dictates that I come to the floor of the Senate and discuss one of the great and unfortunate and shameful chapters in our history.

Last February I came to the floor to appeal to the conscience of my colleagues and fellow citizens about the mass atrocities that the Assad regime is perpetuating in Syria. I brought with me at that time a series of gruesome images that documented the horrors the Assad regime has committed against political prisoners in its jails across that country. Those images were smuggled out of the country by Caesar—Caesar—a Syrian military policeman who risked his life and the lives of his family and friends to show the world the real face of human suffering in Syria today.

At the time I had hoped that those images would cry out to our national conscience and compel our great Nation to help end the suffering and genocide of the Syrian people. How could anyone—how could anyone—look at those pictures and not press for immediate accountability and an end to those mass atrocities?

In the months since those images were first made public, United States and European investigators have pored over the images and concluded that not only are these images genuine but they are evidence of an industrial-scale campaign by the Assad regime against its political opponents. According to the State Department, these photographs are evidence of systematic atrocities not seen since Hitler's Nazi regime exterminated millions during World War II.

Stephen Rapp, the State Department's Ambassador-at-Large for War Crimes, stated that:

> This is solid evidence of the kind of machinery of cruel death that we haven't seen frankly since the Nazis. It's shocking to me.

U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Samantha Power, after a briefing to the U.N. Security Council members, stated, ''The gruesome images of corpses bearing marks of starvation, strangulation and beatings and today's chilling briefing indicate that the Assad regime has carried out systematic, widespread and industrial killing.''

Despite the statements from these and other senior officials, the administration has yet to finish its investigation. Perhaps when the administration does complete its forensic analysis of the evidence provided by Caesar, President Obama will decide it is finally time to take action in Syria and prevent the continuation of mass atrocities that according to his Presidential Study Directive on Mass Atrocities is ''a core national security interest and a core moral responsibility of the United States.''

I have to tell my colleagues I am not hopeful. In the time that the investigation to prove what we all know to be true has been underway, approximately 40,000 more people have died, another 1 million people have been forced from their homes, and over half of Syria's population is now believed to be in dire need of food, water, and medicine.

The Assad regime continues to bomb northern Syria, using crude cluster munitions known as barrel bombs with the sole purpose of terrorizing and killing as many people as possible when indiscriminately dropped from Syrian Government aircraft on schools, factories, and mosques. It continues to raze entire neighborhoods for no military purpose whatsoever, simply as a form of collective punishment of Syrian civilians.

It continues its ''surrender or starve'' famine campaign, starving people to death by denying entire neighborhoods any access to food or water. Just last month the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, which has been tasked with destroying Syria's chemical stockpiles, announced there is credible evidence that toxic chemicals are still being used in a systematic manner in Syria.

Indeed, this kind of inhumane cruelty is a pattern of behavior for the Syrian government. As early as August 2011, a damning 22-page report was issued by the United Nations human rights office, which concluded that Syrian Government forces had committed crimes against humanity by carrying out summary executions, torturing prisoners and harming children, the evidence of which we now see clearly in those images.

The report prompted President Obama to issue a statement calling for President Assad to step down. The President declared:

> We have consistently said that President Assad must lead a Democratic transition or get out of the way. He has not led. For the sake of the Syrian people, the time has come for President Assad to step aside.

That was 2 years ago. The President ended this statement by saying, ''It is clear that President Assad believes that he can silence the voices of his people by resorting to the repressive tactics of the past, but he is wrong.''

Following the President's statement, there was no shortage of administration officials publicly professing that President Assad's days were numbered. In December 2012, then-Secretary of State Hillary Clinton told a NATO gathering that Assad's fall was ''inevitable.'' She later repeated, ''It is time for Assad to get out of the way.'' That was from our then-Secretary of State.

That same month White House spokesman Jay Carney echoed Clinton's proclamation stating:

> Assad's fall is inevitable. As governments make decisions about where they stand on this issue and what steps need to be taken with regards to brutality of Assad's regime, it is important to calculate into your consideration the fact that he will go.

He went on to say, ''The regime has lost control of the country and he will eventually fall.'' In May 2012, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Martin Dempsey told FOX News that ''escalating atrocities would likely trigger a military intervention following a massacre that left more than 100 dead.''

One hundred dead—that was back when we were talking about Syria's dead in hundreds rather than thousands and tens of thousands. One month later, in June 2012, then-Secretary of Defense Panetta stated:

> I think it's important when Assad leaves—and he will leave—to try to preserve stability in that country . . . I'm sure that deep down Assad knows he's in trouble, and it's just a matter of time before he has to go. I would say, if you [Assad] want to be able to protect yourself and your family, you better get the hell out now.

That was in June of 2012 by our Secretary of Defense.

Where are we now? Three years after President Obama and his administration rightly decided it was time for him to go, President Assad remains in power, and I know of no one who believes Bashar Assad is going to negotiate his departure. In fact, he just orchestrated another ''reelection.'' I remember when an American President said that a foreign leader must go, it conveyed a commitment to doing something about it. But instead of taking decisive action in support of the President's declared policy, the administration has simply moved away from calls for Assad to step down over the past year.

In fact, instead of being forced to step down, Assad has continuously gotten the administration to treat his regime as a central interlocutor, first with the chemical weapons agreement through which Assad forced the United States into acknowledging its legitimacy and ensuring that he would remain in place until the agreement was carried out, then by serving as the sole authority on distribution of aid within the country, and now by presenting himself as critical to the fight against terrorism and the Al Qaeda-affiliated Islamic State of Iraq and Syria.

So as it turns out, President Obama was right that Assad's violence and repressive tactics could not silence the voices of the Syrian people who even in the worst imaginable conditions have continued to fight for freedom and a Democratic Syria. Instead, it has been the voice of President Obama and other administration officials that President Assad has managed to silence. We cannot be silent, but we cannot allow words to replace action either.

What has become exceedingly clear in the wake of recent events is that even if we can ignore the moral imperative to act, the growing threat to American national security interests means that doing nothing is now out of the question. The conflict in Syria is largely to blame for the resurgence of Al Qaeda in Iraq, which has grown into the even more dangerous and lethal Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham, commonly referred to by the acronym ISIS or ISIL.

Top officials testified in last week's Foreign Relations Committee hearing that ISIS represents a threat that is ''worse than Al-Qaeda.''

Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Iraq and Iran Brett McGurk stated that ISIS is no longer simply a terrorist organization but ''a full blown army seeking to establish a self-governing state through the Tigris and Euphrates Valley in what is now Syria and Iraq.''

The Director of National Intelligence, the Director of the FBI, the Secretary of Homeland Security, and the Attorney General have all warned repeatedly about the threat posed by ISIS's state-like sanctuary in Syria and Iraq and the largest safe haven for global terrorism in the world.

If the September 11 attack should have taught us anything, it is that global terrorists who occupy ungoverned spaces and seek to plot and plan attacks against us can pose a direct threat to our national security. That was Afghanistan on September 10, 2001. That is what these top officials are now warning us that Syria is becoming today.

Secretary of Homeland Security Jeh Johnson said, ''Syria is now a matter of homeland security.'' FBI Director James Comey recently warned Congress that the terrorist threat from Syria against the United States is ''metastasizing.'' Their assessments were confirmed earlier this month by Attorney General Eric Holder, who said that recent intelligence reports of terrorists from Syria partnering with Yemeni bombmakers are ''more frightening than anything I think I've seen as attorney general. It's something that gives us really extreme, extreme concern.''

He added:

> If they—

Meaning ISIS—

> are able to consolidate their gains in that area, Iraq and Syria, I think it's just a matter of time before they start looking outward and start looking at the West and at the United States in particular. So this is something that we have to get on top of and get on top of now.

It is clear President Assad's strategy is to convince the administration that we only have two options, him or Al Qaeda-linked terrorists. It is a sad testament to the administration's leadership on Syria that Assad's strategy seems to be working. According to a report by the Daily Beast, administration officials are debating whether to abandon the President's goal of toppling Assad and enter into a de facto alliance with the Assad regime to fight ISIS or other Sunni extremists in the region.

Such a decision would represent the height of folly. Nobody—nobody—should believe Assad is an ally in the fight against terrorism. Former Ambassador to Syria Robert Ford, who resigned in May after asserting that he could no longer defend American policy in Syria, made it clear how foolish such thinking is. He said:

> The people who think Bashar Assad's regime is the answer to containing and eventually eliminating the Islamic-based threat do not understand the historic relationship between the regime and ISIS. They do not understand the current relationship between Assad and ISIS and how they are working on the ground together directly and indirectly inside Syria.

He added,

> If this administration wants to contain the Islamic State on the ground, they are going to have to help the Free Syrian Army.

After more than 3 years of horror and suffering and devastation and growing threats to our national security, the conflict in Syria continues to get worse and worse, both for Syria and for the world, but the United States has no effective policy to bring this conflict to a responsible end. The outcome of the administration's disengagement has been a consistent failure to support more responsible forces in Syria when that support would have mattered.

The descent of Syria into chaos and growing regional instability, the use of Syria as a training ground for Al Qaeda affiliates and other terrorist organizations, the ceding of regional leadership to our adversaries, and the shameful tolerance of war crimes and crimes against humanity—in short, all of the horrible things the critics said would happen if we got more involved in Syria—have happened because we have not gotten more involved. Now President Obama finds himself in a position where the United States will have to do far more today to stave off disaster in

Syria than we would have needed to do in 2012. The administration seems to have finally come around to the idea that we must arm, train, and equip the moderate opposition in Syria. But arming moderate FSA units is only one element of what must be done for a much broader strategy that includes both Syria and Iraq.

I will be the first to admit there are no good options left, if good options ever existed to begin with. But as bad as our options are, we still have options to do something meaningful in Syria.

The conflict in Syria is reaching a critical point. Government forces are advancing on Aleppo, effectively cutting off routes into and out of the city from the south and west, exercising a stranglehold on the people of Aleppo. More than 6 months of punishing daily air strikes have killed thousands of residents and forced tens of thousands more to flee. But at least 500,000 residents remain in Aleppo, and they are being slowly asphyxiated by Assad's forces as they brace for Aleppo's upcoming siege.

Meanwhile, disillusioned fighters, starved of the resources and equipment they need, have been drifting from the front lines and, in some cases, joining the better funded and equipped extremist groups.

It is a moral outrage to watch the destruction of what remains of Aleppo and refuse to do more to help those fight against our enemies in the region. Worse still, the government's campaign has been aided and abetted by ISIS, which is attacking the Free Syrian Army from the northeast in an attempt to take control of two vital supply lines from Turkey and forcing the moderate opposition to fight simultaneously on two fronts.

Such activists are suggesting that the fall of Aleppo could be the nail in the coffin for the modern opposition, and the situation for civilians still living in Aleppo has become so disastrous that the United States recently authorized the delivery of cross-border humanitarian aid without prior approval from the Assad regime.

These efforts are a bandaid on a bullet wound. It will not be enough to mitigate the dire crisis unfolding in the city, and we must offer quick support to the moderate opposition as they battle the Assad regime and extremists from the Islamic state before it is too late.

The rise of ISIS, combined with the events in Gaza and Ukraine, has placed Assad's assault on Aleppo safely outside of the headlines. With the international community distracted by these disturbing events in other parts of the word, Assad will again manipulate time and terror in his favor.

President Obama, who spent much of his time in recent weeks at fundraising events, said nothing about Syria or Iraq during recent appearances to discuss Gaza and Ukraine.

Worse still, details of the sole initiative proposed by the administration on Syria since the collapse of the Geneva peace talks reveals a plan that would train less than a battalion-sized unit of 2,300 individuals and wouldn't begin until the middle of next year. By that time Aleppo may be lost and there may be no more units left in Syria to support.

The conflict in Syria is a threat to our national interests, but it is more than that. It is an affront to our conscience. Images such as these should not just be a source of heartbreak and sympathy, they should be a call to action. For the sake of our national security we must move quickly to help the moderate opposition now before it is too late. For the sake of our national conscience, we must do more to help the 150,000 political prisoners who remain in Assad's prisons and put an end to the suffering of the Syrian people.

It is with great sadness that I met with Caesar yesterday and had to tell him the truth: that although our great Nation could have done more to stop the suffering of others, that we could have used the power we possess—limited and imperfect as it may be—to prevent massive atrocities and the killing of innocents, it is with everlasting shame that we have not.

Shame on all of us for our current failure. If there ever was a case that should remind us that our interests are indivisible from our values, it is Syria, and we cannot afford to go numb to this human tragedy.

I have seen my fair share of suffering and death in the world, but the images and stories coming out of Syria haunt me most. But it is not too late. The United States is still the most powerful Nation in the world today, and we have the power and capabilities to act when brutal tyrants slaughter their people with impunity. No one should believe that we are without options even now. I pray that we will finally recognize the costs of inaction and take the necessary actions to end Assad's mass atrocities and to help the Syrian people write a better ending to this sad chapter in world affairs.

I note the presence of our distinguished chairman of the Armed Services Committee. I urge my colleagues—among many reasons—to support him in his effort to bring the National Defense Authorization Act before this body. Part of that act also authorizes for the training and equipping of the Free Syrian forces.

I thank my friend and colleague the Senator from Michigan and the chairman of our committee, whose unstinting effort has made this National Defense Authorization Act something that deserves the attention, debate, amending, and passage from the Senate.

I thank my colleague from Michigan.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD my statement on the National Defense Authorization Act following the remarks of Senator LEVIN and Senator INHOFE.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. LEVIN. Would the Senator from Pennsylvania yield for a unanimous consent request?

Mr. CASEY. I yield to the Senator from Michigan.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. LEVIN. May I inquire of the Senator from Pennsylvania how long he intends to speak?

Mr. CASEY. About 10 minutes.

Mr. LEVIN. After the Senator from Pennsylvania concludes, I would ask that the Senator from Oklahoma and I be recognized for 20 minutes, evenly divided, to talk about the need to get the Defense authorization bill to the floor, and each one of us would control 10 minutes under this unanimous consent request.

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

The Senator from Pennsylvania.

AFGHANISTAN

Mr. CASEY. I rise to speak about a topic that we don't talk about enough, which is what is happening in Afghanistan with regard to women and girls.

I know the senior Senator from Arizona was speaking about Syria before I had recognition, and I am grateful to him for the work we have done together. He is working with me and others on the best way forward for us to have a constructive impact on what is happening, working to get more dollars and more efforts in the direction of supporting the well-vetted Syrian opposition. I am grateful to him for his compassion and his commitment on this issue, and we look forward to working with him going forward.

I rise today to talk about an issue that we don't focus on enough here and that is the outlook for Afghan women and the children who have grown up during the past 13 years of war in Afghanistan. Children all too often are the innocent victims of the conflict.

According to a recent report by the U.N. Secretary General to the Security Council in Afghanistan, child casualties increased by 30 percent between 2012 and 2013.

While reporting was limited by the security environment, there were at least 790 documented incidents in which 545 children were killed and 1,149 were injured. That is just a snapshot of the horror that so many children have suffered in Afghanistan. Armed opposition groups such as the Taliban are responsible for a majority of the recorded child casualties.

I have spoken on the floor a number of times about the substantial improvements that have been made in Afghanistan, with significant United States support. Our tax dollars, our people, and our government have helped enormously to get greater numbers of Afghan children, especially girls, into school. Where there were once only a few educational opportunities, now more than 8.3 million children are in school, boys and girls. By

one assessment, up to 40 percent of those 8.3 million children are girls.

The security situation and persistent Taliban aggression in Afghanistan continue to threaten this progress. According to the same U.N. report, there were at least 73 reported attacks on schools. In some especially horrifying incidents, improvised explosive devices—we know them as IEDs—were planted inside school premises. The American people should be proud of the sacrifices that have already been made by our fighting men and women and our diplomats who have served in Afghanistan and the progress—which I have just mentioned—that has been made. As the political transition approaches and we prepare for a full security transition, this issue merits continued focus.

In 2013 and 2014, I led a bipartisan effort with Senator AYOTTE to include language in the National Defense Authorization Act that highlights the security issues Afghan women and girls face and promotes the recruitment and retention of women in the Afghan National Security Forces.

I focused on the issue because I believe the future of women and girls is critical, essential, to the stability of Afghanistan going forward and consequently our own national security interests in the region. According to the Institute for Inclusive Security: ''There is evidence that women in uniform are more likely than their male colleagues to de-escalate tensions and less likely to use excessive force.''

Some improvements have been made to recruit and retain women in the Afghan National Security Forces. For example, earlier this month, 51 women graduated from the Afghan National Police Academy. These women defy the Taliban's threats by serving as police officers.

During the elections earlier this year, female police officers and searchers helped secure polling stations for women, and their effect was tangible: significant turnout by female voters despite serious security threats.

Although significant progress has been made in women's rights and security, there are still far too many horrific incidents of violence against women and children.

I was particularly disturbed, as I know many women were, by an article that ran in the New York Times on July 19 entitled: ''Struggling to Keep Afghan Girl Safe After a Mullah is Accused of Rape.'' That is the name of the article dated July 19.

The article describes how a 10-year-old Afghan girl was raped by a mullah in a mosque. A local women's shelter took in the young girl after the attack to protect her from her own family, who were planning to carry out an honor killing. The activists at the shelter received death threats in addition to the threats to the girl.

Once the young girl recovered, she was returned to her family. However, as the article concludes: ''Those caring for the girl said she had been terribly homesick and wanted to return to her family, but no one had the heart to tell her they had been conspiring to kill her.''

To say that this story is heartbreaking doesn't begin to translate the horror of what some young girls have to face in Afghanistan and other parts of the world as well. Extremists will no doubt continue to threaten women leaders and target innocent children in an effort to terrorize the Afghan people during this transition. We should send an unequivocal message that the United States continues to stand with Afghan women and children and that we see them as an important part of building a stable and secure Afghanistan.

In an effort to honor the sacrifices of the American people and our service men and women, and to make sure those sacrifices are remembered, we have to make sure that we take steps in the Senate. I filed an amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act, and I am grateful again for the work Senator AYOTTE has done with me. We were joined most recently by several cosponsors, Senator SHAHEEN, Senator WARNER, and Senator BOXER.

This amendment will address three main issues:

No. 1, continue to prioritize recruitment and retention of women in the Afghan National Security Forces.

No. 2. Support police units that are specially trained to work with female or adolescent victims and increase the number of female security officers specifically trained to address cases of gender-based violence. This would include ensuring Afghan National Police's Family Response Units have the necessary resources and are available to women across Afghanistan.

No. 3. Finally, emphasize the need to maintain the female searcher capabilities that were established in the April 2014 Presidential elections and for the 2015 parliamentary elections.

We must ensure that the gains made by Afghan women in every sector of society are preserved in a post-2014 Afghanistan. It is in our national security interests to help prevent Afghanistan from ever again becoming a safe haven and training ground for international terrorism.

We have seen from the recent events in Iraq what happens after a security transition if some groups are marginalized. As we approach transition in Afghanistan, women and young people should not just be the target of Taliban violence; they should be full partners in building a stable Afghanistan.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I come to the floor today, along with Senator INHOFE—Senator MCCAIN was here before—to express the hope that the Senate will be able to take up the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015 during our September work period.

In June Senator INHOFE and I came here to urge Senators to begin the process to file amendments to our bill, and many amendments have been filed. We have been working to clear as many amendments as possible in preparation for Senate consideration of our bill. The amendment described just a few moments ago by the Senator from Pennsylvania is the type of amendment that we believe we can clear and would strengthen our bill and strengthen the position of our Nation.

When the Defense authorization bill is brought to the floor, our goal is first to be in a position to offer a package of cleared amendments. Our second goal—probably as important, perhaps more important than our first—is to see if we can identify specific relevant amendments that could be included in an unanimous consent agreement ready to be debated and voted on or, in the alternative, to craft the unanimous consent agreement with a limited number of relevant amendments, leaving it to the managers and the leaders to identify which relevant amendments would be brought to a vote.

Given the small number of days that are left for legislative action in this Congress, we must all—all of us individually and as a body—pull together if we are going to get our Defense bill completed. In my judgment, the course I have outlined will facilitate that conclusion.

I know there is a backlog of important nominations the Senate must still address, and these nominations have been taking up much of the Senate's time. But we have enacted a national defense authorization act every year for 52 years.

The bill this year—S. 2410—was reported out of the Senate Armed Services Committee on the 2nd day of June with a strong bipartisan vote of 25 to 1. It provides critical authorities, funding, assistance, and guidance for our military, for our men and women in uniform and their families, at a time when they face a wide array of threats around the world.

In our national defense authorization bill, we enact authorities and programs that would create important initiatives that would be unnecessarily delayed if we do not adopt this bill.

If we fail to enact this bill, our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines will not receive many important special pays and bonuses. These include the critical skills retention bonus; enlistment and reenlistment bonuses; bonus and special pays for health professions, including those in critically short wartime specialties; and many other bonus and special pays that enable the military services to shape the force as we draw down that force.

If we fail to enact this bill, we will not be able to slow the growth of military personnel costs and the Department will not be able to use the savings, as planned, to make up for readiness shortfalls that undermine our military's ability to respond to emerging national security crises. The committee-reported bill includes over $1.8 billion in savings in 2015 and over $20 billion in savings over the Future Years Defense Program. If this bill doesn't pass, those savings will not be achieved and the readiness and modernization accounts will be even further depleted.

If we fail to enact this bill, we will risk delaying the implementation of programs to address the mental health of our Armed Forces by developing a standard method for collecting, reporting, and assessing suicide and attempted suicide data for members of the National Guard and Reserves. Our Presiding Officer is very active in that particular area, in trying to address the suicide problems we have in our Armed Forces.

If we fail to enact this bill, we will delay a much needed reorganization of the Department's prisoner of war/missing in action community to enable the Department to more effectively accomplish its mission of accounting for POWs and MIAs.

If we fail to enact this bill, school districts all over the United States that rely on our supplemental impact aid to help them educate military children will no longer receive that money.

If we fail to enact this bill, we are unlikely to authorize the National Commission on the Future of the Army—a critical step to enable the Army to ensure that its forces—including its Active-Duty, Reserves, and Army National Guard components—are properly structured and supported to meet current and future threats.

If we fail to enact this bill, no new military construction projects will be authorized for fiscal year 2015 and our Armed Forces will too often continue to live, train, and work in substandard facilities.

Previous years' national defense authorization acts have been strengthened and enhanced through a debate on the Senate floor, and that includes the opportunity for Members to offer amendments. Debating and enacting those authorizations are critical not only to our national security but to ensure that our Nation keeps its sacred vow to provide for our armed servicemembers and their families.

Senator INHOFE and I will do our part, but we urge our colleagues to continue to file amendments colleagues would like to see in the bill, and we will do our best to clear them. We will also do our utmost to draft a unanimous consent agreement for consideration by our leadership that would provide for some contested relevant amendments so that we can show our leaders we can deal with this bill in a day or two.

We will do all that we can, but we need 98 other Senators to help us. So we urge our colleagues, please continue to bring amendments to us. Please help us craft a unanimous consent agreement that would allow for a reasonable number of contested relevant amendments to be debated and voted on. This is the best way we are going to be able to persuade our leaders and our colleagues that we can bring the bill to the floor, have a reasonable period for debate, dispose of at least some relevant amendments, and pass the critically needed National Defense Authorization Act.

Our troops and their families deserve maximum effort on the part of all of us. I hope that will be forthcoming so we will not miss in the 53rd year a passage of a bill that is so critical to our national security.

Before I yield, I wish to thank my good friend from Oklahoma, our ranking member, who has worked so closely with me. Our staffs worked so hard on this bill. Together, as partners, we have been able to bring this bill to the floor. I thank him for the very strong leadership he has shown in the security area and on this bill.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, first, I thank my good friend, the chairman of the committee, Senator LEVIN.

It is true that we have worked so closely together—not just the two of us but our staffs directly, the minority and majority staff. It is rare that we have a difference of opinion. When we do, we sit down and work things out, debate, and get things done. So there is a reason, as Senator LEVIN said, that we have passed this bill for 52 consecutive years.

There are a lot of bills that hit the floor, and some are important, some are not. Some are more important to different Members than others. This is important to everybody. There is not one Senator here who doesn't want to pass a defense authorization bill. When Senator LEVIN mentioned that it passed by 25 to 1—we have been ready to go since that time. That is why we are encouraging people and have been encouraging people to bring amendments down.

Let me mention that I personally went—as did Senator LEVIN—to both the majority and the minority leader.

They said: Well, go ahead. You have our go-ahead to get these people to bring down their amendments.

This is very important. And I have to say that one of the problems we had last year was there are a lot of Republicans—and I am on the Republican side. A lot of Republicans had amendments that they didn't think were going to be able to get heard. Well, this is their chance to do that right now.

The count as of today is that 94 amendments have been filed. Of that, 73 are Democratic amendments and only 21 are Republican amendments. So I appeal now to the Republicans because what I don't want to happen is for us to come back and maybe go into some type of lameduck session and find ourselves in the same position we were in last year. Now is the time to preclude that from happening by getting their amendments down. I think we can do it. We have 4 or 5 weeks during this August recess for our staff to work on these. As the chairman said, a lot of these are going to be put together and are going to be accepted and be in the manager's amendment—but not unless Members get them down right now.

We know that right now we are probably in the most perilous situation we have ever been in as a country. I sometimes say that I look wistfully back to the days of the Cold War when we had two superpowers and we knew what they had and they knew what we had and we assured certain destruction if they did anything to us. Now there are places led by people with certainly questionable character and abilities. We have North Korea, Iran, and all these countries developing nuclear weapons. Our intelligence is good but not good enough to be able to know when it is going to come our way. So we have to be ready. That is the primary function of this committee.

We rely on all the people making our Nation safe right now, and they are looking at what we are doing. We need to take care of them in training, readiness, pay, benefits. These are things that are going to happen.

The other day the President came out with the OCO request for $59 billion. In there, he mentioned two programs that—frankly, I have never heard of—either one of them. One was $4 billion to go to the Counterterrorism Partnerships Fund, and the other was $1 billion for the European Reassurance Fund. I don't know what these are.

This is the forum we will use when we start debating the NDAA. It is going to be to get to all these programs that are new on the horizon, to see whether we really want to devote any of our scarce resources to some of these programs. We don't know. When we get the bill on the floor, we will know.

It is too important to our troops to do what we did last year. Not passing it will send a terrible signal to them. But I think it is more important to realize how close we came last year to not having the bill by December 31. If we didn't have it by December 31, just think of what would have happened. If we could not have corrected the situation, we would have had combat pay stopping. We would have had incentive pay for some of the doctors and all that come to a conclusion.

We also would have reenlistment bonuses. Looking at the some of our airmen who are flying sophisticated equipment, people don't realize that to train a new person to get to the level of an F–22 costs about $15 million. However, a reenlistment bonus is about $250,000.

So we look at what we can do by doing the right thing and passing the bill.

We have a lot of serious questions we need to debate on problems in Syria, as Senator MCCAIN was talking about a few minutes ago, and Iraq and Ukraine and Afghanistan. That is why we need to have the NDAA tended to, hopefully as soon as we get back from this recess. The later we put it into the year to act, the more likely many of these provisions could be rolled into one massive Omnibus appropriations bill. We all know how that would play out. It would be rammed through the Senate without amendments and open debate. We want transparency. We want people to have an opportunity to bring their amendments out, and the more we can get between now and when we go into this recess, the more it can be worked out by the staff because they are going to be working all during the recess to get this done. We have all these people risking their lives on our behalf. They certainly deserve to have this bill in a well-thought-out manner.

Right before we came on, Senator CASEY was talking about the Afghan women and girls, some of the real tragedies that are taking place right now over there. These are things, the language of which we can correct in this bill. So there is no reason to put it off. We don't want to go through what we went through last time, and now is the time to prepare for that, and all we have to do is get the amendments in. No one should complain later on in November or December about not being able to have their amendments heard if they are not out there right now, bringing their amendments now.

With that, it is my understanding that Senator MCCAIN was going to participate in this plea we are making, but he has a statement he will be submitting for the RECORD.

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

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I join my colleagues today to urge the majority leader to bring to the floor for debate one of the most important pieces of legislation that comes before this body each year—the National Defense Authorization Act.

The Senate Armed Services Committee version of the Fiscal Year 2015 National Defense Authorization Act provides $514 billion for national defense in Fiscal Year 2015. This includes $496 billion for the Department of Defense, DOD, base budget and $17.7 billion for national security programs.

This bill contains several important provisions. It includes a provision to keep the A–10, a vital close air support combat aircraft. This provision would strictly prohibit the U.S. Air Force from retiring A–10 airplanes for 1 year and fully fund the flight hours, pilot training, fuel, maintenance, and operations for all A–10 pilots and crew through 2015.

Additionally, this bill contains three different provisions that would improve the prospects of competition for military space launch and help move the Pentagon away from using taxpayer dollars to purchase rocket engines from Russia.

Finally, this bill includes a provision that would eliminate wasteful spending in Department of Defense, DOD, IT systems. Before DOD is allowed to spend millions of dollars on new IT projects, the department must identify and eliminate old IT systems first.

These are just a few of the important provisions that have been included in this year's NDAA.

The Senate Armed Services Committee began consideration of the defense authorization bill immediately after the President submitted his fiscal year 2015 budget request. Over the course of 4 months, the committee conducted several hearings, held countless briefings, and then met for 3 solid days in markup to produce this legislation. The bill was approved by the committee on May 22 and is ready to be debated, amended, and passed so that we may conference with the House on their version of the bill.

I strongly urge the majority leader to bring this important bill to the Senate floor for debate. A failure to move to the defense authorization bill as soon as possible is a failure to recognize the critical national security importance signified through the strong bipartisan support this bill has enjoyed in this Chamber over the past five decades.

Mr. INHOFE. I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

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

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

HIGHWAY TRUST FUND

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about an amendment that I filed with the Highway and Transportation Funding Act. While my amendment did not get a vote, the issue it addresses is very important to my home State so I want to take a minute today to talk about the issue and the need to address a situation that was created when we passed the MAP–21 conference report in 2012.

The conference report undid a carefully constructed compromise on the Abandoned Mine Land Program that was put together in 2006. It took apart the work that we had done by limiting the total annual payments of AML funds to $15 million per year. That is a change that only affected the State of Wyoming. We usually don't do legislation that only affects one State when a number of them receive funds.

What was worse, the provision was not in the House or Senate highway bill. It was added in the dead of night without consulting anyone from the Wyoming congressional delegation. I was extremely disappointed that the provision was included in the conference report because Senators from other coal-producing States and I spent years working on this issue.

When the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act was passed in 1977, a tax was levied on each ton of coal that was produced. The purpose of that tax was to reclaim the coal mines that had been abandoned before the enactment of the reclamation laws. Half of that tax was promised to the States where the coal was mined. That was known as the State share. The other half went to the Federal Government to administer the reclamation program and to provide additional funding to the States with the most abandoned coal mines.

It was a simple enough concept. Unfortunately, like many things in Washington, while the concept was good, clear, and well-intentioned, its implementation was a nightmare and the program did not work as Congress intended. For years States were shortchanged and the reclamation work was not done or the States did it themselves at their own expense, expecting to get reimbursed. That is the case in Wyoming. At one point the Federal Government owed the States more than $1.2 billion, while more than $3 billion in reclamation programs remained incomplete and unfinished.

The issued pitted the East against the West and the debate was always the same. When Members from the East would argue that we should send more money to the States to support reclamation efforts, my colleagues from the West were just as certain that we needed to keep the Federal Government's promise to the States to provide the revenue they were entitled to under the provisions of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act.

In 2006, a bipartisan coalition of Senators—including me—fixed the broken AML structure. It started with Senator Santorum approaching me with a proposal that had the support of a number of local coal companies, also the United Mine Workers of America, several environmental groups, and other businesses. After listening to the proposal, I laid out a set of principles that had to be included in their proposal if they were going to gain my support.

First I wanted to see the return of the money owed to the States, which included $550 million owed to my State. Because Wyoming is a certified State, I also wanted to see the money that came from the Federal Government with no strings attached. The legislation accomplished that goal by guaranteeing that Wyoming was to receive the money owed from the Federal Government over a 7-year period.

This is money in a trust fund. Trust funds are kind of interesting to the Federal Government. We put money in the drawer and then we take money out and put bonds in the drawer. Think

about that in Social Security. It is another one of our trust funds, and I am one of the protectors.

This was a trust fund but there were only bonds in there, so it was difficult for us to get any money. I wanted to guarantee that future moneys would be paid to States such as Wyoming where significant amounts of coal were produced. We are where most of the Federal half of the tax comes from.

Third, it was important that more money be directed toward reclamation in the States where it was needed. More money was needed.

And fourth, there had to be a provision for orphan miners' health. Sometimes that is kind of overlooked, but Senator Byrd and Senator ROCKEFELLER were very adamant on that.

What is an orphan miner? That was a miner who was promised health care and then their mine went out of business. So there is no company to pay in anymore so they can get their health care, and we made a provision to take care of that.

The legislation that we put together accomplished all four of those goals. We continued our efforts as a bipartisan group, and in December 2006 we passed the AML reauthorization as part of the Tax Relief and Health Care Act of 2006. The coal industry and the United Mine Workers of America supported the bill. Members from certified States less Wyoming supported the compromise, as did members from uncertified States such as Pennsylvania and West Virginia.

As a Senator, President Obama voted in favor of the legislation that included this compromise. From all signs it appeared we had finally fixed our problem and helped strengthen our State economies at the same time. Unfortunately, appearances are often deceiving.

By limited AML payments in the MAP–21 conference report, Congress once again made clear that taxpayers could not count on a Federal trust fund to meet its obligations to administer the tax dollars it collected each year in a proper and legislatively mandated manner. This has been contested and successfully defended year after year to preserve this money, and it was supported by a supermajority from this body until—until—it was included in this highway bill and included in the highway bill in the conference report, not when we had an amendment on the floor that we could once again successfully defeat with a supermajority. It came in the middle of the night, and the next day we had an opportunity to vote for the highway bill.

The highway bill is probably one of the most crucial bills to any State in the Nation, and if all you get to do is vote yes or no, you are not going to take a look at a little portion of the bill where we steal a trust fund from one State—Wyoming—and that is exactly what happened, and it passed.

My amendment to the highway bill this time will address the problem and put things back together the way they were meant to be. Simply put, it will ensure that when a State has been promised it will receive AML funds, it will receive them. Fortunately, I have the intent of Congress and the support of many colleagues on this matter of such great concern to Wyoming and to all the coal-producing States.

I want to particularly thank Senators HATCH and WYDEN for their commitment to address this issue created by the MAP–21 conference report. This isn't just a problem for Wyoming, because the next time a conference committee goes looking for some money, they can steal it from another AML State.

My amendment also encouraged the production of energy right here at home by opening the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to drilling. The Congressional Budget Office estimates such an effort will increase gross Federal receipts by $5 billion over 10 years. That is more than we need to make this payment. There are other possibilities for offsets as well, but that is one that is rather meaty, and that is more than enough to pay the funds that were stolen from Wyoming over 10 years and to pay for 2 years' worth of transportation projects, not just a short-term fix on transportation.

I know my colleagues will see the importance of this matter for Wyoming and to all the coal-producing States. It is important we take a look at this and protect the validity of trust funds that we set up and not redo them without adequate debate or an actual vote on the trust fund that we are violating. We have done that on a couple of other trust funds as well.

One of the ones that we also did was to impose an additional tax on those companies that have private pension funds, because we have a Pension Benefit Guaranty trust fund that is designed so that if a company goes out of business a worker who works for one of those businesses will get at least 60 percent of what they were supposed to get in their retirement. That is why it is called the Pension Benefit Guaranty trust fund. We increased the amount that had to be put in by $80 per employee for each of the companies involved, and that was going to the trust fund to make sure those funds would be available. But we diverted those funds before they got to the trust fund because the actual money could be replaced by bonds in the drawer of the trust fund. That money went to highways, and that is just another example of how we are taking money from 10 years' worth of trust funds and using it for 2-year projects. We have to change that, and my amendment will be one of the ways of making that change.

I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Does the distinguished Senator from Utah seek recognition?

Mr. HATCH. I was told 6 p.m.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. The Senator from Utah may proceed, if he wishes.

Mr. HATCH. How long will the Senator from Rhode Island take?

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I will take approximately 20 minutes.

I ask unanimous consent that I be recognized after the Senator from Utah, Mr. HATCH.

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

The Senator from Utah is recognized

Mr. HATCH. I thank my gracious colleague. He is one of the better people here, and I have a great friendship with him as well. I appreciate it.

PATENT TROLLS

Mr. President, I rise to speak about the importance of our patent system and how it continues to be abused by patent trolls.

Most Members in this body are fully aware of the crippling effect patent trolls are having on innovation and growth upon all areas of our economy—ranging from Main Street businesses to America's largest technology companies. Through abusive and meritless litigation, patent trolls—often shell companies that do not make or sell anything—extort settlements from innovators throughout the country.

How do they do it? Take, for example, the small coffee shop down the street that provides Wi-Fi service to its customers. The shop owners are using a technology exactly as it is intended to be used, but thousands of miles away a patent troll purchases broad patents previously issued to someone else. Next, the patent troll sends vague and hostile demand letters to the coffee shop, and thousands of similar businesses, accusing them, often improperly, of infringing their questionable patents.

Many trolls target small businesses that they hope will agree to settle even though they have done nothing wrong simply because they do not have the resources to defend themselves in court. These settlements divert capital that could otherwise be used for research and development or to create jobs. In many cases, it costs around $2 million to fight one of these cases. So they are forced into settling with whatever they can pay rather than doing what they would hope to do; that is, prove that there was an unmeritorious claim.

The sad reality is that many businesses often have little choice other than to settle rather than to expend the far greater resources required to fight them in court. Those who do fight back are forced to spend millions in litigation costs, often with no chance of enforcing a court-ordered award against a judgment-proof plaintiff.

How big of a problem is this? Mr. James Bessen, writing in the Harvard Business Review, confirms that ''the economic burden of today's patent lawsuits is, in fact, historically unprecedented. Research shows that patent trolls cost defendant firms $29 billion per year in direct out-of-pocket costs; in aggregate, patent litigation destroys over $60 billion in firm wealth each year.''

Mr. Bessen further cites three studies on patent lawsuits currently in the works by researchers from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Rutgers, Harvard, and the University of Texas. Based upon preliminary findings, Mr. Bessen states:

> A consistent picture is emerging about the effects of patent litigation: it costs innovators money; many innovators and venture capitalists report that it significantly impacts their businesses; innovators respond by investing less in R&D; and venture capitalists respond by investing less in startups.

I agree with Mr. Bessen. The evidence from these studies cannot be ignored. Patent trolls do hurt innovation, and it is past time for Congress to do something about it.

For the better part of a year, Congress worked toward a legislative solution to combat patent trolls. In December we overcame the first legislative hurdle when the House of Representatives passed the Innovation Act by a vote of 325 to 91. The White House endorsed the bipartisan legislation by stating: ''The bill would improve incentives for future innovation while protecting the overall integrity of the patent system.''

Here in the Senate, I worked closely with a bipartisan group of Senators to craft a compromise bill that could pass the Senate. Countless hours of negotiation yielded encouraging results on key litigation reform provisions, including fee shifting, heightened pleading and discovery standards, and a mechanism to ensure that recovery of fees will be possible against shell companies.

In the spirit of bipartisanship, my Republican colleagues and I were willing—albeit very reluctantly—to lower the bar on fee shifting if we maintained strong litigation reforms elsewhere. I continue to believe mandatory fee shifting is the best way to discourage patent litigation in cases where a plaintiff's or defendant's case is so weak it should never have been brought or defended in the first instance. That is why I included mandatory fee shifting in the Hatch-Leahy Patent Reform Act of 2006 and why I will insist on its inclusion in future legislation.

Fee shifting alone gives a prevailing party little relief against patent trolls who litigate in the name of shell companies while their financial backers or interested parties purposefully remain beyond the court's jurisdiction.

Thus, there must be a mechanism to ensure that recovery of fees will be possible even against judgment-proof shell companies. The recovery of award provision I drafted is intended to ensure that shell companies primarily in the business of asserting and enforcing patents and litigation cannot escape potential liability for attorneys fees if they are found to have pursued an unreasonable case. Those deemed interested parties may either voluntarily submit to the court's jurisdiction and become liable for any unsatisfied fees awarded in the case or opt out by renouncing sufficient interest related to the litigation or do nothing.

In my view fee shifting without such a recovery provision is akin to writing a check on an empty account. You are purporting to convey something that is not there. Fee shifting, coupled with this recovery provision, would stop patent trolls from litigating and dashing—dashing away, I might say.

There is no question that America's ingenuity fuels our economy. We must ensure that our patent system is as strong and vibrant as possible, not only to protect our country's premier position as a world leader in innovation but also to secure our own economic future. Patents encourage technological advancement by providing incentives to invent, invest in, and of course develop new technology.

It bears repeating that the governance of patents and copyrights is one of the essential, specifically enumerated powers given to the Federal Government and our Nation's founding. In my view it is one of the most visionary, forward-looking provisions in the entire U.S. Constitution. Unfortunately, at least in the 113th Congress, it is unlikely that this body will act to end the abuses by patent trolls.

It is shameful that even intellectual property bills are now among the latest casualties of our current partisan gridlock.

As Senators prepare to return to their home States for the August recess, I hope they will hear from people who represent the hotel, restaurant, retail, real estate, financial services, and high-tech industries—just to mention a few—about the urgent need to pass patent troll legislation.

I hope Senators will be reminded about the opportunity the Senate abandoned to pass important bipartisan, bicameral legislation that was supported by the White House but pulled from the Senate's agenda by the majority leader.

I hope Senators will recognize we must end the multibillion-dollar assault on American businesses and workers—because that is what it is.

Through commonsense reforms to our patent laws, we can ensure that American resources are used to innovate and create jobs and not wasted to settle or litigate frivolous claims.

I am disappointed that during the 113th Congress the Senate has failed to act to address this critical challenge. Legislation to combat abusive patent litigation will be among my top priorities in the next Congress. I intend to do everything in my power to get such legislation passed for the good of the economy and the good of this country.

ISRAEL

Mr. President, I rise to speak out in strong support of Israel's right to self-defense. This is not a partisan issue. Whether Republican or Democrat, we should all stand behind America's loyal ally as it faces Hamas's cowardly terrorism. In this time of frequent domestic political division, it is encouraging to witness the remarkable degree of unanimity among my colleagues on this issue.

The wide support for Israel's self-defense here in Congress reflects the unique bond between the United States and Israel. It is an interest we share for many reasons, including our kinship with Israel as a free society and a democracy, our close economic and cultural ties, especially for those of us who consider support for Israel a deeply spiritual matter, our respect for the many virtues of the Israeli society—from its industriousness to its tolerance—our appreciation for Israel's unique stability in an unstable region full of failed and stressed states, and our recognition that Israel wants nothing more than to live in peace with its neighbors.

When Hamas fires constant rocket barrages indiscriminately at Israel's cities and seeks to infiltrate Israel with teams of murderers and kidnappers, Israel has every right to defend itself against this terrorist threat.

In the realities of urban warfare against a guerrilla opponent, some civilian casualties are unavoidable. But in its military actions, Israel has acted with admirable and unprecedented concern for Palestinian civilians—making phone calls, sending text messages, dropping leaflets to warn of impending attacks against military targets, aborting critical airstrips to avoid civilian casualties, and undertaking numerous other measures to protect Palestinian civilians, even at the expense of Israeli military objectives.

While the Israeli Defense Forces act with great courage not only to protect Israeli civilians but also to avoid harming Palestinian civilians, what does Hamas do?

Similar to all terrorists, they hide behind civilians—building bunkers and tunnels to protect its fighters but refusing to shelter civilians; using civilian buildings, including schools, hospitals, and places of worship, to launch rockets and hide other weapons; and even ordering civilians to ignore Israeli warnings and instead turning them into human shields.

In the face of this barbarism, Israel deserves our strongest support as it seeks to root out the infrastructure of terror Hamas has built in and around Gaza. The Israeli people have a right to live free from fear of constant rocket attack. While we should applaud the success of the Iron Dome system in protecting Israeli citizens from the Hamas rocket threat, Israel is acting responsibly by seeking to eliminate the means by which Hamas perpetuates that threat.

Above all else, we must recognize that supporting Israel is truly about supporting peace in the Middle East. Israel wants peace—not peace at any price but a just, secure, and enduring peace. As long as Hamas terrorists hate Israel more than they love their own children—to paraphrase Golda Meir—Israel must occasionally resort to force

of arms in self-defense. In this endeavor our ally deserves our strongest support.

I thank my dear colleague from Rhode Island for allowing me to proceed on these two short but very important sets of remarks. I appreciate that and wish him well in every way.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. The distinguished Senator from Utah is one of the most distinguished and ablest lawyers ever to serve in this Senate, and his comments about the patent trolls and patent litigation are entitled to great weight.

I thoroughly agree with him that the use of these shell corporations is something we could and should act quickly to get rid of. I think the protection of an end user, such as a coffee shop or a florist or somebody who is not a competitor with a manufacturer or the patent holder, is something we could and should address. I think policing these often extortionate demand letters is something we could and should address. I look forward to working with the distinguished Senator in those areas.

I think when it comes to fee-shifting, that is a very significant step. The principle in the American system of justice that a party pays his or her own lawyer is so deeply engrained in our system of justice that it is actually known as the American rule. To depart from that is something that I think we should do only with a very—let's put it this way. It is a very grave step and I am not sure it is justified in this case. But certainly we could move on the bill that got rid of shell corporations, that protected end users, and that went after these demand letters, and get into conference and, with any luck, something could be done there. But I very much appreciate Senator HATCH's long and sincere interest in this issue.

Mr. HATCH. I wish to thank my colleague for those comments.

GLOBAL WARMING

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I rise today for the 76th time to urge my colleagues that it is time for us to wake up to the growing threats of climate change. Not a single State remains unaffected by the unprecedented changes we are already seeing, driven by the excessive carbon pollution we continue to dump into our oceans and atmosphere.

Yet in Washington, our Republican colleagues either parrot the polluter line that climate change is just a hoax, or stay silent. No one will step forward.

It was not always this way. Environmental protection was once a top priority of the Republican Party. It seems remarkable now, but it is true. In the early 1970s, the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, and the Endangered Species Act were all passed with broad bipartisan support and signed by a Republican President. In the 1980s and 1990s, bipartisan majorities voted to strengthen those laws, led by Rhode Island's Republican Senator, John Chafee, who served as chairman of the Environment and Public Works Committee and whose seat I now have the honor to hold.

Conservation and stewardship were once fundamental principles of American conservatism. From seminal thinkers of the conservative movement to great Republican leaders of the 20th century, the conservative ideal included a commitment to the interests of future generations. Today, under a relentless barrage of unlimited corporate spending in our elections, much and perhaps most of it by polluters, the interests of future generations have taken a backseat to the interests of the oil companies and coal barons.

The disastrous Citizens United Supreme Court decision let polluters cast their dark shadow over Republicans in Congress who might otherwise work with Democrats on curbing their carbon pollution.

Edmund Burke, an Irish-born member of the British Parliament, is considered by many the father of modern conservatism. Sir Winston Churchill called him ''a foremost apostle of liberty.'' Burke was a staunch defender of our American Colonies and his statue stands here in Washington today. His 1790 conservative manifesto, ''Reflections on the Revolution in France,'' cautioned that we are but ''temporary possessors'' of our society. If individuals are ''unmindful of what they have received from their ancestors or of what is due to their posterity,'' he wrote, ''no one generation could link with another. Men would become little better than flies of summer.''

In our case, flies of a carbon-fueled summer.

Russell Kirk was a distinguished scholar at the Heritage Foundation who none other than President Ronald Reagan dubbed ''the prophet of American conservatism.'' He wrote a 1970 piece for the Baltimore Sun: ''Conservation Activism Is a Healthy Sign.'' Kirk wrote: ''Nothing is more conservative than conservation.''

The noted essayist and Kentucky farmer Wendell Berry, known for what the American Conservative magazine called his ''unshakeable devotion to the land, to localism, and to the dignity of traditional life,'' wrote in 1993:

> Our destruction of nature is not just bad stewardship, or stupid economics, or a betrayal of family responsibility; it is the most horrid blasphemy.

Berry would also remind us in this Chamber that ''[w]hether we and our politicians know it or not, Nature is a party to all our deals and decisions, and she has more votes.''

No figure in American history embodied the conservative value of conservation more than President Theodore Roosevelt. Roosevelt resented the ''malefactors of wealth,'' as he called them, the timber and mining interests whose ''selfish and shortsighted greed seeks to exploit our natural resources in such fashion as to ruin them and thereby to leave our children and our children's children heirs only to an exhausted and impoverished inheritance.'' To Roosevelt, this great land of ours was the birthright of all Americans—past, present, and future—to be used, to be sure, in achieving our destiny, but not wasted.

He wrote to Congress in 1907:

> To waste, to destroy our natural resources, to skin and exhaust the land instead of using it so as to increase its usefulness, will result in undermining in the days of our children the very prosperity which we ought by right to hand down to them.

That is a sentiment echoed by Republican Presidents throughout our history, including President Dwight Eisenhower, whose 1961 farewell address invoked this national legacy. Here is what he said:

> As we peer into society's future, we—you and I, and our government—must avoid the impulse to live only for today, plundering, for our own ease and convenience, the precious resources of tomorrow. We cannot mortgage the material assets of our grandchildren without risking the loss also of their political and spiritual heritage.

Republican President Gerald Ford, who once worked actually as a National Park ranger, said this in 1975:

> We have too long treated the natural world as an adversary rather than as a life-sustaining gift from the Almighty. If man has the genius to build, which he has, he must also have the ability and the responsibility to preserve.

And, of course, no one is more revered by today's Republican Party than Ronald Reagan. His conservative credentials are unassailable and GOP candidates for elected office strive mightily to out-Reagan each other at every turn. In 1984, Reagan put this question to his fellow Republicans:

> What is a conservative after all but one who conserves, one who is committed to protecting and holding close the things by which we live? . . . And we want to protect and conserve the land on which we live—our countryside, our rivers and mountains, our planes and meadows and forests. That is our patrimony. That is what we leave to our children. And our great moral responsibility is to leave it to them either as we found it or better than we found it.

President Ronald Reagan's words would make him a fringe liberal candidate in today's extremist Republican Party.

In Congress, we have been boxed in by a barricade of special interest propaganda and we refuse to admit the plain evidence piling up before our eyes. We know with ever greater certainty what our carbon pollution is doing to the climate, what it is doing to our atmosphere, what it is doing to our oceans. And we know with ever greater certainty what that means for the planet and future generations. What do Republicans in Congress today have to say to our heirs, to our children and grandchildren?

''Catastrophic global warming is a hoax,'' says one of my Republican colleagues.

''It's not proven by any stretch of the imagination,'' says another.

A third dismisses the issue altogether, saying, ''A lot of this is condescending elitism.'' That is the voice of today's Republican Party.

But what does the next generation have to say back to these Republican voices of denial? More than half of young Republican voters said they would describe a politician who denies climate change is happening as ignorant, out of touch, or crazy—not my words, their words in the poll: ignorant, out of touch, or crazy. That is what the next generation says back to the Republican voices of denial.

Unfortunately, if one is a Republican in Congress today, it is more likely than not that one either holds that view or is afraid to say otherwise. According to one analysis, 58 percent of congressional Republicans in the 113th Congress have denied or questioned the overwhelming scientific consensus that the Earth's oceans and atmosphere are changing in unprecedented ways, driven by our carbon pollution. This includes, I am sad to report, every single Republican member of the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works. And where there is not denial, there is silence.

Outside these barricaded walls, it is different. Outside Congress, more and more Republicans acknowledge the threat of climate change and call for responsible solutions. Former Members of Congress, free now from the polluters' thrall, implore their colleagues to return to their conservative principles. Former Representative Bob Inglis, for example, invokes the tenets of conservative economics. Here is his quote:

> If you're a conservative, it is time to step forward and engage in the climate and energy debate because we have the answer—free enterprise. . . . Conservatives understand that we must set the correct incentives, and this should include internalizing pollution and other environmental costs in our market system. We tax income but we don't tax emissions. It makes sense to conservatives to take the tax off something we want more of, income, and shift the tax to something we want less of, emissions.

Sherwood Boehlert and Wayne Gilchrest, former Republican representatives from New York and Maryland, also argue for a market-based approach to reducing carbon pollution. Here is what they said:

> We could slash our debt by making powerplants and oil refineries pay for the carbon emissions that endanger our health and environment. This policy would strengthen our economy, lessen our dependence on foreign oil, keep our skies clean, and raise a lot of revenue.

Top advisors to former Republican Presidents have joined the chorus. William D. Ruckelshaus, Lee M. Thomas, William K. Reilly, Christine Todd Whitman all headed the Environmental Protection Agency during Republican administrations. They all recently testified before the Environment and Public Works Committee that it is time to get serious about climate change. Here is how they put it in a New York Times op-ed. They wrote:

> As administrators of the EPA under Presidents Richard M. Nixon, Ronald Reagan, George Bush and George W. Bush, we held fast to common-sense conservative principles—protecting the health of the American people, working with the best technology available and trusting in the innovation of American business and in the market to find the best solutions for the least cost.

These former officials recognize both the wisdom of properly pricing carbon and the truculence of the opponents who stand in the way of progress. ''A market-based approach, like a carbon tax, would be the best path to reducing greenhouse-gas emissions,'' they say—''the best path''—''but that is unachievable in the current political gridlock in Washington. . . .'' I would interject that political gridlock is the product of big-spending polluters who profit from the gridlock that they create. But let me continue with what the EPA Administrators said: ''But we must continue efforts to reduce the climate-altering pollutants that threaten our planet. The only uncertainty about our warming world,'' they wrote, ''is how bad the changes will get, and how soon. What is most clear is that there is no time to waste.'' Four Republican EPA Administrators.

One day folks are going to look back at this time and we are all going to be judged very harshly with all the dread power that history has to inflict on wrong. The polluters and their instruments will be judged harshly, and the Republican Party will be judged harshly for letting itself be led astray by polluters from its most basic conservative values. Unless they step up, Republicans will leave—to borrow language from Russell Kirk—''[t]he principle of real leadership ignored, the immortal objects of society forgotten, practical conservatism degenerated into mere laudation of private enterprise, economic policy almost wholly surrendered to special interests.'' That is about as good a description of where they are right now as I could muster, and it comes from the conservative Russell Kirk.

We cannot do this alone, not with the numbers that we have. Republicans and Democrats alike must approach this climate problem head on with the full conviction of our ideals, but working together, working in good faith, and working on a common platform of fact and common sense to protect the American people and our American economy from the looming effects of carbon pollution.

We must rise to our duty here and place our own natural resources, our own American international reputation, and our legacy to future American generations first, ahead of the poisonous influence of the polluters that so dominates this debate now.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WHITEHOUSE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, thank you very much for recognizing me.

I also wish to thank the Presiding Officer for his leadership on environmental issues which are so immensely pressing and important for our country, and I am proud and honored to join with him in that cause, which he has helped to lead so often on the floor, but also privately amongst our colleagues and in so many ways across the country. I hope to continue our work together on that issue, and I thank him for presiding now and for continuing that leadership.

Mr. President, I am speaking today, after listening to the people of my State, on an issue that perplexes and challenges us in so many ways. The situation on our southern border perplexes us because it is a problem without easy or ready solutions. It is a challenge to America in the resources that it requires and the spirit that it evokes. Our resources are scarce. Our spirit and our inner strength are boundless. Many have expressed to me in my State of Connecticut concerns about those resources, about the limits on those resources, in facing a seemingly endless challenge, as children come to our borders and stretch the capacity of this Nation to accept them. I am sympathetic with the folks who wonder whether we are capable, very simply, of caring for these children—but I know we can—the children who are coming here because of the humanitarian crisis they face in their countries.

Our supplemental legislation, so ably guided by Senator MIKULSKI, provides a path for providing the resources that are necessary. This supplemental is a thoughtful and significant document that addresses this situation without either breaking the bank or sacrificing American values.

I am immensely impressed and inspired by the spirit that has been evoked, again, among citizens of Connecticut in saying: We must care for those individual children who need asylum because returning them to the countries of Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala would be a death sentence for many of them. And we must respect our law which provides for individual consideration and assessment of those children in whether they deserve and need asylum and that status of fleeing persecution and death that many of them, in fact, have faced in those lands.

We must place those individuals, according to law, with their families, if possible. Many of them have parents here, and the vast majority have some family, moms and dads, aunts and uncles. They need to be screened under the law. Their placement has to be in a

safe and secure home with people, in my view, who are here legally. That screening has to be, as the law requires, to assure their safety and security as children. The United States has a responsibility to follow the law, and so do we as citizens and as lawmakers. As torn as we may be, as conflicted as we may feel, as vehement as those conflicting feelings may be felt and expressed by fellow citizens, let us uphold the law and afford due process and individual consideration to those children who, under the law, deserve that individual assessment, individual treatment, individual consideration for the status of asylum in this Nation.

People speak about these children as if they were a mass, indistinguishable, a single societal challenge or problem. A Member of the House of Representatives even referred to them as an ''invasion.'' What I saw at the border when I visited there with two of my colleagues, Senator HIRONO and Senator MURKOWSKI, joined by a third, Senator CORNYN, all friends and distinguished colleagues, hammered home for me that these children are individuals and they should be treated as such.

The vast outpouring of spirit and generosity in this country is mirrored by countless organizations—we heard about them during our visit—that want to help these children, want to volunteer and give of themselves, their time, money, goods and services, everything from blankets, to furniture, to pizza, to you name it. America is pouring out its heart for these children.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a letter to Secretary Johnson and Commissioner Kerlikowske from Save the Children, a Connecticut organization that has offered, very generously, its help and support in very specific and concrete ways, along with a briefing note that outlines what it perceives the children's needs at the border to be.

Let's end one doubt: the need for and the urgent justification for individual due process consideration and the full and adequate screening of these children and a fair judicial proceeding. I would describe just a few stories.

Girls are fleeing sexual violence at the hands of gangs in Honduras and El Salvador. I will give just a few examples.

Ms. L was raped by more than a dozen gang members in Honduras. After reporting the gang rape to police, her family began to receive death threats.

There are only three shelters in Honduras for rape survivors, and two of them actually operate as brothels. The one remaining shelter declined to take Ms. L because it could not protect her or the other shelter residents from gang violence. She had no choice but to flee Honduras.

Carlita is a 13-year-old who fled gang violence in El Salvador. She was kidnapped by the Zetas in Mexico, used for sex, and forced to be a drug mule for them before escaping and ultimately reaching the United States.

Ms. H survived multiple rapes in Honduras. After she fled she was kidnapped by a Mexican gang and raped and tortured. She eventually reached the United States.

Ms. N and Ms. O, ages 15 and 8, fled El Salvador. Their older female cousins had been forced to work as sex slaves for gang leaders. The gangs threatened to kill Ms. N and were placed in removal proceedings.

Ms. E fled El Salvador when she was 8 years old. Gang members had kidnapped her and two older sisters. The girl's mother did not want her 8-year-old daughter to suffer the same fate, so she arranged for her daughter to be brought to the United States.

Many gangs use sexual violence as a part of the price or rent demanded of girls.

Ms. X fled an area of El Salvador controlled by gangs. Her brother was killed for refusing to join a gang that forcibly tried to recruit him. She was raped by two men, became pregnant as a result, and then was required to pay ''renta'' to the rapists, which increased over time. She fled El Salvador and was attacked by Mexican robbers during her journey, before arriving in the United States.

Many of these girls are victims of forced prostitution and human trafficking. I have other stories that will be printed in the RECORD. These stories come from personal experiences of advocates and others who have interviewed them at length as well as our own officials. Many of these girls are sexually assaulted during the treacherous journey northward. Those stories are not imagined or fictionalize; they are graphic and dramatic. Rape is so prevalent that many girls begin the journey by taking birth control injections before they leave home from Central America as a precaution against pregnancy.

I refer to these stories because they illustrate and illuminate the need for a thoughtful humanitarian approach, especially to these young girls whose stories are so real and so inspiring, not just in the treacherous journey they overcome, not just in the torture and abuse they suffer, but in the dignity and self-worth and strength and resoluteness they continue to have. A thoughtful humanitarian approach is what is required. It is the approach that this supplemental exemplifies in providing resources.

There is an oath that doctors take: ''First do no harm.'' Let that be the approach of this body in approving basic amounts of money, reduced by the chairman of the Appropriations Committee, so that it meets appropriately and frugally the needs of these children to be placed in humane circumstances with families who are screened for their safety and security and their being here legally.

I will close with one last experience. In one interview I watched at the border, I saw a 7-year-old girl crying quietly as she tried to answer the questions of an armed border guard. The border guard did his best. He was obviously caring in his approach. But neither his training nor the experience of any border guard equips them really to play this role with a 7-year-old-girl. They are in uniform, a police uniform, which for this girl's whole life has meant fear, potential rape, bodily harm. These children have learned from hard experience that that fear is often justified. They are distrustful of adults generally and authority figures in particular.

Nobody could watch this scene without feeling a sense of compassion for those guards and, of course, most especially the girl, separated from her family, sitting on a bench, her legs swinging free because she was not big enough to reach the floor. The look on her face revealed not just terror but a fervent desire to please, inspired by fear. She could not communicate openly with the border guard.

What she needed was someone trained and equipped to elicit the facts of her background, the reason she had fled, the motivation for her escape, the facts and her feelings about it. That kind of individual assessment is the reason we have the law passed by Congress in 2008, unanimously. This Trafficking Victims Protection Act was designed for these girls and boys coming from noncontiguous countries facing those fears, those threatening conditions if they were to be returned. They face a near certain death, many of them, if they are returned without the individual assessment and consideration. Call it due process, call it judicial, call it humane questioning—the title matters less than what happens.

I know this Nation cannot be expected to rescue all of the children of the world from all of the harsh and inhumane conditions they may face. We are not limitless in our capacity to do good. But I know and I believe we have the resources to do what is just and right under the law considering every one of those children and every one of the potential threats they face if they are returned to their countries.

It is an American value that we follow the rule of law, that we grant asylum under the law to people who deserve it and need it. That much we can do. I know we have the resources to do it. I believe we have the will to do it. The heart of America and its citizens is big. We are a big country. We are not limitless in our resources, but we are boundless in our capacity for generosity and doing what is right.

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

SAVE THE CHILDREN,
JULY 22, 2014.

DEAR SECRETARY JOHNSON AND COMMISSIONER KERLIKOWSKE: Like you and your team, we are deeply concerned about the thousands of unaccompanied minor children crossing our southern border. To address the humanitarian crisis, I am writing to offer our support and propose ways that Save the Children can be of immediate assistance to improve the conditions for children.

Save the Children has nearly a century of experience working with displaced children around the world and has responded to serve children in the face of every natural disaster in the US for the past decade. In the US, we have been a leading partner of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), supporting the needs of children. We have been operating for the past month in McAllen, TX serving children and mothers after their release from Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) custody and have trained more than 80 FEMA Corps members to begin offering basic child programming within the CBP detention and overflow sites. However, we know we can do more to improve the conditions and outcomes for these children.

Your Rio Grande Valley CBP Team, under the leadership of Chief Kevin Oaks, has been a great ally to us as we try to support and assist in this unprecedented situation, offering us tours and being open to dialogue about the needs of children in their custody. However, he has been unable to grant us permission to provide technical assistance and professional child programming onsite without higher authority—it is to you we appeal for this permission.

The conditions in which the children and mothers are being detained are designed for accused criminals, not mothers and children. Save the Children would like to work with you and your team to be a part of the solution. We have the expertise needed to give the children the unique support needed under the current difficult circumstances.

I am writing to propose that Save the Children work with you to immediately help improve conditions for children and address children's urgent needs for care and mental health supports. This would support the safety, protection and wellbeing of the children—and it would relieve stress on the CBP agents. All of these programs could be established at no cost to you—or, if required through DHS/CBP policies and procedures, Save the Children could be reimbursed for this support.

Here is what Save the Children is proposing:

1. Save the Children is offering to immediately provide care for the young children at the CBP detention sites, including the new McAllen overflow site, while their cases are being processed.

Save the Children would provide our Child-Friendly Spaces program, a signature program that we use to support children's mental health and safety in crisis in the U.S. and around the world. This care would be customized to fit the CBP space availability in each border detention site. We would be able to provide basic programs directly in the holding cells or in whatever space may be available. Our teams are trained to provide this program in the U.S. and in challenging, high-risk environments all over the world. For example, we are currently providing this program in Iraq, South Sudan, and the countries bordering Syria.

2. Save the Children is requesting your permission to provide professional staff at each site that has FEMA Corps members, whom we are now supporting to provide urgently needed programming for children in custody. Our professional staff would lead the work with children and provide ongoing support and guidance to the FEMA Corps members while they are in the CBP stations. This will help ensure that there is consistent quality and safety for the children while they participate in the program activities.

Through our partnership with FEMA, the Corporation for National and Community Service and FEMA Corps, this week, Save the Children is training the FEMA Corps teams who are deployed to serve in the CBP stations. Until now, the FEMA Corps members were not trained to work with children and have not been supplied with materials or program activities, specifically activities that support children's emotional wellbeing. We know that many of the children had arduous journeys at the hands of smugglers and traffickers. The children need to receive psychosocial support from the moment of their arrival to ensure their wellbeing. Save the Children will be training and providing ongoing technical support to the FEMA Corps members to help them in their mission assignment to support the children in CBP custody.

3. Save the Children is also offering to provide psychosocial support programs to the CBP agents and their families to help relieve their stress and support their emotional wellbeing during this crisis. We know that many of the border agents are heavily stressed by this crisis. By supporting the psychosocial and mental health needs, and the needs of their families, you will help ensure their longer-term wellbeing. I am attaching a fact sheet about our Journey of Hope program.

4. Save the Children is offering to distribute comfort kits to the mothers and children. We have customized the kits to be age appropriate for mothers, infants and toddlers, young children and school-aged children. They include items such as pacifiers, wipes, baby blankets, plush toys, and bilingual storybooks. We would be happy to work with CBP to ensure that the items provided meet with CBP security regulations. We are ready to immediately provide 5,000 comfort kits for the children, 1,000 infant and toddler kits, and 2,000 kits for the mothers.

5. Save the Children is offering to conduct a multi-sector assessment of needs and provide ongoing monitoring to ensure the programs for children support CBP's mission and the children's needs.

Save the Children is uniquely qualified to address the needs of these children in collaboration with CBP and the U.S. government during this crisis. We are reaching out across all relevant federal and state agencies to both advocate for the needs of these children and to offer our support. Thank you again for your attention to this humanitarian crisis and I appreciate your review of our request to work with you and your team for the benefit of all.

I look forward to working together,

CAROLYN MILES,

President & CEO, Save the Children USA.

BRIEFING NOTE: MEETING THE NEEDS OF CHILDREN ON THE U.S. BORDER

THE CRISIS

For years, children and minors from Guatemala, Mexico, El Salvador, Honduras and other Central American nations have sought refuge in the United States. However, their numbers have increased dramatically since late 2013 because of violence, extreme poverty and other factors that make their and their families' lives untenable. Between October 2013 and May of this year, nearly 50,000 children, many unaccompanied by a parent or guardian, arrived at the U.S. border. This is a 92 percent increase from the prior year, according to U.S. Customs and Border Protection. Projections suggest that the number of children arriving will increase to between 60,000 and 90,000 by the end of 2014.

THE IMPACT ON CHILDREN

Children are always among the most vulnerable in any emergency. Many of the children arriving at the border are suffering from physical illnesses, diarrhea and dehydration, and some have been victimized during their long and arduous journey. They are in urgent need of protective adult care, supportive supervision, medical and hygiene care, and nutritious meals.

With intensive overcrowding at the border stations, reports about sanitation and living conditions for children are extremely disturbing. We have heard stories that children as young as age six are being separated from their mothers for days and kept in border detention sites that are ill-equipped to meet the basic needs of children. Our staff in Texas has also heard first-hand from women that they are fleeing communities because of threats that have been made by gangs to harm their families.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The large influx of migrants poses huge challenges for local communities and Border Patrol agents charged with protecting the border. Despite these challenges, it is critical for local communities and U.S. government agencies to:

Provide adequate sanitary conditions, and basic needs such as food, water, blankets and places to sleep in the shelters, detention centers and transit centers housing children;

Prevent traumatic separation of mothers from young children where at all possible; and

Facilitate basic health services and mental health support for children who are in need of psychosocial support.

NGOs like Save the Children have decades of experience in addressing the needs of fleeing children in some of the hardest hit areas of the world. In order to ensure that children are receiving treatment and care that is up to international standards, we urge the U.S. government to:

Allow NGOs with expertise in child protection issues to gain access to border detention sites; and

Permit NGOs with expertise in child protection issues to assess the needs of children and their families to devise strategies that will ensure their well-being.

It is both important and obligatory under current U.S. and international law to uphold the legal rights of children, especially those with a possible claim to refugee status. To this end, we ask the U.S. government to:

Provide unaccompanied children with adequate screenings and a fair judicial process to ensure that they are not being returned to life-threatening situations;

Uphold provisions in existing laws that provide due process for unaccompanied children so that those with the right to stay are not short-changed and lost in the shuffle; and

Ensure children and their families are made aware of their legal protections and options.

Finally, any viable long term strategy must include a robust effort to address the root causes for the surge and not focus only on its symptoms. To this end, we request that the U.S. government:

Dedicate funding to address issues of violence and poverty that drive migration from the countries of origin and not only on border security and deterrence.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HEINRICH.) The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

CHILDREN IN NEED

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I am especially grateful to the senior Senator from Connecticut for his words tonight and the challenge those words present to us. We are grateful for his efforts to stand for children.

I rise tonight to speak about children here in the United States. I spoke earlier about issues that related to women

and girls and children generally in Afghanistan. But I wanted to highlight a report that came out recently by one of the leading organizations in the country that charts the well-being of children over time and advocates on their behalf. The name of the organization that many here have heard of, I am sure, is the Annie E. Casey Foundation—no relation to me—a foundation that has made it its mission to advocate on behalf of children. We cannot be an effective advocate—none of us—unless we chart their progress and find out what is working. So I am going to briefly summarize tonight the findings of the 2014 Kids County Report by the Casey Foundation.

I have here at the lectern kind of a color-coded chart which I will not hold up because I do not have an enlarged version of it. I will not be able to have it printed in the RECORD.

I want to summarize it. Basically, what is in front of me is a summary of various categories that the Annie E. Casey Foundation has developed to chart the well-being of children. They separate the comparisons into four sections, and then they determine whether over time—whether it is over 4 or 5 years or over a longer period of time—whether for children the indicators have worsened or improved. It is a very basic set of metrics.

The categories they track for children are the following four categories: first, economic well-being, and I will talk about some of the indicators there; second, education; third, health; and fourth, a category they call family and community.

The basic indicators for the entire United States—of course, they have a breakdown for how the children in every State are doing on those indicators. For example, in terms of what is getting better, we should highlight and note when there are improvements made. I think the fact that we have improvements on these indicators for children over time indicates that public policy matters, what happens here in the Congress matters, what happens across the country in nonprofit organizations and advocacy organizations that fight every day for children and say over and over again, as the advocates tell us, that children are not small adults—we need specific strategies for children, whether it is for health care or for early education or to make sure they get enough to eat or to protect them from predators. Whatever the issue, we have to have specific strategies for children.

Let's go through a couple of areas where there has been improvement—not dramatic improvement, not enough improvement for us to say we have achieved a measure of success on one metric and we can move on.

In the area of education, just by way of example, eighth grade children—eighth graders not proficient in math, so it is kind of almost a negative indicator the way it is phrased. In 2005, across the United States, 72 percent of eighth graders were not proficient in math—a very high number, 72 percent. When they looked at it again in 2013, it was down to 66. So it has improved by 6 percentage points, but thankfully it is moving in the right direction. But we can't be satisfied with 66 percent of eighth graders not—not—proficient in math, but it is good news it is moving in the right direction.

Another bit of good news and maybe a more urgent issue in terms of what happens to very young children—in this case, low birth weight babies—there is an improvement there from 2005 to 2012. So over 7 years, the percentage of low birth weight babies, according to this data, has gotten better, but the unfortunate part is it only went from 8.2 percent to 8 percent—not much of an improvement but an improvement.

We have a long way to go in the greatest country in the world when we say that there has been an improvement but still 8 percent of babies are low birth weight. So there is an improvement, but there is a lot more work to do.

Maybe the best area indicator of improvement—and then I will move on to areas where there has been a worsening—children without health insurance. We hear a lot of discussion about health insurance, health care, and the Affordable Care Act in Congress, but in 2008 when that measurement was taken, 18 percent of children did not have health care. So in 2008 it was 10 percent, and as of 2012 it is down to 7 percent. So there is a substantial diminution or reduction in the number of children without health insurance. But if we do the math, 7 percent of the children of the country don't have health insurance. That is a big number. So it is getting better, substantially better, better than almost any other metric in terms of growth or progress, but we have to do a lot more to make sure that it is not 7 percent—that number should be zero—make sure that every child has health insurance. That has to be the goal, and that has to be what we are determined to achieve in the Senate.

I will go through a couple of areas that have worsened, but thankfully, of what is 16 categories, there are more improvement categories than worsening categories. Unfortunately, we have to go through some of the areas where it is worse.

One that is particularly disturbing is children in poverty. That has worsened between the years 2005 and 2012—19 percent in 2005 was the percentage of children in poverty. As of 2012 that went up to 23 percent. So prior to the great recession and then some time after the recession ended, the 2012 number was 23 percent. So that is a worsening number, and it should give us not just pause, but it should be an impetus to action to reduce that number—23 percent of the children in the country in poverty as of 2012. Children whose parents lack secure employment—that number got worse. Children living in households with high-housing-cost burden—that number got worse, unfortunately.

I will give two more, and then I will conclude my remarks. Children in single-parent families—that number got worse between 2005 and 2012. Finally, children living in high-poverty areas—that was measured over a different time period—2000 versus a time period between 2008 and 2012. That number got worse as well.

What this report indicates—and I won't go through the State numbers—is that first and foremost we have to keep records and we have to track progress. But it also indicates that even when there is an improving metric, when the numbers are getting better, say, for example, on low birth weight babies, that improvement is in many cases very slight and not nearly adequate or acceptable.

I think both on the worsening numbers and on the improvement numbers, it should be a call to action. I believe that if we are doing the right thing for our children, if we are living up to what the Scriptures tell us about justice, where the Scriptures talk about ''Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for justice, for they shall be satisfied,'' if we think of how we treat children as a measure or as an indicator of justice and our commitment to justice, we cannot say that these numbers are in any way acceptable, that our hunger and our thirst for that kind of justice cannot be satisfied with these numbers.

We should be committed to not just tracking and making marginal or incremental progress, we should be committed to the full measure of justice for our children.

Hubert Humphrey said—and he may have said it on this floor when he represented Minnesota—''It was once said that the moral test of a government is how that government treats those who are in the dawn of life, the children; those who are in the twilight of life, the elderly; and those who are in the shadows of life, the sick, the needy, and the handicapped.'' He said that was the moral test of a government.

So if we are talking about what Humphrey said about children in the dawn of their life, we have to reflect upon and be motivated by the findings of the Annie E. Casey Foundation report. It is one of those reports that remind us how we can improve when it comes to the well-being of our children, but it also reminds us and I think alarms us about areas where we have not improved and we have a ways to go.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I rise today to speak in support of the President's emergency supplemental request of $615 million to fight wildfires throughout the United States.

We have witnessed increasingly large and devastating wildfires over the last few decades.

Nationwide, the costs of fighting wildfires has increased from $200 million in 1986 to $1.7 billion in 2013. In

that same time, the amount of acres burned has increased from 2.7 million acres in 1986 to 4.3 million acres in 2013.

In many parts of the U.S., fire seasons are now 60 to 80 days longer compared to three decades ago and in some places like Southern California, the fire season never ends.

This is leading to seasonal firefighters being hired several months earlier than normal and federal agencies spending more to make sure our firefighters are prepared and have the necessary resources available for the entire year.

So far this year, California has experienced a 35 percent increase in fire activity and a 16 percent increase in acres burned over an average year. These alarming statistics translate to more than 4,000 wildfires in my State already that have burned more than 52,000 acres since the beginning of the year.

Right now, brave firefighters in California are battling five different large fires. The largest is the Sand Fire, which has burned over 4,000 acres east of Sacramento. This fire has already destroyed 19 homes.

Although it has already been an unprecedented fire season in California, we are not at all out of danger yet as the significant wildland fire potential remains above normal for most of the State through October of this year. It is also above normal in Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Nevada, and parts of Arizona.

Adding to the difficulty of battling these enormous fires is the constrained fire suppression budget we are currently operating under.

Earlier this year, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Department of Interior announced that wildfire-fighting costs this summer are projected to run about $400 million over budget.

In fact, since 2002, the United States has overspent its wildfire suppression budget every year except one—and in three of those years, went over the suppression budget by nearly $1 billion. This chronic underfunding of our firefighting accounts cannot continue.

When we fail to budget for fire suppression, the Forest Service and the Department of Interior are forced to transfer money from fire prevention accounts to make up the difference. That makes no sense!

We are taking money from the very programs that help reduce the threat of wildfires—such as hazardous fuel removal programs.

In my State, plans to remove dry brush and dead trees in the Tahoe National Forest and the Plumas National Forest have been delayed because wildfire prevention funding is not available.

The President's supplemental request not only adds funding for fire suppression during this fiscal year, it solves the problem in the future by creating a Wildfire Suppression Cap Adjustment so that extraordinary fire costs are treated in the same way as destructive hurricanes, tornadoes, or earthquakes are funded.

This means that money to fight the largest fires would not be subject to discretionary budget caps much like FEMA's Disaster Relief Fund.

As our fire seasons become longer, hotter, and endanger more communities, we must act now to change how wildfire suppression is funded so that we can reduce fire risk and increase the resiliency of the Nation's public lands, forests, and the surrounding communities.

I urge my colleagues to support this emergency supplemental funding and address the growing crisis of wildfires.

I yield the floor. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

KELLOGG-HUBBARD LIBRARY

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, every time I go by the children's library at Kellogg-Hubbard Library in my hometown of Montpelier, VT, it brings back happy memories. I would like to have printed in the RECORD an article I wrote about the library and its wonderful librarian, Miss Holbrook.

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

[From the Times Argus, June 13, 1996]

MONTPELIER BOY REALIZES MISS HOLBROOK WAS RIGHT

(By Patrick Leahy)

The 100th anniversary of the Kellogg-Hubbard Library triggers memories for all of us who have lived in Montpelier. And they are great memories.

While I was growing up, Montpelier did not have television. We children did not have the advantage of cable TV with 10 channels giving us the opportunity to buy things we didn't need and would never use or another 10 offering blessings or redemptions for an adequate contribution.

Deprived as we were, we made do with the Lone Ranger and Inner Sanctum on the radio and Saturday's serials at the Strand Theater on Main Street. For a few minutes on Saturday afternoon, we could watch Hopalong Cassidy, Tarzan, Flash Gordon, Jungle Jim or Batman face death-defying predicaments that would guarantee you would be back the next Saturday, 14 cents in hand, to see how they survived (and I recall they always did).

Having exhausted radio, Saturday matinees, the latest comic books (I had a favorite) and childhood games and chores, we were left to our own imagination.

That was the best part.

We were a generation who let the genies of our imagination out of the bottle by reading. Then, as now, reading was one of my greatest pleasures.

My parents had owned the Waterbury Record Weekly newspaper and then started the Leahy Press in Montpelier, which they ran until selling it at their retirement. The Leahy family was at home with the printed word and I learned to read early in life.

At 5 years old I went down the stairs of the Kellogg-Hubbard Children's Library, and the years that followed provided some of the most important experiences of my life.

In the '40s and '50s, the Kellogg-Hubbard was blessed with a white-haired children's librarian named Miss Holbrook. Her vocation in life had to be to help children read and to make reading enjoyable. She succeeded more than even she might have dreamed.

She had the key to unlocking our imagination.

With my parents' encouragement, the Kellogg-Hubbard was a regular stop every afternoon as I left school. On any day I had two or three books checked out. My sister Mary, brother John and I read constantly.

In my years as U.S. senator, it seems I never traveled so far or experienced so much as I did as a child in Montpelier with daily visits to the library. With Miss Holbrook's encouragement I had read most of Dickens and Robert Louis Stevenson in the early part of grade school.

To this day, I remember sitting in our home at 136 State St. reading Treasure Island on a Saturday afternoon filled with summer storms. I knew I heard the tap, tap, tap of the blind man's stick coming down State Street and I remember the great relief of seeing my mother and father returning from visiting my grandparents in South Ryegate.

Miss Holbrook was right. A good and an active imagination creates its own reality.

In my profession, I read computer messages, briefing papers, constituent letters, legislation and briefings, the Congressional Record—and an occasional book for pleasure—in all, the equivalent of a full-length book each day.

Interesting as all this is, and owing much of my life to those earlier experiences at the library, the truest reading pleasure was then. I worry that so many children today miss what our libraries offer.

During the past few years I have had many of my photographs published. DC Comics and Warner Brothers have also asked me to write for Batman or do voice-overs on their TV series. In each case, I have asked them to send my payment to the Kellogg-Hubbard Library to buy books for the Children's Library.

It is my way of saying: ''Thank you, Miss Holbrook.''

RECOGNIZING RONALD McDONALD HOUSE CHARITIES

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise to commemorate the 30th anniversary for two excellent charities in my home State of Kentucky, the Ronald McDonald House Charities. The Ronald McDonald House Charities of Kentuckiana in Louisville and the Ronald McDonald House Charities of the Bluegrass in Lexington both first opened their doors to needy families in 1984.

Since then, each house has served more than 25,000 families. In the last

year alone, more than 1,100 Kentucky families have spent nearly 15,000 nights in the two homes operated by these charities. The two homes operate thanks to the generosity of Kentucky's McDonalds' owners, a broad swath of Kentucky businesses, countless individual donors, and the hundreds of thousands of hours given by tireless volunteers.

For those of my colleagues who are not familiar with the Ronald McDonald House, it serves as a home away from home, at low or no cost, for the families of children who are hospital patients. At a time when a family is undergoing such a crisis as the illness of a child, infant, or newborn, the last thing these families need to worry about is finding housing near the hospital. The Ronald McDonald House eases that need by providing a home away from home for families of children receiving health care at area medical facilities while also lending support to other organizations that aid children. Today there are 125 local chapters in 55 countries.

The Ronald McDonald House Charities of Kentuckiana first opened in Louisville in September 1984. Since their most recent expansion in 2009, they feature 36 guest rooms, each accommodating up to four people.

In 1992, the Ronald McDonald House Charities of Kentuckiana helped pioneer one of the first Ronald McDonald Family Rooms in the world—a smaller version of a Ronald McDonald House located inside a hospital so a parent is only steps away from their seriously ill child. Today there are Ronald McDonald Family Rooms in three Louisville hospitals.

The Ronald McDonald House Charities of the Bluegrass in Lexington similarly opened their doors in 1984, and have since expanded to 20 rooms. In 2005, through a partnership with the University of Kentucky, the Ronald McDonald House Charities of the Bluegrass began the Ronald McDonald Care Mobile to offer eastern Kentucky's children free professional dental care and education aboard a state-of-the-art mobile clinic. Centered in Hazard, KY, the Ronald McDonald Care Mobile cares for underserved children in their own neighborhoods and schools.

Together, the Ronald McDonald House Charities of both Kentuckiana and the Bluegrass have accomplished a great deal for the Commonwealth and helped thousands of Kentucky families. Kentucky residents and businesses are proud to have supported them for 30 years, and I know will continue to do so for many years more. I want to thank the Ronald McDonald House Charities of Kentuckiana and the Bluegrass for serving as the home away from home for distressed families with a child in the hospital for 30 years. Kentucky is proud of these institutions and the many people behind them who make them work.

TRIBUTE TO JIMMY RUSSELL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to a friend and legendary Kentuckian, Wild Turkey Distillery's Master Distiller Jimmy Russell. This year marks the 60th year Jimmy has been making Bourbon for Wild Turkey, a fact that the distillery is rightfully proud to celebrate. As a 60-year Bourbon veteran, Jimmy is the longest tenured active spirits master distiller in the world.

Kentucky is, of course, the birthplace of Bourbon. The drink itself is named for Bourbon County, KY, in the heart of the Bluegrass State, where the product first emerged. Kentucky produces 95 percent of the world's Bourbon supply, and Kentucky's iconic Bourbon brands ship more than 30 million gallons of the spirit to 126 countries, making Bourbon the largest export category among all U.S. distilled spirits. Not only is Kentucky the overwhelming producer of the world's Bourbon, Bourbon gives much back to Kentucky. It is a vital part of the state's tourism and economy.

Jimmy grew up only 5 miles away from the Wild Turkey Distillery, located in Lawrenceburg, KY. His passion for Bourbon led him to study under whiskey luminaries, including Bill Hughes, Wild Turkey's second master distiller; and Ernest W. Ripy, Jr., great-nephew of distillery founder James Ripy and Wild Turkey's third master distiller. Jimmy recalls being taken under Bill's wing and learning everything about the business from the ground up. Since becoming master distiller in the mid-1960s, he has traveled the world as an unofficial ambassador of Bourbon, introducing people from as far and wide as Japan and Australia to American's native spirit.

Over the past 60 years, Jimmy has been responsible for the launches of several new Wild Turkey brands and expressions, such as Tradition, Tribute, 17-year-old Wild Turkey for Japan, Rare Breed, American Spirit, Kentucky Spirit and Russell's Reserve, which he cocreated with his son and distilling partner Eddie Russell. Jimmy broke new ground in 1976 with the first honeyed Bourbon, at the time called Wild Turkey Liqueur. The evolution of that product today is known as American Honey. Jimmy is also responsible for overseeing the production of Wild Turkey 101, the distillery's flagship brand. This fall, Wild Turkey released a commemorative Diamond Anniversary limited-edition Bourbon created by Jimmy's son, distilling partner and Bourbon Hall of Famer Eddie Russell. As for Jimmy himself, he is known to enjoy his Bourbon neat or with a touch of branch water.

As a legend in the distilled spirits industry, Jimmy is a member of the Kentucky Bourbon Hall of Fame. He is a member of the Whiskey Hall of Fame and a whiskey judge for the International Wine and Spirits Competition. He has been honored by the Commonwealth of Kentucky General Assembly, been anointed a Kentucky Colonel, and received the key to the city from the mayor of Lawrenceburg.

When not hard at work at Wild Turkey, Jimmy spends time with his wife Joretta. They have three children, Eddie, Mike, and Kathy, six grandchildren and one great-grandchild. An avid sports fan, Jimmy is a lifelong supporter of local Anderson County High School athletic programs for girls and boys.

I want to congratulate Jimmy Russell for reaching his 60th anniversary of work at Wild Turkey Distillery. His lifetime of achievement in the distilled spirits industry is certainly something to be proud of. I know my Senate colleagues join me in commending Jimmy for decades of success.

TRIBUTE TO MARCUS ADAMS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to SPC Marcus Adams. Adams hails from Magoffin County, KY, and proudly served his country on a tour of duty in Iraq.

Adams graduated from Magoffin County High School, and after his freshman year in college he decided to enlist in the U.S. Army. Because of the strong military tradition in his family—his father, grandfather, and two uncles all served—he felt it was an easy decision to carry on that legacy.

After completing his basic training and advanced individual combat training, Adams was assigned to the 555th Engineer Brigade. In September of 2008, he and his brigade were sent to Balad, Iraq, where they would remain for the duration of their yearlong tour of duty.

In Iraq, Adams was responsible for all of his brigade's technology. Managing the computer networks, servers, and radios were tasks that all fell under his purview.

Adams is now happily back in his old Kentucky home with his wife Ash'leigh and his son Alistair and will soon be joined by his first daughter Hermione.

For his honorable service to this country, he is well deserving of praise from this body. Therefore, I ask that my U.S. Senate colleagues join me in honoring SPC Marcus Adams.

The Salyersville Independent recently published an article detailing Adams' service in Iraq. I ask unanimous consent that the full article be printed in the RECORD.

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

[From the Salyersville Independent, July 3, 2014]

QUICK DECISION LEADS TO IRAQ

(By Heather Oney)

One ''drop of the hat'' decision took Marcus Adams all the way to Iraq.

Adams, a graduate of Magoffin County High School, was 19 years old and had completed one year of college when he came in one afternoon in February 2007 and told his wife, Ash'leigh Nicole Prince Adams, he had joined the Army.

''There were no objections,'' Adams laughed. ''She stayed in college at Morehead and I went to basic training.''

Adams said given his family's history, with his dad, grandfather and two uncles serving in the military, it was a no-brainer.

''With 9/11, I felt because everyone else in my family had served, I felt the responsibility to at least do a minimum tour,'' Adams said. ''I didn't feel productive in college and the Army could give me steady employment and healthcare.''

Adams finished his basic training at Fort Jackson, South Carolina, then his Advanced Individual Training (AIT) at Fort Gordon, Georgia. He was then assigned to the 555th Engineer Brigade, based out of Fort Lewis, Washington.

His primary job with the brigade, which he stayed in all through his enlistment, was to be the computer guy, Adams said. He was responsible for the computer networks, servers, radios—any technology—the engineers needed.

In September 2008, only seven years after 9/11, Adams and his brigade were sent to Balad, Iraq, where the team would stay a year.

''The War in the Middle East we have been engaged in for the past 10-plus years is open-ended by its very nature,'' Adams said. ''In Vietnam, we had an actual bad guy, in uniform and everything. In Iraq and Afghanistan, when the enemy is terror, who is that? There's no way to define victory.''

Despite recent developments in Iraq, Adams said, ''I'm proud of the work we did. Less than 1 percent of U.S. Americans ever serve in any capacity. The importance of serving and the things I got from it turned me into the person I am.''

Adams said the majority of the time he remained on base, which was a former Iraqi Army base where temperatures got up to 130 degrees in the day.

''It's hard to express how hot that is,'' Adams remembered.

He had one mission off-base, where he said he saw how big the gap was between the poor and the rich in Iraq.

''Here, the poorest people get food stamps and aid,'' Adams said. ''I've seen Iraqi men walking around bare naked, picking up garbage, and the guys working with us are wearing suits and eating lobster. We saw people working at a dump in a junk-yard, building shelters out of it.''

While their truck was armored with additional plates, he said a man threw a Russian RKG–3 anti-tank grenade between the truck and the plate, causing damage to the truck, but no one was hurt.

At one point Adams and a few other men received four-day passes and they went to Doha, Qatar, to unwind. Located on the Persian Gulf, Qatar is more of a tourist country, with only 30 percent of the people in the country at any given time actually being residents. Since they were there during Ramadan, when it is illegal to be caught eating or drinking during the daylight hours, Adams said they had to be careful to stay hydrated. They would pull the curtains on the bus they were traveling on and drank anyway in order to not dehydrate in the well over 100-degree temperatures.

In September 2009, he came back to the states, getting to travel all around the country. He worked in Fort Irwin, California, twice, Fort Campbell, Kentucky and Yakima Training Center, Washington.

The hardest part, he said, was reintegrating with his wife.

''It's weird when you leave that long when you've been the head of the household,'' Adams said. ''You have to leave and hand it all over to her—the bills and all the decisions—and when you come back, you try to come back in the same role, but she's like, I've got this.''

Adams said for the first month back, all the soldiers had to report for a daily briefing set up to help them with the reintegration process, but he saw many dealing with infidelity issues when they returned, as well as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

''People can get really messed up and they used to just tell us, Suck it up and deal with it,' but I think they are seeing now that's not the best policy.''

Thankfully, for him, he said they never had to deal with either issue.

He could have gone to Afghanistan for another tour, however, his contract would have had to be extended past the usual six years. Since he was now the father of one, he took the Army's offer for an early honorable discharge, leaving three months early to be with his son. He was ranked as a Specialist, under the E4 pay grade.

Marcus and Ash'leigh Adams have one son, Alistair Dean Adams, who is three years old, and one daughter on the way (at press time), Hermione Sue Adams.

CYPRUS

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, in 1974, 40 years ago this month, Turkish troops invaded the Republic of Cyprus. By August they had taken control of more than one-third of the island. Turkey's invasion had immediate consequences, such as the confiscation of property and the displacement of Greek and Turkish Cypriots alike.

The invasion has also had more enduring consequences—consequences that are still felt today. The so-called green line, a demilitarized United Nations buffer zone, still cuts a jagged path across the island, dividing one part of the country from the other. It even bisects the capital city of Nicosia. In 1983, Turkish Cypriots declared a separate country in the northern third of Cyprus—a country recognized to this day by Turkey alone.

Vice President JOE BIDEN visited Cyprus in May, and he spoke of being called the White House optimist for his belief that the best days are yet to come. Well, by that standard, my colleagues here must think me the Senate optimist. But I really do believe that the future is bright for Cyprus and that most Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots want to put aside decades of division and move forward together.

I was pleased to read that leaders issued a joint declaration in February calling the status quo ''unacceptable'', and I am encouraged by the resumption of high-level negotiations on a comprehensive settlement. I think the United States, with its deep ties to Cyprus and Turkey, can play a productive role in facilitating these discussions. I also urge the Government of Turkey to step up and be a constructive partner throughout this process.

It has been my experience that intractable problems rarely have simple or easy solutions, so I am not under any illusions about this. But I have seen what folks can accomplish when they set ideology aside, and I remain a believer in a just settlement that brings an end to 40 years of division and reunites Cyprus.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, in my capacity as chairman of the Helsinki Commission, I wish to draw attention to the fact that July 20 marked the 40th anniversary of the invasion of Cyprus by a Turkish army. Sadly, this year also marks more than 50 years since a power-sharing arrangement between the two communities on Cyprus collapsed following independence from Britain. As the situation in the eastern Mediterranean and the wider Middle East is becoming more volatile and fragile, it is time to end the forcible division of Cyprus, which has endured for far too long.

The continued presence of Turkish troops in the northern part of Cyprus exacerbates a number of human rights concerns including property restitution, restrictions on freedom of worship, and damage to religious and archeological sites. I have consistently raised these concerns and want to emphasize that all religious sites in the north must be protected.

It is gratifying that the Government of Cyprus remains fully committed to the U.N.-sponsored process to reach a sustainable and enduring settlement that would reunify Cyprus based on a bizonal, bicommunal federation in accordance with relevant U.N. Security Council resolutions.

The joint statement agreed to by Greek Cypriot President Anastasiades and Turkish Cypriot leader Dervis Eroglu on the island in February of this year lays a solid foundation for results-oriented talks. The basic parameters for a solution laid out in the statement should be fully respected.

I applaud the efforts of both leaders to move this process forward. Following the signing of the joint statement in February, President Anastasiades called the chance for peace a ''win-win situation.'' ''I believe that a solution that would be accepted by the Greek Cypriots would create stability in the region. Greater cooperation with Turkish Cypriots will contribute to foster growth . . . to do that you have to have a settlement that is not at the expense of one community or to the benefit of the other,'' he said.

After meeting in April with U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, Turkish Cypriot leader Dervis Eroglu said that during negotiations with Greek Cypriot President Anastasiades, ''we'll try to bridge our differences and find a comprehensive settlement in the shortest possible time.'' ''We can finalize a settlement and take it to a separate simultaneous referenda in 2014.''

Many observers believe the discovery of vast offshore oil and natural gas reserves in the eastern Mediterranean could be a game changer in pressing negotiations forward and could potentially also act as a stabilizing and unifying factor in the eastern Mediterranean. The cheapest and most expeditious way of exporting the reserves, discovered first by Israel and then by Cyprus, would be through an underwater pipeline to Turkey. I certainly

hope this potential for economic empowerment for all of the people of Cyprus will help both communities to visualize and then implement a final settlement.

In keeping with the numerous U.N. resolutions on Cyprus and the principles enshrined in the Helsinki Final Act, it is time for Turkey to remove its troops from the island. The people of Cyprus cannot wait another 40 years for reconciliation.

MONHEGAN, MAINE QUADRICENTENNIAL

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, in 1614, 6 years before the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth, Captain John Smith—explorer, soldier, navigator, and adventurer—landed at Monhegan Island off the coast of Maine. I wish to commemorate the 400th anniversary of that discovery and to congratulate the people of a truly remarkable community as they celebrate their quadricentennial.

In the very first sentence of his remarkable journal of that voyage, Captain Smith names the ''Isle of Monhegan,'' the Wabanaki Indian word for ''island of the ocean.'' In reference to the shared latitude with his home country, he coined the term ''New England.''

As the Wabanaki had known for centuries, the fish were plentiful. In addition, Captain Smith used the stands of timber to make small boats to explore the inlets and rivers on the mainland coast. So, Monhegan can rightly claim to be the birthplace of three industries that built the State of Maine—fishing, boatbuilding, and logging.

Certainly, there were disappointments. The whales proved elusive, and the gold Captain Smith sought was nonexistent. But the potential was everywhere.

In addressing the question of what it would take to settle the untamed region, the captain's log contains these lines that define Monhegan today. It would take, Captain Smith wrote, ''the best parts of art, judgment, courage, honesty, constancy, diligence, and industry.''

Maine's island communities are an essential part of our State's identity. They survive and thrive because of the qualities Captain Smith so wonderfully described.

The island's lobster industry is a shining example. More than 90 years ago, long before conservation was a watchword, Monhegan's lobstermen voluntarily established their own ban on harvesting small lobsters. To the list of Monhegan's firsts—fishing, boatbuilding, and logging—we can add lobster management.

By mutual agreement, rather than government edict, Monhegan lobstermen set trap limits to prevent overfishing. They established their own management zone to ensure that this generations-old fishery will sustain the generations to come. Most remarkable of all is the tradition of Trap Day, now October 1, when all boats, captains, and crews wait for each other and head to their fishing grounds together at the crack of dawn. The ethic that ''no one goes until everyone goes'' is the very definition of community.

For more than a century, Monhegan also has been a magnet for artists. In 1902, Samuel Triscott became the first artist to live there year-round, and he found the subject matter enticing enough to stay the rest of his life, nearly one-quarter century. From Rockwell Kent to Andrew and Jamie Wyeth, this singular place has inspired some of the best artists to create their greatest work.

There is no question that the magnificent scenery is part of the attraction. But as we look at the powerful works of art the island has inspired, it is clear that the people of Monhegan, their judgment, courage, honesty, constancy, diligence, and industry, enhance the natural beauty of the island so that it represents something more profound than crashing surf on rocky shores.

Captain Smith concluded his journal of that voyage four centuries ago with these words: ''We are not born for ourselves, but each to help the other. Let us imitate the virtues of our predecessors to be worthily their successors.'' Those words are fitting for a celebration of the past that looks with confidence to the future, and I congratulate the people of Monhegan, Maine, on this landmark anniversary.

CAMPOBELLO INTERNATIONAL PARK

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President. I wish to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Roosevelt Campobello International Park. This beautiful and historic park preserves the summer home that Franklin Delano Roosevelt enjoyed both as a boy and as president. It was established by treaty between the United States and Canada and is the only memorial to an American president on Canadian soil.

The 2,800-acre park on Campobello Island, New Brunswick, was opened on August 20, 1964, by Canadian Prime Minister Lester Pearson and American President Lyndon Johnson. It is jointly owned and managed by both countries and is a beautiful and historic testament to a legacy of friendship. Like all true friendships, the friendship commemorated at Roosevelt Campobello International Park is based not upon expedience or self-interest, but upon shared values.

It is a legacy of friendship between two men: one of America's greatest presidents and one of Canada's greatest prime ministers. Franklin Delano Roosevelt and Mackenzie King could not have been more dissimilar in personality—one gregarious and outgoing, the other reticent and intensely private—yet they saw beyond the superficial traits and into the depths of character. Together, they led their nations out of the Great Depression. Together, they led their nations through the Second World War and made North America the arsenal of democracy so crucial to victory. Although only one lived to see the peace, together they forged an alliance that has allowed that peace to endure.

It is a legacy of friendship between two communities. By land, Campobello Island is accessible only from Lubec, ME, our Nation's easternmost town, via the FDR Memorial Bridge, itself a stunning example of international cooperation and friendship. The people of eastern Maine and western New Brunswick share a past, a present, and the future. They are bound together by a rugged yet rewarding way of life, by personal and family ties, by commerce and by mutual assistance. They earn their livelihoods from the land and from the sea, and they care for this special place so that those livelihoods may continue for generations to come.

It was at Campobello, his ''beloved island,'' that young Franklin Roosevelt learned to guide a sailboat through the challenging Lubec Narrows and developed the inner strength and self-reliance that enabled him to meet any challenge. Among the proud and determined people on both shores of the narrows, he felt the power of committed individuals working together in common cause.

In 1933, during his first return visit as President, with First Lady Eleanor at his side, FDR recalled his happy childhood memories and again thanked the islanders who taught him to sail. Then, in words that still ring true today, he described the region as, ''The finest example of friendship between Nations—permanent friendship between nations—that we can possibly have.''

The United States and Canada share the world's longest undefended border, a common history and culture. In trade, we are each other's best customers. We are, as one of the park's permanent exhibits declares, ''Good Neighbours—Best Friends.''

George Washington wrote that, ''True friendship is a plant of slow growth, and must undergo and withstand the shocks of adversity.'' The friendship between the United States and Canada is the hardiest of plants with the deepest of roots. The adversities are but minor shocks; they are no match for the values of freedom, human rights and the rule of law that bind us together.

Those values are the foundation of this legacy, and they are our guarantee that this friendship will endure. They are what make the 50th anniversary of Roosevelt Campobello International Park an event so worthy of celebration.

U.S. MARSHALS SERVICE ANNIVERSARY

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. President, I wish to honor the U.S. Marshals Service on the occasion of the 225th anniversary of its founding. Since its establishment in 1789, the Marshals Service has distinguished itself as not only the oldest, but one of the most effective law enforcement agencies in the United States. In recent years, the Marshals Service has demonstrated its versatility through Operation FALCON, a nationwide fugitive apprehension initiative. In this program, resources of Federal, State, city, and county law enforcement agencies are combined to locate and apprehend criminals wanted for crimes of violence. Since its inception in 2005, Operation FALCON has made 91,086 arrests and cleared 117,874 warrants and is the single most successful initiative aimed at apprehending violent fugitives in U.S. law enforcement history. Congratulations to the Marshals Service on 225 years of service to our Nation.

McDONALD NOMINATION

• Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, my office continues to receive an inordinate number of complaints about persistent problems with the delivery of health care services and other benefits by the Department of Veterans Affairs to those who have served in our Armed Forces. This is very troubling to me.

Evidence of serious and systemic mismanagement and negligence within the Department led to the resignation of a former Secretary of the Department and a call for a thorough assessment of how to better serve our veterans. We should take very seriously our responsibility to those who have served in our military. Robert McDonald, the next Secretary of Veterans Affairs, will face many challenges to improve the VA system. He will have the support of many of us in Congress as he assumes this important position.

I have recommended on several occasions continued, vigorous oversight by the Department of Veterans Affairs during the implementation of a corrective action plan at the G.V. ''Sonny'' Montgomery VA Medical Center in Jackson, MS. Reports from VA patients, their families and VA hospital officials in Mississippi have served to guide corrections and improvements at the facility.

I support measures to correct the VA's problems and improve the quality of, and access to, care for veterans. I am hopeful that the pending VA reform legislation and the confirmation of a new Secretary of Veterans Affairs will be reassuring steps toward enhancing the delivery of health care services to our veterans.

We can and should do better for those who have devoted themselves to serving our country.•

REMEMBERING ADMIRAL CHARLES R. LARSON

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, today I want to pay tribute to an exceptional leader, public servant, patriot, and friend. Earlier this week, ADM Charles Larson passed away after a 2-year battle against leukemia. This morning, we said goodbye to him as he was memorialized and laid to rest at the U.S. Naval Academy Cemetery in Annapolis. Although it is always hard to lose a friend, and it is certainly proper to mourn, I also want to celebrate his life and his tremendous accomplishments and contributions to the Navy, Naval Academy, and Nation.

Chuck and I were good friends, flight school roommates, and both members of the Class of 1958. An Eagle Scout, brigade commander and class president, he continued his meteoric trajectory, becoming the first naval officer selected as a White House Fellow and the second youngest officer to be promoted to the flag rank. On top of his operational commands, he also served as naval aide to President Richard Nixon. Chuck was bright, extremely talented, and never shied away from a challenge. For instance, after earning his pilot wings and doing a tour aboard the USS *Shangri-la*, he decided to go to nuclear power school to become a submariner and be at the tactical tip of the Cold War. Similarly, instead of pursuing a lucrative civilian job after finishing his tour as the commander in chief, U.S. Pacific Command, he took on what he considered his most challenging but rewarding job of his career, returning to his alma mater for a second tour as the superintendent.

A man of unparalleled character and vision, Admiral Larson wanted to refocus the academy to be ''an ethical beacon for the nation.'' He established the Character Development Division and implemented innovative ethical and character-enhancing programs and initiatives to both the curriculum and student life. His devotion to the academy and midshipmen went beyond his two tenures at the helm, serving as the chairman of the U.S. Naval Academy Foundation for nearly a decade after his retirement.

Chuck was more than a renowned four-star admiral; he was a friend to many, husband to Sally, father to Sigrid, Erica, and Kirsten, and grandfather to seven beautiful children. I join many past and present members of the Senate Armed Services Committee, the Class of 1958, the Naval Academy family, and thousands of military personnel who have served under and alongside Chuck in extending our most sincere gratitude for his legacy of excellence and ethical leadership.

Fair winds and following seas, Admiral Larson. You will be missed, but not forgotten.

INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM ACT

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I wish to express my appreciation that the Senate has passed H.R. 4028, a bipartisan bill Representatives GRACE MENG and DOUG COLLINS introduced that amends the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 to include the desecration of cemeteries among the many forms of violations of the right to religious freedom. Last month, Senator RISCH and I introduced a Senate companion bill, S. 2466, to H.R. 4028.

In 1998, Congress passed the International Religious Freedom Act to affirm America's commitment to religious freedom, enshrined both in the U.S. Constitution and in numerous international human rights instruments. The act acknowledges the pressure and persecution that many people around the world face because of their religious beliefs and requires the Department of State to issue an annual report on international religious freedom.

Freedom of religion requires respect for those practicing their faith alone as well as in community with others. It also requires protection for those who identify as members of a religious community, for the symbols of the community, for the houses of worship, and for other institutions of the community. The defacing or destruction of a cemetery based on an affiliation with a particular religious or spiritual group should not be tolerated by governments and must factor into our international religious freedom reporting. This bill, H.R. 4028, will ensure inclusion of these acts in the annual State Department reports and will better aid those of us working to monitor and combat anti-Semitism and other religious discrimination.

There is no question that we need to report on these crimes. In recent years, we have witnessed with growing concern a number of cases involving the desecration of Jewish cemeteries in the Netherlands, Hungary, Russia, Poland, France, Germany, Georgia, Moldova, and Argentina. This legislation is even more important and timely given the rise in anti-Semitism across Europe. In just the past few weeks, large-scale anti-Semitic protests have taken place in major cities across Europe. In this year's European Union elections, extremist parties espousing anti-Semitic platforms have made alarming progress. And in Hungary and Greece, extremist parliamentary parties associated with street militias have been successful in elections.

I have served on the Helsinki Commission for nearly 20 years. During my tenure, I have worked tirelessly to combat anti-Semitism and religious discrimination. Ensuring that religiously motivated cemetery desecration is reported is the first important step to combating this serious crime.

I thank Senator RISCH for his leadership on this issue. I also thank Senators MENENDEZ and CORKER for taking up H.R. 4028 and moving it quickly through the Senate Foreign Relations

Committee. Finally, I thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle supporting this bill and for helping to recognize the desecration of cemeteries as a violation of the right to religious freedom.

REMEMBERING JEFFREY B. WESTERFIELD

Mr. DONNELLY. Mr. President, today I rise to recognize and honor the extraordinary service and ultimate sacrifice of Gary, IN police department officer Jeffrey B. Westerfield. Dedicated, loyal, and above all compassionate to those in need, Officer Westerfield served with the Gary Police Department, GPD, for 19 years.

On Sunday, July 6, 2014, Officer Westerfield was found shot and unresponsive in his patrol car. Sadly, despite the best efforts of his fellow officers, EMTs, and medical personnel, Officer Westerfield, 47, succumbed to his wounds.

A native of Owensboro, KY, Officer Westerfield joined the U.S. Army at the age of 18. Jeffrey was stationed in Georgia for basic training, where he earned the nickname ''Rambo'' after sustaining a leg injury and surviving alone in the wilderness for 2 days during a training maneuver.

After being honorably discharged from the U.S. Army, Jeffrey began his career in law enforcement. In August 1995, Jeffrey fulfilled his dream when he was sworn in as an officer with the Gary Police Department. Officer Westerfield served in various capacities during his career with the GPD, including with the patrol division, traffic division, K–9 handler, and as a field training officer.

Known for his quiet demeanor, Officer Westerfield was a man of few words and genuine in his actions. ''He was very soft-spoken. He was like a huge teddy bear. [H]e was able to actually go to any situation, and calm the situation down immediately, just by his presence and his voice,'' said Gary deputy police chief Gary McKinley.

Officer Westerfield is survived and deeply missed by his fiancée Denise Cather, and his five children: Allie, Katie, Cheyenne, Rachel and Brady.

Officer Westerfield loved his work, and he gave his life to serve and protect the citizens of Gary. He was a quintessential Hoosier and a true American hero. Let us always remember and treasure the memory of this stalwart, brave man and honor him for his selfless commitment to serving his fellow citizens. My thoughts and prayers, along with those of fellow Hoosiers, are with Jeff's family and friends.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

STAFF SERGEANT BENJAMIN PRANGE

Ms. FISCHER. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the life and sacrifice of U.S. Army SSG Benjamin G. Prange, who was killed in action on July 24 while serving in Kandahar Province in Afghanistan. Staff Sergeant Prange ''Ben'' to his friends and family—was a soldier in the 4th Infantry Division at Fort Carson, CO. He repeatedly answered the call to deploy, serving three tours in Afghanistan in 6 years.

Ben was born and raised in rural Nebraska south of Lincoln, near Hickman and Roca. He was no stranger to adversity early in life, overcoming the deaths of both of his parents before he turned 16. He was raised by his grandparents, Kent and Carolyn Prange, who live just west of Roca, NE.

Ben attended Norris High School, where he met his future wife Elizabeth. Ben is remembered as a ''good, solid kid'' by his high school superintendent Roy Baker. Liz and Ben married a year after his graduation. They would have celebrated their 11th wedding anniversary on July 26. He enlisted in the Army in January 2007 to fulfill a dream of becoming an infantryman. Liz is left to care for their two sons, Corbin and Dillon, who I hope will understand in time the tremendous debt of gratitude this Nation owes to their father for selfless sacrifice to protect all that we hold dear.

Ben served our country with distinction. He was a four time recipient of the Army Commendation Medal and a recipient of the Combat Infantryman Badge for service under direct enemy fire. He was also awarded an Army Achievement Medal, two Good Conduct Medals, a National Defense Service Medal, a Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, an Overseas Service Ribbon, and two NATO Medals, in addition to his Afghanistan Campaign Medal with three campaign stars for his tours of duty.

My thoughts and prayers remain with his family, friends, and his fellow soldiers who have lost a great father, soldier, and friend. His sacrifice will never be forgotten.

VICTIMS OF CHILD ABUSE ACT REAUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, I wish to speak on S. 1799, the Victims of Child Abuse Act Reauthorization Act of 2013, which recently passed the House of Representatives and is awaiting the President's signature. In addition to the bill's support for Child Advocacy Centers, it contains an important provision that bears mentioning. S. 1799 makes Congress' intent clear that money from the Crime Victims Fund should only be used to assist victims of crime. Since the funds for the Crime Victims Fund are derived from fines collected from those convicted of Federal crimes rather than tax revenue, Congress directed the funds to only be used for crime victims. I offered the provision clarifying this intent as an amendment to the Justice For All Act, and it was accepted unanimously by the Senate Judiciary Committee. I am pleased the sponsors of S. 1799 agreed to include it at my request.

Crime victims can face a confusing and sometimes overwhelming system, and so it is important for someone to explain their rights and address other victim-centered issues. Encumbering victim advocates with other non-victim-related tasks could delay or prevent the resources needed to meet victims' needs such as assisting victims with impact statements and collecting restitution information and associated receipts. It could also delay or prevent ongoing safety assessments for the victim. Victim specialists, also referred to as victim advocates, along with their supervisors, victim witness coordinators, should be improving services for the benefit of crime victims and not tasked with other duties, such as arranging travel for witnesses.

My amendment makes clear it is Congress' intent that the funds authorized for victims services are limited to those dedicated to victims services and their direct support staff. This will ensure that that none of the funds available is used for purposes that do not benefit crime victims.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

CONGRATULATING PATRICIA ZULKOSKY

• Mr. BEGICH. Mr. President, I wish to recognize Patricia Zulkosky for her outstanding years of service to the State of Alaska and congratulate her on the occasion of her retirement from the Department of Juvenile Justice.

Born into and raised by a large Polish family in northern Minnesota, Patricia moved to Alaska in 1978, making her home in the western tundra community of Bethel. After quickly falling in love with the Yup'ik Eskimo and rural Alaska lifestyle, she took to subsistence fishing and gathering. Patricia built lifelong friendships in Alaska. After 6 years, she began her family by welcoming the arrival of her first and only daughter, Tiffany.

Patricia started working for the State of Alaska in 1985 as a clerk typist for Alaska Public Health Nursing, but it wasn't until Patricia was hired by the Department of Juvenile Justice in December 1988 that she would come to know her passion for working with troubled youth and the families of rural Alaska. Hired as a youth counselor, Patricia's work ethic, commitment, and enthusiasm would quickly help her move up in the ranks. Not letting life get in the way, Patricia pursued her bachelor's degree in social work while being a single mom of a young daughter and working several other jobs to make ends meet.

After graduating in 1996, she returned to Alaska fulltime where she would hold supervisory positions before becoming the Bethel Youth Facility superintendent. Under her leadership as superintendent, the Bethel Youth Facility has become an exemplary facility in Alaska for utilizing subsistence

ways of life as a form of treatment. They have successfully hosted a community-based Cultural Heritage Week and begun to undergo a long-planned expansion. Patricia's love of community, culture, and hard work has resulted in a public service career that exemplifies the Alaska and American dream.

I would like to extend my deepest appreciation to Patricia for her many years of service to the people she has come to call family. I wish the absolute best for her and her family as they begin this next stage in their lives.●

RECOGNIZING MINNESOTA POLICE OFFICERS

● Mr. FRANKEN. Mr. President, the Minnesota Police and Peace Officers Association, the largest association representing Minnesota's rank-and-file police officers, recently met for its annual conference in Alexandria, MN.

During that conference, MPPOA recognized several outstanding police officers: Sergeant Eric Kilian of the Hutchinson Police Department was named Police Officer of the Year, and Officer Mark Blumberg of the St. Paul Police Department and Officer Brian Hasselman of the Burnsville Police Department received Honorable Mentions. In addition, the Minnesota Association of Women Police, a wonderful organization that trains women police officers and promotes professionalism in law enforcement, recently honored Detective Alesia Metry of the Maplewood Police Department as Officer of the Year at its annual conference in Duluth.

I join MPPOA and MAWP in recognizing these brave public servants, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank both organizations and their members for the work they do every single day to keep our communities safe.●

CONGRATULATING JOHN STROUD

● Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, I wish to congratulate Commander John W. Stroud from Hawthorne, NV, on being named the National Commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States for 2015. I am proud to honor a Nevadan who has dedicated his life to serving our country and is committed to ensuring that our Nation's heroes receive the care that they deserve.

As a member of the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs, I recognize the important role the Veterans of Foreign Wars plays for combat veterans and military servicemembers from the Active, Guard, and Reserve forces. This distinguished national group of veterans has been a constant influence, furthering the voice of all of our Nation's heroes. On July 23, 2014, at the 115th National Convention, John Stroud was elected as VFW national commander. This is the second time in VFW history that a Nevadan has been elected commander. John has served the VFW in many leadership positions, and I have no doubt that he will work tirelessly in his new position as commander towards the VFW's mission to ensure that veterans are respected for their service, always receive their earned entitlements, and are recognized for the sacrifices they and their loved ones have made on behalf of this great country.

Graduating from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University with a bchelor of science degree in professional aeronautics, Commander Stroud decided to serve his Nation by joining the U.S. Air Force, where he went on to enjoy a distinguished career. Upon joining the Air Force, he was sent overseas for a tour in Korea with the 51st Fighter Wing at Osan Air Base as a flight operations superintendent. For his service, he was awarded four Meritorious Service Medals, three Air Force Commendation Medals, three Air Force Achievement Medals, the Korea Defense Service Medal, and the National Defense Service Medal. Commander Stroud's accomplishments extend far beyond his numerous commendations; he has also been recognized for his service to the community. He dedicates much of his time as a member of many volunteer organizations, like the American Legion and the Elks, and is a Life Member of the Disabled American Veterans, the Military Order of the Cootie, and the VFW National Home for Children.

I want to extend my deepest gratitude to Commander Stroud for his courageous contributions to the United States of America and to freedom-loving nations around the world. His service to his country and his bravery and dedication earn him a place among the outstanding men and women who have valiantly defended our Nation. As a member of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, I recognize that Congress has a responsibility not only to honor these brave individuals who serve our Nation but also to ensure they are cared for when they return home. I remain committed to upholding this promise for our veterans and servicemembers in Nevada and throughout the Nation.

I am both humbled and honored by Commander Stroud's service and am proud to call him a fellow Nevadan. Today, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Commander Stroud for all of his accomplishments and wish him well in all of his future endeavors.●

RECOGNIZING EDIE JOHNSTON AND ELDERTIDE LLC

● Mr. KING. Mr. President, I wish to commend Edie Johnston and her company, Eldertide LLC, for being named a 2014 Small Business Administration Tibbetts Award recipient. Located in Dresden, ME, Eldertide harvests and produces elderberries for medicinal purposes. Along with Eldertides sister company, Maine Medicinals, the business creates various herbal supplements with the elderberry product. Fueled by the belief that natural, native elderberries are nutritionally valuable, Eldertide has successfully marketed and sold their Maine-made supplements nationwide and around the world.

With just two employees and 6 years of business experience, the company is expanding vastly. Their antioxidant-rich elderberry juice concentrate is now being distributed nationally and internationally. Maine Medicinals, which serves as the retail branch of the company, recently reached an agreement with Whole Foods to sell their supplements.

Eldertide and Maine Medicinals not only represent a successful entrepreneurial spirit, but they also strive to impact Maine, the United States, and the world with an emphasis on innovation and education. The company has contributed to two university research initiatives through the University of Southern Maine and the University of Maine-Orono and has also engaged Kennebec Valley Community College students in valuable research to examine the health effects of phytochemicals from whole foods such as elderberries. Specifically, this research has examined the impact of elderberry juice on chronic diseases such as type 2 diabetes.

In addition, Mrs. Johnston founded the Elderberry School, an institution where family farmers interested in the science and business of herbal supplements can learn the process that has propelled Eldertide to where it is today. Some recent graduates have even gone on to own small businesses dedicated to the same core principles that Eldertide espouses.

We have many great small businesses in Maine, and 2014 Tibbetts Award recipient Mrs. Edie Johnston and Eldertide LLC is certainly one of them. Eldertide and its sister company Maine Medicinals represent the innovative, entrepreneurial spirit that defines the State of Maine. I am proud to join in recognizing their creativity and dedication to larger social and economic goals, and I expect they will continue to impress us—both in Maine and around the world with their superb nutraceuticals.●

REMEMBERING LIEUTENANT GENERAL MARC C. REYNOLDS

● Mr. LEE. Mr. President, On July 21, 2014, America lost one of her finest veterans. Lt. Gen. Marc C. Reynolds, U.S. Air Force, Retired, passed away with his family by his side after a life full of tremendous achievements and honors. I share a few of those achievements from his own recollections and from the recollections of those who knew him.

General Reynolds was not always a Utahn, although we have proudly claimed him as one for decades. He was born in Chamberlain, SD in 1928 to Morris and Ione Reynolds. He grew up during the Second World War, a time—

as we sometimes forget—of tremendous sacrifice for our entire Nation. He observed that this experience shaped his entire life.

He graduated from Chamberlain High School in 1946 and subsequently moved to Colorado, where he attended the University of Denver. In 1950, the year after his graduation, North Korean forces invaded South Korea. Within 24 hours of hearing the news, Marc went to the Air Force recruitment office in downtown Denver and signed up for the aviation cadet program. He trained at Perrin and Vance Air Force bases and graduated from pilot training as a second lieutenant. He subsequently attended jet interceptor training at Moody and Tyndall Air Force bases.

All of General Reynolds' moving and training was part of the American Defense Command's initiative to build forces in response to the ever-growing threat of tyranny and oppression from the Soviet Union. In 1952, he was assigned to the 83rd Fighter-Interceptor Squadron and Hamilton Air Force Base and moved with the squadron to Paine Air Force Base.

In 1953, near the end of the Korean war, he was transferred to Okinawa, where he flew F–94Bs on fighter-interceptor missions. After the war was over, he was assigned to the 437th Fighter-Interceptor Squadron as the tactical flight commander out of Otis Air Force Base. He later became a maintenance officer with the 602nd Consolidated Maintenance Squadron, also at Otis.

General Reynolds then transitioned to reconnaissance, joining the 19th Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron in Europe as flight commander. He served at various posts around the world and completed Air Command and Staff College in 1966.

During this time, war was being waged in Indochina and a proxy war between the United States and the Soviet and Chinese Communist regimes was beginning to form. General Reynolds was assigned to the 460th Tactical Reconnaissance Wing at Tan Son Nhut Air Base near Saigon in South Vietnam. He arrived on December 7, 1966. In reference to the anniversary of Pearl Harbor, he occasionally joked that it was ''a good day to go to war.''

General Reynolds' achievements and endurance during this time are remarkable. Throughout his 10-month deployment to Vietnam, he flew 230 combat missions—a majority being flown at night. He also flew many missions over North Vietnam, which was heavily defended by Viet Cong radar, antiaircraft guns, and surface-to-air missiles. Flying 10 of these missions up north would merit month off of the year-long deployment.

In an interview with KUED, he recalled his first mission in Vietnam:

I had one of these ten-mile squares that was probably 80 or 90 miles south of Saigon, so it was deep down in the south. It's flat down there with no mountains, so they put the starter guys down there, where they won't run into a mountain. I had an experienced navigator, but it was my first mission. We went down there, and we found the target area. We started running up and down these preplanned lines, and I noticed on the third line what I'd call—well, I'd seen a little bit of flak in my life, but this was obviously a .50 caliber or 20 millimeter gun. I'd see these tracers go over my head. So I did . . . three of these lines, and of course, the backseater's got his head buried in the scope, and he's concentrating seriously on keeping the airplane in the right place in the target area. When I got the end of a line, I came around and I said, ''Hey, why don't you pull your head out of the scope a minute and take a look at what's going on up here.'' And he used immediately, a long series of four letter words to describe how he felt about what was going on, but the last thing he said is like, ''Get outta here.'' I said, ''Well, he's been here longer than I have,'' so we went back to Saigon, and we talked about it. But that was my first mission.

He subsequently served in Japan as a deputy chief of the Reconnaissance Division and then as a commander of the 16th Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron. Upon his return to the United States in February 1971, he was assigned to Shaw Air Force Base, where he served as assistant deputy commander for operations in the 363rd Tactical Reconnaissance Wing. He graduated from the Naval War College in August 1973 and was subsequently assigned to Ogden Air Logistics Center, Hill Air Force Base, initially as the director of distribution and later as director of maintenance.

In July 1976 he transferred to McClellan Air Force Base, CA, as director of materiel management, Sacramento Air Logistics Center. In March 1978 he became the center's vice commander. General Reynolds moved to Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in May 1980 as vice commander of the Air Force Acquisition Logistics Division and took command of the division in October 1981. In July 1983 he was appointed commander of Ogden Air Logistics Center. General Reynolds subsequently received his third star and was assigned as the vice commander of the Air Force Logistics Command at Wright-Patterson, where he served until his retirement.

General Reynolds logged over 5,200 (with 475 combat) flying hours in his career—most of which were spent in physically-taxing small fighter and reconnaissance jets. His military decorations and awards include the Distinguished Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Distinguished Flying Cross, Meritorious Service Medal with oak leaf cluster, Air Medal with 15 oak leaf clusters and Air Force Commendation Medal with two oak leaf clusters.

In this storied 36-year career, General Reynolds lived all over the world, but, according to those who knew him, one of his favorite places on earth was the Hill Aerospace Museum near Ogden, UT. After he retired from the Air Force, he became a member of the Utah Aerospace Heritage Foundation board, on which he served for 26 years. He was a driving force behind making the Hill Aerospace Museum one of the premier aviation museums in the country. He was appointed chairman of the board and served in that position for more than 20 years. General Reynolds' work in preserving Air Force history was awe-inspiring and will positively affect many generations to come.

Those who worked with General Reynolds describe his conduct and character as that of a perfect gentleman. His smile was infectious and he always treated those around him with tremendous respect and dignity. I have been told that he lifted everyone around him and was committed to excellence in all that he did.

I offer my deepest sympathies to his dear wife Ellie and to his children: Pam, Barbara, Scott, Lisa, Kristan, and Karine, and to his 15 grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren. I was told that the date on which he passed turned out to be a bit ironic. This great patriot-statesman had a weakness, which I am sure many of us share, in that he had trouble remembering his and Ellie's anniversary date. However, in what seems to be coincidence, may have been an act of providence: Marc was able to show his love on this last mortal anniversary by his determination to hold on just one-half hour into the day of their 30th anniversary before passing. Whatever the case may be, the timing offers a sweet thought.

I praise Lieutenant General Reynolds' life as an example to all Americans. I pray that we constantly remember those who serve, who have served, and who have given all that we might maintain our rights and enjoy the blessings of liberty. As citizens of a nation made great by those who serve her, like Lieutenant General Reynolds, it is our duty to honor those who have gone before by living our lives with excellence today.●

RECOGNIZING rosieMADE LLC

● Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, it is imperative to distinguish the originality of women-owned small business owners who take a leap of faith and invest in an idea that not only awards their own creativity but also inspires other women throughout the Nation. Across the United States, women-owned companies employ 7.9 million people, generate $1.4 trillion in sales, and are the fastest growing segment in our economy. Today, I am proud to recognize rosieMADE of Meridian, ID, a women-owned small business committed to selling products made in the U.S.A. by women.

In November 2012, Alicia Vanderschuere launched rosieMADE, an online marketplace that features vendors offering quality products made in the U.S.A. by women-friendly companies. After 15 years of experience in

retail and corporate merchandising, Alicia Vanderschuere decided to follow her dreams in pursuit of owning her own business and reached out to the Idaho Women's Business Center, WBC, to help get started. The Small Business Administration's WBCs represent a nationwide network of educational centers designed to assist women entrepreneurs in starting and growing their own businesses.

Inspired by the iconic champion for women Rosie the Riveter, rosieMADE aims to increase the number of women engaged in entrepreneurship while supporting homegrown products. In addition, rosieMADE offers services beyond that of selling products. The business promotes business prosperity through opportunities including training and information sessions on leadership, balancing home and work life, and various elements of small business. The roiseMADE team strives to inspire women to pursue their own business ventures by featuring women-owned business leaders and sharing their stories. As a resource for women nationwide, women who have successfully overcome obstacles in the business environment are honored regularly in the ''Real Life Rosies'' section of the Web site. These success stories are aimed to encourage other women to take a risk and start their own businesses.

Within a few short years, Alicia Vanderschuere and rosieMADE have already achieved an outstanding reputation for quality, as well as that of a unique Idaho gem. It is not surprising that in 2013 Alicia Vanderschuere was featured on the cover of the Idaho Women's Journal and is currently listed as one of the Idaho Women's Journal's ''Who's Who of Idaho Women.'' In addition, in February 2014 Alicia Vanderschuere received the Women of the Year Award from the Idaho Business Review. With rosieMADE's commitment to female small business owners, I hope they will inspire more women throughout the Nation to become entrepreneurs.

I would like to recognize rosieMADE on their mission to promote products made by women in the U.S.A. and their willingness to take a risk in inspiring future entrepreneurs. I congratulate the entire rosieMADE team and wish them great success in the future.●

TRIBUTE TO SCOTT AND JAMIE NAGY

● Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I wish to recognize Scott and Jamie Nagy of Brookings, SD, as my nominees for the 2014 Angels in Adoption Award. Since 1999, the Angels in Adoption program, through the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institution, has honored more than 2,000 individuals, couples, and organizations nationwide for their work in providing children with loving, stable homes.

In 2006, after being married 14 years, Scott and Jamie, along with their four children Nick, Tyler, TJ, and Natalie, adopted their daughter Naika from Haiti when she was 2½ years old. Jamie, who was adopted as an infant, found the process helped her better understand her own adoption story. Through their journey with Naika, the Nagys decided to help others understand adoption and the needs of children around the world. In 2009, Scott was one of the first coaches in the country to coach barefoot at a basketball game to help raise awareness for Samaritan's Feet, an organization that provides shoes to orphans and impoverished children in developing countries. Scott cites his interest in helping Naika's home country as a source of inspiration for participation in the program.

Scott and Jamie's story demonstrates how parents and families can foster patience, grace, and understanding as they grow their families and open their hearts and homes. Their desire to help others understand the effect of overwhelming change on both the child and the family and learn how to overcome those challenges speaks to their strength of character. I commend their efforts to assist other families navigate the adoption process and raise awareness of the needs of children around the world. It brings me great pride to honor South Dakotans Scott and Jamie Nagy, my nominees for the 2014 Angels in Adoption Award.●

TRIBUTE TO JOSH CURRY

● Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I wish to recognize Josh Curry, an intern in my Washington, DC office for all of the hard work he has done for me, my staff, and the State of South Dakota.

Josh is a graduate of Elk Point-Jefferson High School in Elk Point, SD. Currently, Josh is attending Augustana College, where he is majoring in business administration and government. Josh is a dedicated worker who has been committed to getting the most out of his experience.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Josh Curry for all of the fine work he has done and wish him continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO JASON HELLAND

● Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I wish to recognize Jason Helland, an intern in my Sioux Falls, SD, office for all of the hard work he has done for me, my staff, and the State of South Dakota over the past several weeks.

Jason is a graduate of Lincoln High School in Sioux Falls, SD and Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, MN. Currently, he is attending the University of Denver Strum College of Law. He is a hard worker who has been dedicated to getting the most out of his internship experience.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Jason for all of the fine work he has done and wish him continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO WILLIAM HYDE

● Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, today I recognize William Hyde, a legal fellow in my Washington, DC office for all of the hard work he has done for me, my staff, and the State of South Dakota.

After graduating from the University of San Francisco in 2002, William joined the U.S. Army. He was stationed abroad multiple times and served a combat tour in Iraq. In 2009 William received his M.A. from Stanford University, earning summa cum laude distinction. Currently, William is attending Harvard Law School in Cambridge, MA and is serving as a Blackstone legal fellow through the Alliance Defending Freedom. William and his wife, Celeste, are the proud parents of a son William.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to William for his service to our country and the work he has done on behalf of the people of South Dakota. Bill is a consummate professional with excellent legal research, writing, and analytical skills. I wish him continued success in the years to come as he embarks on his legal career.●

TRIBUTE TO KYLEE KETTERING

● Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I recognize Kylee Kettering, an intern in my Washington, DC office for all of the hard work she has done for me, my staff, and the State of South Dakota.

Kylee is a graduate of Mobridge High School in Mobridge, SD. Currently, Kylee is attending Augustana College, where she is majoring in government and communications. Kylee is a dedicated worker who has been committed to getting the most out of her experience.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Kylee Kettering for all of the fine work she has done and wish her continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO JOHN KLUMPP

● Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I wish to recognize John Klumpp, an intern in my Sioux Falls, SD, office for all of the hard work he has done for me, my staff, and the State of South Dakota over the past several weeks.

John is a graduate of Brandon Valley High School in Brandon, SD. Currently, he is attending Iowa State University and majoring in finance. He is a hard worker who has been dedicated to getting the most out of his internship experience.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to John for all of the fine work he has done and wish him continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO RUTH LATTERELL

● Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I wish to recognize Ruth Latterell, an intern in my Aberdeen, SD office for all of the

hard work she has done for me, my staff, and the state of South Dakota over the past several months.

Ruth is a native of Aberdeen and a graduate of Aberdeen Christian School. Currently, she is attending South Dakota State University, where she is pursuing a degree in human development and family sciences. She is a very hard worker who has been dedicated to getting the most out of her internship experience.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Ruth for all of the fine work she has done and wish her continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO SCOTT MAH

● Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I recognize Scott Mah, an intern in my Washington, DC office for all of the hard work he has done for me, my staff, and the State of South Dakota.

Scott is a graduate of Sioux Falls Christian High School in Sioux Falls, SD. Currently, Scott is attending Northwestern University, where he is majoring in economics. Scott is a dedicated worker who has been committed to getting the most out of his experience.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Scott Mah for all of the fine work he has done and wish him continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO SAM REULAND

● Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I recognize Sam Reuland, an intern in my Washington, DC office for all of the hard work he has done for me, my staff, and the State of South Dakota.

Sam is a graduate of White Lake High School in White Lake, SD. Currently, Sam is attending University of South Dakota, where he is majoring in history and political science. Sam is a dedicated worker who has been committed to getting the most out of his experience.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Sam Reuland for all of the fine work he has done and wish him continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO KATHERINE VEENIS

● Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I recognize Katherine Veenis, an intern in my Washington, DC office for all of the hard work she has done for me, my staff, and the State of South Dakota.

Katherine is a graduate of Lincoln High School in Sioux Falls, SD. Currently, Katherine is attending Texas Christian University, where she is majoring in political science. Katherine is a dedicated worker who has been committed to getting the most out of her experience.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Katherine Veenis for all of the fine work she has done and wish her continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO KRISTIN WILEMAN

● Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I wish to recognize Kristin Wileman, an intern in my Aberdeen, SD office for all of the hard work she has done for me, my staff, and the state of South Dakota over the past several months.

Kristin is a native of Aberdeen and a graduate of Aberdeen Central High School. Currently, she is attending North Central University, where she is pursuing a degree in journalism communications. She is a very hard worker who has been dedicated to getting the most out of her internship experience.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Kristin for all of the fine work she has done and wish her continued success in the years to come.●

PITTOCK MANSION CENTENNIAL

● Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I would like to honor the centennial of a unique historical landmark in my home State. The Pittock Mansion in Portland, OR, educates Oregonians and tourists from around the world about the city's history and the legacy of the family who once owned it.

When Henry Pittock completed construction of the large 46-room house in the West Hills of Portland in 1914, there was nothing like it in the region—and arguably, there still isn't. Henry came to Oregon by covered wagon with little in his pocket but grew to become a respected local businessman and the owner of our State newspaper, the Oregonian. His wife Georgiana was a philanthropist who was known for serving the needs of the elderly, women and children, and for her famous rose garden. Georgiana often hosted garden parties where she would showcase her famous roses and is credited with kick-starting the first Portland Rose Society and the tradition of the Portland Rose Festival, which now draws thousands of people from around the world each summer.

When Henry and Georgiana built their mansion, they hired Oregon craftsman and artisans and used northwest materials, helping their community and contributing to the bourgeoning city in a variety of ways. They lived a long, happy life together and had 6 children and 18 grandchildren, including some who lived in the mansion up until it was put up for sale in 1958.

Today, the mansion serves as a historical museum. The interior of the house and the surrounding property are publicly owned and preserved by dedicated staff and volunteers. Tourists, locals, and schoolchildren are often seen wandering through the home and along the paths around the large property learning about the historic significance of the mansion and of Portland. The house represents an era of growth that was occurring throughout the Pacific Northwest at the time of its construction.

For its symbolism, history, and meaning, today we recognize the Pittock Mansion's Centennial Year. May it continue to serve as a place to learn and enjoy for many years to come.●

BENTON COUNTY FAIR AND RODEO ANNIVERSARY

● Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, this week is the opening of the 101st Benton County Fair and Rodeo. For more than a century, the citizens of Benton County, OR, have come together to show off the literal and metaphorical fruits of their yearlong labor, display their talents, and enjoy a few diversions.

The roots of the Benton County Fair actually run as far back as those of the State of Oregon. Just 7 months after Oregon achieved statehood, the Benton Agricultural Society began holding small fairs. In the early 1900s, Benton County had an outstanding showing at the Oregon State Fair, handily winning the State fair's blue ribbon for its display of produce five times—in 1907, 1908, 1910, 1911, and 1912. In 1912, J.F. Yates, the mayor of Corvallis, announced a public holiday to celebrate Benton County's outstanding showing at the Oregon State Fair. The following year, the county had its own celebration on the grounds of the Oregon Agricultural College, later to become Oregon State University. That year, the county brought out its finest produce, livestock, and technology, starting a tradition that will be continued this week.

The Benton County Fair and Rodeo found its current home in 1957, when the county purchased 20 acres of land for the fair in Corvallis. In 1958, the Future Farmers of America and 4–H joined the thriving county fair in its longstanding practice of showcasing the region's rich agricultural tradition. The fair has matured beyond its roots to include carnival festivities, rides, and concession stands in addition to live music. I know that folks in Benton County will enjoy a wonderful week as they take in the region's storied culture.

I would like to recognize Betty Malone, the Benton County Fair and Rodeo's committee chair, for proposing a quilt to be sewn to commemorate the fair's centennial last year, an important date in the county's history. I would also like to congratulate Dawn Wunder and Donna Johnson for leading the charge to make Betty's proposal a reality. The centennial quilt will be presented to the region's residents in a ceremony today. Dozens of community members decorated the patches that make up the quilt, a collective celebration of the county's history. It is a fitting tribute to folks in Benton County who for more than 100 years have graced the region with their strong spirit and hard work.

It is my pleasure to submit this statement in recognition of the Benton County Fair and Rodeo's 101st year. I look forward to the Fair's continued success for many more years.●

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

At 12:49 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker had signed the following enrolled bill:

S. 1799. An act to reauthorize subtitle A of the Victims of Child Abuse Act of 1990.

At 1:21 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 3896. An act to amend the Longshore and Harbor Workers' Compensation Act to provide a definition of recreational vessel for purposes of such Act.

H.R. 4315. An act to amend the Endangered Species Act of 1973 to require publication on the Internet of the basis for determinations that species are endangered species or threatened species, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4626. An act to ensure access to certain information for financial services industry regulators, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4709. An act to improve enforcement efforts related to prescription drug diversion and abuse, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4809. An act to reauthorize the Defense Production Act, to improve the Defense Production Act Committee, and for other purposes.

H.R. 5062. An act to amend the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 to specify that privilege and confidentiality are maintained when information is shared by certain nondepository covered persons with Federal and State financial regulators, and for other purposes.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

At 3:17 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker had signed the following enrolled bill:

H.R. 4028. An act to amend the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 to include the desecration of cemeteries among the many forms of violations of the right to religious freedom.

The enrolled bill was subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

At 5:28 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House agreed to the following concurrent resolutions, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 107. Concurrent resolution denouncing the use of civilians as human shields by Hamas and other terrorist organizations in violation of international humanitarian law.

H. Con. Res. 111. Concurrent resolution directing the Clerk of the House of Representatives to make certain corrections in the enrollment of the bill H.R. 3230.

The message also announced that the House agrees to the report of the committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 3230) to improve the access of veterans to medical services from the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 4315. An act to amend the Endangered Species Act of 1973 to require publication on the Internet of the basis for determinations that species are endangered species or threatened species, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

H.R. 4709. An act to improve enforcement efforts related to prescription drug diversion and abuse, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

H.R. 5062. An act to amend the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 to specify that privilege and confidentiality are maintained when information is shared by certain nondepository covered persons with Federal and State financial regulators, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

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

S. 2685. A bill to reform the authorities of the Federal Government to require the production of certain business records, conduct electronic surveillance, use pen registers and trap and trace devices, and use other forms of information gathering for foreign intelligence, counterterrorism, and criminal purposes, and for other purposes.

The following bill was read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and placed on the calendar:

H.R. 4626. An act to ensure access to certain information for financial services industry regulators, and for other purposes.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bill was read the first time:

S. 2709. A bill to extend and reauthorize the Export-Import Bank of the United States, and for other purposes.

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–6638. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Department of Defense (DoD) intending to open the skill identifier associated with attending the Bradley Infantry Fighting Vehicle Commander's Course to women; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–6639. A communication from the Director of Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement: Domestically Nonavailable Articles-Elimination of DoD–Unique List'' ((RIN0750–AI11) (DFARS Case 2013–D020)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2014; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–6640. A communication from the Director of Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement: Use of Military Construction Funds in Countries Bordering the Arabian Sea'' ((RIN0750–AI33) (DFARS Case 2014–D016)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2014; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–6641. A communication from the Director of Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement: Application of Certain Clauses to Acquisitions of Commercial Items'' ((RIN0750–AI13) (DFARS Case 2013–D035)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2014; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC–6642. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency that was declared in Executive Order 12947 with respect to terrorists who threaten to disrupt the Middle East peace process; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–6643. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Addition of Certain Persons to the Entity List'' (RIN0694–AG16) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–6644. A communication from the Associate General Counsel for Legislation and Regulations, Office of the Secretary, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Removal of HOPE for Homeowners Program Regulations'' (RIN2501–AD68) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–6645. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, Office of Protected Resources, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Endangered and Threatened Species: Designation of a Nonessential Experimental Population of Upper Columbia River Spring-run Chinook Salmon in the Okanogan River Subbasin, Washington, and Protective Regulations'' (RIN0648–BD51) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–6646. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Basis of Indebtedness of S Corporations to their Shareholders'' ((RIN1545–BG51) (TD 9682)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 24, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–6647. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the

report of a rule entitled ''Partnerships; Start-up Expenditures; Organization and Syndication Fees'' ((RIN1545–BL06) (TD 9681)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 24, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–6648. A communication from the Senior Procurement Executive, Office of Acquisition Policy, General Services Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Federal Acquisition Regulation: Equal Employment and Affirmative Action for Veterans and Individuals with Disabilities'' (RIN9000–AM76) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2014; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–6649. A communication from the Senior Procurement Executive, Office of Acquisition Policy, General Services Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Federal Acquisition Regulation; Small Business Protests and Appeals'' (RIN9000–AM46) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2014; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–6650. A communication from the General Counsel, Peace Corps, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Deputy Director of the Peace Corps, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2014; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–6651. A communication from the Secretary of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the export to the People's Republic of China of items not detrimental to the U.S. space launch industry; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–6652. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to sections 36(c) and 36(d) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 14–052); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–6653. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; 2014 Commercial Accountability Measure and Closure for Deep-Water Complex in the South Atlantic Region'' (RIN0648–XD351) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–6654. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Snapper-Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic; 2014 Commercial Accountability Measure and Closure for the South Atlantic Lesser Amberjack, Almaco Jack, and Banded Rudderfish Complex'' (RIN0648–XD350) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–6655. A communication from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Yellowfin Sole for the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Trawl Limited Access Sector in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area'' (RIN0648–XD348) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–6656. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; 'Other Flatfish' in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area'' (RIN0648–XD372) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–6657. A communication from the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Recreational Management Measures for the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Fisheries; Fishing Year 2014'' (RIN0648–BE16) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–6658. A communication from the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act Provisions; Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Northeast Multispecies Fishery; Unused Catch Carryover; Emergency Action'' (RIN0648–BE19) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–6659. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Ocean Perch in the Western Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska'' (RIN0648–XD358) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–6660. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Dusty Rockfish in the Western Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska'' (RIN0648–XD360) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–6661. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Northern Rockfish in the Western Regulatory Area of the Gulf of Alaska'' (RIN0648–XD359) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 28, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC–6662. A communication from the Chair of the Board of Governors, Federal Reserve System, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''Annual Report to Congress on the Presidential $1 Coin Program''; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–6663. A communication from the Chief, Policy and Directives Management Division, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Addresses of Headquarters Offices'' (RIN1018–BA52) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 29, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–6664. A communication from the Chief of the Endangered Species Listing Branch, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Endangered Species Status for the Zuni Bluehead Sucker'' (RIN1018–AY25) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 29, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–6665. A communication from the Chief of the Endangered Species Listing Branch, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Revision of Critical Habitat for Salt Creek Tiger Beetle'' (RIN1018–AY56) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 29, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–6666. A communication from the Chief of the Branch of Listing, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Designation of Critical Habitat for the Northwest Atlantic Ocean Distinct Population Segment of the Loggerhead Sea Turtle'' (RIN1018–AY71) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 29, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–6667. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Amendments to Compliance Certification Content Requirements for State and Federal Operating Permits Programs'' ((RIN2060–AQ71) (FRL No. 9913–88–OAR)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 24, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–6668. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Protection of Stratospheric Ozone: the 2014 and 2015 Critical Use Exemption from the Phaseout of Methyl Bromide'' ((RIN2060–AR80) (FRL No. 9911–99–OAR) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 24, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–6669. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Maine; Nitrogen Oxides Exemption Request'' (A–1–FRL–9913–56–OAR) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 24, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–6670. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Texas; Control of Air Pollution from Nitrogen Compounds'' (FRL No. 9914–44–Region 6) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 24, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–6671. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Money Market Funds and the Wash Sale Rules'' (Rev. Proc. 2014–45) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 29, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–6672. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Branded Prescription Drug Fee; Procedural and Administrative Guidance'' (Notice 2014–42) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 29, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–6673. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Branded Prescription Drug Fee'' ((RIN1545–BJ39) (TD 9684)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 29, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–6674. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Revenue Procedure Guidance on Indexing Under Section 36B and Section 5000A'' (Rev. Proc. 2014–37) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 29, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–6675. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Revenue Procedure Providing Guidance To Compute the Section 162(I) Deduction with Section 36B Credit'' (Rev. Proc. 2014–41) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 29, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–6676. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Section 5000A National Average Premium for a Bronze Level of Coverage'' (Rev. Proc. 2014–46) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 29, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–6677. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''IRS Truncated Taxpayer Identification Numbers'' ((RIN1545–BJ16) (TD 9675)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 29, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–6678. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Information Reporting by Passport Applicants'' ((RIN1545–AJ93) (TD 9679)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 29, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–6679. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Applicable Federal Rates—August 2014'' (Rev. Rul. 2014–19) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 29, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–6680. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification, of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country (OSS–2014–1057); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–6681. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification, of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country (OSS–2014–1056); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–6682. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a section of the Arms Export Control Act (RSAT 14–3942); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC–6683. A communication from the Deputy Inspector General, Office of Inspector General, Department of the Interior transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department of the Interior's Semiannual Report of the Inspector General for the period from October 1, 2013 through March 31, 2014; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–6684. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20–378, ''Residential Real Property Equity and Transparency Amendment Act of 2014''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–6685. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20–376, ''Fiscal Year 2014 Revised Budget Request Temporary Adjustment Act of 2014''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. LEAHY, from the Committee on the Judiciary:

Report to accompany S.J. Res. 19, A joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States relating to contributions and expenditures intended to affect elections (Rept. No. 113–223).

By Mr. TESTER, from the Committee on Indian Affairs, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 2132. A bill to amend the Indian Tribal Energy Development and Self-Determination Act of 2005, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 113–224).

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. LEVIN for the Committee on Armed Services.

*Jessie Hill Roberson, of Alabama, to be a Member of the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board for a term expiring October 18, 2018.

*Daniel J. Santos, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board for a term expiring October 18, 2017.

Air Force nomination of Col. Clarence Ervin, to be Brigadier General.

Army nomination of Brig. Gen. Charles L. Gable, to be Major General.

Army nomination of Brig. Gen. Stephen L. Danner, to be Major General.

Army nominations beginning with Brigadier General Patricia M. Anslow and ending with Brigadier General David C. Wood, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014. (minus 1 nominee: Brigadier General Matthew P. Beevers)

Army nomination of Brig. Gen. Mark W. Palzer, to be Major General.

Army nominations beginning with Brig. Gen. Neal G. Loidolt and ending with Col. Wallace N. Turner, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Army nomination of Col. Robert J. Ulses, to be Brigadier General.

Army nomination of Col. Timothy J. Sheriff, to be Brigadier General.

Army nomination of Col. Timothy S. Paul, to be Brigadier General.

Army nomination of Col. Glenn A. Goddard, to be Brigadier General.

Army nominations beginning with Colonel Gregrey C. Bacon and ending with Colonel David S. Werner, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Army nomination of Col. Robert J. Howell, Jr., to be Brigadier General.

Navy nomination of Rear Adm. (lh) Kerry M. Metz, to be Rear Admiral.

Navy nominations beginning with Capt. Gene F. Price and ending with Capt. Linnea J. Sommerweddington, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Navy nomination of Capt. Dawn E. Cutler, to be Rear Admiral (lower half).

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, for the Committee on Armed Services I report favorably the following nomination lists which were printed in the RECORDS on the dates indicated, and ask unanimous consent, to save the expense of reprinting on the Executive Calendar that these nominations lie at the Secretary's desk for the information of Senators.

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

Air Force nominations beginning with Jonathan Ackley and ending with Aaron Allen Wilson, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Air Force nominations beginning with Richard Edward Alford and ending with Dylan B. Williams, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Air Force nominations beginning with William J. Annexstad and ending with David J. Western, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Air Force nomination of Robert P. McCoy, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Air Force nominations beginning with Michael E. Coghlan and ending with Ajay K. Ojha, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 22, 2014.

Army nomination of Burton C. Glover, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Army nomination of Paul A. Thomas, to be Major.

Army nominations beginning with Aleksandr Baron and ending with Ryan D. Zimmerman, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Army nominations beginning with Carlo J. Alphonso and ending with Jordan E. Yokley, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Army nomination of Desiree S. Dirige, to be Major.

Army nomination of Nealanjon P. Das, to be Major.

Army nominations beginning with Yong K. Cho and ending with Thomas A. Starkoski, Jr., which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 22, 2014.

Navy nominations beginning with John I. Actkinson and ending with Robert E. Zubeck II, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Navy nominations beginning with Christopher W. Acor and ending with Richard P. Zabawa, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Navy nominations beginning with Mate W. Aerandir and ending with Jacquelinemar W. Wrona, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Navy nominations beginning with Christian G. Acord and ending with Brian P. Worden, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Navy nominations beginning with Aaron N. Aaron and ending with Chelsey L. Zwicker, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Navy nominations beginning with Brian F. Breshears and ending with David A. Ziemba, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Navy nominations beginning with Daniel J. Bradshaw and ending with Ross W. Peters, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Navy nominations beginning with Arlo K. Abrahamson and ending with Tiffani B. Walker, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Navy nominations beginning with James C. Bailey and ending with Amanda J. Wells, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Navy nominations beginning with Eric S. Kinzbrunner and ending with Eric M. Zack, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Navy nominations beginning with Jermaine A. Bailey and ending with Jeremiah J. Young, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Navy nominations beginning with Jemar R. Ballesteros and ending with Anne L. Zack, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Navy nomination of Christopher A. Cegielski, to be Captain.

Navy nominations beginning with Kevin C. Antonucci and ending with Joshua D. Weiss, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Navy nominations beginning with Ferdinand D. Abril and ending with Allen E. Willey, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Navy nominations beginning with Michael D. Amedick and ending with Dennis M. Wheeler, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Navy nominations beginning with Kerry E. Baker and ending with Michael D. Winn, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Navy nominations beginning with Kenneth R. Basford and ending with John P. Zalar, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Navy nominations beginning with Brian J. Ellis, Jr. and ending with Sylvaine W. Wong, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Navy nominations beginning with Kevin S. Bailey and ending with Theodor A. Zainal, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Navy nominations beginning with David L. Bell, Jr. and ending with Nathan J. Wonder, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Navy nominations beginning with Ruben D. Acosta and ending with David M. You, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on July 17, 2014.

Navy nomination of Adam J. Rains, to be Commander.

By Mrs. BOXER for the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

*Ann Elizabeth Dunkin, of California, to be an Assistant Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

*Manuel H. Ehrlich, Jr., of New Jersey, to be a Member of the Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board for a term of five years.

*Jane Toshiko Nishida, of Maryland, to be an Assistant Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

By Mr. CARPER for the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

*James C. Miller, III, of Virginia, to be a Governor of the United States Postal Service for the term expiring December 8, 2017.

*Stephen Crawford, of Maryland, to be a Governor of the United States Postal Service for the remainder of the term expiring December 8, 2015.

*David Michael Bennett, of North Carolina, to be a Governor of the United States Postal Service for a term expiring December 8, 2018.

*Victoria Reggie Kennedy, of Massachusetts, to be a Governor of the United States Postal Service for a term expiring December 8, 2016.

*Joseph L. Nimmich, of Maryland, to be Deputy Administrator, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security.

*Anne E. Rung, of Pennsylvania, to be Administrator for Federal Procurement Policy.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

(Nominations without an asterisk were reported with the recommendation that they be confirmed.)

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. CORNYN:

S. 2686. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to prevent the extension of the tax collection period merely because the taxpayer is a member of the Armed Forces who is hospitalized as a result of combat zone injuries; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Mr. REID, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. BROWN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. STABENOW, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. TESTER, Mr. WYDEN, Ms. WARREN, and Mr. BEGICH):

S. 2687. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to ensure that women members of the Armed Forces and their families have access to the contraception they need in order to promote the health and readiness of all members of the Armed Forces, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. THUNE (for himself, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. ISAKSON):

S. 2688. A bill to ensure labor organization transparency and accountability; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mrs. SHAHEEN):

S. 2689. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to specify coverage of continuous glucose monitoring devices, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Mr. HATCH, Mr. WALSH, and Mr. KIRK):

S. 2690. A bill to amend the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 to ensure that student data handled by private companies is protected, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. BENNET (for himself and Mr. HATCH):

S. 2691. A bill to encourage and support partnerships between the public and private sectors to improve our nation's social programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. MCCASKILL (for herself, Mr. HELLER, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. WARNER, Mr. RUBIO, Mrs. BOXER, and Mr. GRAHAM):

S. 2692. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 and the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act to combat campus sexual violence, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. CANTWELL (for herself, Mr. CARDIN, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. BALDWIN, and Mr. WALSH):

S. 2693. A bill to reauthorize the women's business center program of the Small Business Administration, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

By Mr. BROWN (for himself, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, and Ms. LANDRIEU):

S. 2694. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to extend the application of the Medicare payment rate floor to primary care services furnished under Medicaid and to apply the rate floor to additional providers of primary care services; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. BOXER:

S. 2695. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to require institutions of higher education to have an independent advocate for campus sexual assault prevention and response; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. KING (for himself and Mr. WARNER):

S. 2696. A bill to require the Federal Reserve to make certain changes to the small bank holding company policy statement on assessment of financial and managerial factors, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. KING (for himself and Mr. WARNER):

S. 2697. A bill to amend the Truth in Lending Act to clarify the application of the qualified mortgage rule to rural lenders, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. KING (for himself, Mr. WARNER, Mr. TESTER, and Mrs. FISCHER):

S. 2698. A bill to provide regulatory easement for lending institutions that enable a vibrant economy; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. KING (for himself and Mr. WARNER):

S. 2699. A bill to require the National Credit Union Administration to provide pass-through share insurance for the deposits or shares of any interest on lawyers trust accounts, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. PORTMAN (for himself and Mr. TESTER):

S. 2700. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to identify the persons who are eligible to request headstones or markers furnished by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. VITTER:

S. 2701. A bill to require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to address certain inconsistencies between the self-attested information provided by an applicant in enrolling in a health plan on an Exchange and being determined eligible for premium tax credits and cost-sharing reductions or in being determined to be eligible for enrollment in a State Medicaid plan or a State child health plan under the State Children's Health Insurance Program and the data received through the Federal Data Services Hub or from other data sources; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. VITTER:

S. 2702. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to require the social security number of the student and the employer identification number of the educational institution for purposes of education tax credits; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. BOXER (for herself and Ms. COLLINS):

S. 2703. A bill to establish eligibility, assignment, training, and certification requirements for sexual assault forensic examiners for the Armed Forces, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. LEVIN (for himself, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. REED):

S. 2704. A bill to prohibit the award of Federal Government contracts to inverted domestic corporations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. BEGICH:

S. 2705. A bill to establish, within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, an integrated and comprehensive ocean, coastal, Great Lakes, and atmospheric research and environmental information sharing program to support renewable energy, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. ENZI:

S. 2706. A bill to ensure that organizations with religious or moral convictions are allowed to continue to provide services for children; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MORAN:

S. 2707. A bill to provide for coordination between the TRICARE program and eligibility for making contributions to a health savings account; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. COATS (for himself and Mr. BLUNT):

S. 2708. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide equal access to declaratory judgments for organizations seeking tax-exempt status; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MANCHIN (for himself, Mr. KIRK, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. WARNER, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota, and Mr. KAINE):

S. 2709. A bill to extend and reauthorize the Export-Import Bank of the United States, and for other purposes; read the first time.

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself and Mr. THUNE):

S. 2710. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exempt private foundations from the tax on excess business holdings in the case of certain philanthropic enterprises which are independently supervised, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. DURBIN:

S. 2711. A bill to reauthorize the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. DURBIN:

S. 2712. A bill to amend section 455(m) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 in order to allow adjunct faculty members to qualify for public service loan forgiveness; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself and Mr. BEGICH):

S. 2713. A bill to provide for the conveyance of certain property to the Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corporation located in Bethel, Alaska; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. TOOMEY:

S. Res. 529. A resolution recognizing the 100th anniversary of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States and commending its members for their courage and sacrifice in service to the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. PORTMAN (for himself, Mr. ALEXANDER, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. BOOZMAN, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. ENZI, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. HELLER, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. JOHANNS, Mr. KIRK, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. LEE, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. MORAN, Mr. RISCH, Mr. JOHNSON of Wisconsin, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. SESSIONS, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. THUNE, Mr. WICKER, Mr. HATCH, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. VITTER, and Ms. AYOTTE):

S. Res. 530. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate on the current situation in Iraq and the urgent need to protect religious minorities from persecution from the Sunni Islamist insurgent and terrorist group the Islamic State, formerly known as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), as it expands its control over areas in northwestern Iraq; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 240

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the names of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) and the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) were added as cosponsors of S. 240, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to modify the per-fiscal year calculation of days of certain active duty or active service used to reduce the minimum age at which a member of a reserve component of the uniformed services may retire for non-regular service.

S. 392

At the request of Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 392, a bill to support and encourage the health and well-being of elementary school and secondary school students by enhancing school physical education and health education.

S. 489

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 489, a bill to amend the Tariff Act of 1930 to increase and adjust for inflation the maximum value of articles that may be imported duty-free by one person on one day, and for other purposes.

S. 569

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 569, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to count a period of receipt of outpatient observation services in a hospital toward satisfying the 3-day inpatient hospital requirement for coverage of skilled nursing facility services under Medicare.

S. 632

At the request of Mr. MCCAIN, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 632, a bill to amend the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 to repeal a duplicative program relating to inspection and grading of catfish.

S. 734

At the request of Mr. NELSON, the names of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) and the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) were added as cosponsors of S. 734, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to repeal the requirement for reduction of survivor annuities under the Survivor Benefit Plan by veterans' dependency and indemnity compensation.

S. 758

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 758, a bill to establish a comprehensive literacy program.

S. 933

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 933, a bill to amend title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to extend the authorization of the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Program through fiscal year 2018.

S. 1011

At the request of Mr. JOHANNS, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1011, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the centennial of Boys Town, and for other purposes.

S. 1040

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1040, a bill to provide for the

award of a gold medal on behalf of Congress to Jack Nicklaus, in recognition of his service to the Nation in promoting excellence, good sportsmanship, and philanthropy.

S. 1089

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1089, a bill to provide for a prescription drug take-back program for members of the Armed Forces and veterans, and for other purposes.

S. 1188

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1188, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the definition of full-time employee for purposes of the individual mandate in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

S. 1249

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1249, a bill to rename the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking of the Department of State the Bureau to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons and to provide for an Assistant Secretary to head such Bureau, and for other purposes.

S. 1330

At the request of Mr. BEGICH, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1330, a bill to delay the implementation of the employer responsibility provisions of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

S. 1381

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1381, a bill to amend the Lacey Act Amendments of 1981 to clarify provisions enacted by the Captive Wildlife Safety Act, to further the conservation of certain wildlife species, and for other purposes.

S. 1397

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1397, a bill to improve the efficiency, management, and interagency coordination of the Federal permitting process through reforms overseen by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, and for other purposes.

S. 1410

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1410, a bill to focus limited Federal resources on the most serious offenders.

S. 1463

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1463, a bill to amend the Lacey Act Amendments of 1981 to prohibit importation, exportation, transportation, sale, receipt, acquisition, and purchase in interstate or foreign commerce, or in a manner substantially affecting interstate or foreign commerce, of any live animal of any prohibited wildlife species.

S. 1507

At the request of Mr. JOHANNS, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1507, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to clarify the treatment of general welfare benefits provided by Indian tribes.

S. 1562

At the request of Mr. SANDERS, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1562, a bill to reauthorize the Older Americans Act of 1965, and for other purposes.

S. 1710

At the request of Mr. WHITEHOUSE, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1710, a bill to require Amtrak to propose a pet policy that allows passengers to transport domesticated cats and dogs on certain Amtrak trains, and for other purposes.

S. 1842

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the names of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER), the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH), the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. JOHANNS), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN), the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY), the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) and the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) were added as cosponsors of S. 1842, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in recognition and celebration of the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

S. 2003

At the request of Mr. HEINRICH, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 2003, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the energy credit for certain property under construction.

S. 2023

At the request of Ms. MIKULSKI, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 2023, a bill to reform the financing of Senate elections, and for other purposes.

S. 2075

At the request of Mr. WARNER, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2075, a bill to prohibit a reduction in funding for the defense commissary system in fiscal year 2015 pending the report of the Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission.

S. 2082

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2082, a bill to provide for the development of criteria under the Medicare program for medically necessary short inpatient hospital stays, and for other purposes.

S. 2109

At the request of Mr. WARNER, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2109, a bill to eliminate duplicative, outdated, or unnecessary Congressionally mandated Federal agency reporting.

S. 2115

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2115, a bill to provide for the establishment of a fund to provide for an expanded and sustained national investment in biomedical research.

S. 2133

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2133, a bill to amend title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and other statutes to clarify appropriate liability standards for Federal antidiscrimination claims.

S. 2301

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2301, a bill to amend section 2259 of title 18, United States Code, and for other purposes.

S. 2307

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2307, a bill to prevent international violence against women, and for other purposes.

S. 2329

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2329, a bill to prevent Hezbollah from gaining access to international financial and other institutions, and for other purposes.

S. 2333

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2333, a bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to provide for certain behavioral health treatment under TRICARE for children and adults with developmental disabilities.

S. 2359

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2359, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to protect and preserve access of Medicare beneficiaries in rural areas to health care providers under the Medicare program, and for other purposes.

S. 2481

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2481, a bill to amend the Small Business Act to provide authority for sole source contracts for certain small business concerns owned and controlled by women, and for other purposes.

S. 2515

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the name of the Senator from New York

(Mr. SCHUMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2515, a bill to ensure that Medicaid beneficiaries have the opportunity to receive care in a home and community-based setting.

S. 2543

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2543, a bill to support afterschool and out-of-school-time science, technology, engineering, and mathematics programs, and for other purposes.

S. 2611

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2611, a bill to facilitate the expedited processing of minors entering the United States across the southern border and for other purposes.

S. 2621

At the request of Mr. VITTER, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2621, a bill to amend the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp Act to increase the price of Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamps to fund the acquisition of conservation easements for migratory birds, and for other purposes.

S. 2631

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, the names of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) and the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE) were added as cosponsors of S. 2631, a bill to prevent the expansion of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program unlawfully created by Executive memorandum on August 15, 2012.

S. 2655

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2655, a bill to reauthorize the Young Women's Breast Health Education and Awareness Requires Learning Young Act of 2009.

S. 2673

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the names of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) and the Senator from Nebraska (Mrs. FISCHER) were added as cosponsors of S. 2673, a bill to enhance the strategic partnership between the United States and Israel.

S.J. RES. 19

At the request of Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, the names of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) and the Senator from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) were added as cosponsors of S.J. Res. 19, a joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States relating to contributions and expenditures intended to affect elections.

S. RES. 517

At the request of Ms. MIKULSKI, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 517, a resolution expressing support for Israel's right to defend itself and calling on Hamas to immediately cease all rocket and other attacks against Israel.

S. RES. 519

At the request of Ms. MURKOWSKI, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 519, a resolution designating August 16, 2014, as ''National Airborne Day''.

S. RES. 526

At the request of Ms. MIKULSKI, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 526, a resolution supporting Israel's right to defend itself against Hamas, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 3677

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the names of the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. MCCONNELL) and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 3677 intended to be proposed to S. 2569, a bill to provide an incentive for businesses to bring jobs back to America.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. CORNYN:

S. 2686. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to prevent the extension of the tax collection period merely because the taxpayer is a member of the Armed Forces who is hospitalized as a result of combat zone injuries; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 2686

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Wounded Warrior Tax Equity Act of 2014''.

SEC. 2. PREVENTION OF EXTENSION OF TAX COLLECTION PERIOD FOR MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES WHO ARE HOSPITALIZED AS A RESULT OF COMBAT ZONE INJURIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 7508(e) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(3) COLLECTION PERIOD AFTER ASSESSMENT NOT EXTENDED AS A RESULT OF HOSPITALIZATION.—With respect to any period of continuous qualified hospitalization described in subsection (a) and the next 180 days thereafter, subsection (a) shall not apply in the application of section 6502.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by this section shall apply to taxes assessed before, on, or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mrs. SHAHEEN):

S. 2689. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to specify coverage of continuous glucose monitoring devices, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, as the founder and co-chair of the Senate Diabetes Caucus, I have learned a great deal about this devastating disease affecting nearly 29 million Americans. Fortunately, due to the Special Diabetes Program and increased investments in diabetes research, we have seen some encouraging breakthroughs and are on the threshold of a number of important new discoveries.

This is particularly true for the estimated 3 million Americans living with type I diabetes. Advances in technology, like continuous glucose monitors, are helping patients control their blood glucose levels, which is key to preventing costly and sometimes deadly diabetes complications. We are also moving closer and closer to our goal of an artificial pancreas, which would control blood glucose levels automatically and revolutionize diabetes care.

The National Institutes of Health and the Food and Drug Administration have been extremely supportive of these innovations in diabetes care. I was therefore surprised and extremely troubled to learn that insulin-dependent Medicare beneficiaries are being denied coverage for continuous glucose monitors, or CGMs, because the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, CMS, has determined that they do not meet the Medicare definition of durable medical equipment and do not fall under any other Medicare category. As a consequence, we are seeing situations—similar to what we saw with insulin pumps in the late 1990s—where individuals with type 1 diabetes have had coverage for their continuous glucose monitor on their private insurance, only to lose it when they age into Medicare.

A CGM is a physician-prescribed, FDA-approved medical device that can provide real-time readings and data about trends in glucose levels every five minutes, thus enabling someone with insulin-dependent diabetes to eat or take insulin and prevent dangerous low or high glucose levels. As demonstrated by extensive clinical evidence, adults using a CGM have had improved overall glucose control and have reduced rates of hypoglycemia or low blood glucose levels. Professional medical societies, including the American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists and the Endocrine Society, recognize this clinical evidence and have published guidelines recommending CGM be used in appropriate patients with type 1 diabetes. Today, about 95 percent of commercial insurers provide coverage for CGM devices.

The ironic thing is that it is only because of advances in diabetes care like the continuous glucose monitor that people with type 1 diabetes can expect to live long enough to become Medicare beneficiaries. I am particularly concerned given the implications that this coverage decision will have for future decisions regarding artificial pancreas systems, which will combine a continuous glucose monitor, insulin pump, and sophisticated algorithm to control high and low blood sugar around the clock.

I am therefore joining my colleague from New Hampshire and my Co-Chair

of the Senate Diabetes Caucus in introducing the Medicare CGM Access Act of 2014 to create a separate benefit category under Medicare for the continuous glucose monitor and require coverage of the device for individuals meeting specified medical criteria.

By Ms. CANTWELL (for herself, Mr. CARDIN, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. BALDWIN, and Mr. WALSH):

S. 2693. A bill to reauthorize the women's business center program of the Small Business Administration, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, today I am joining with my colleagues to introduce legislation to empower women entrepreneurs and to help address the persistent challenges women face when trying to start and grow a business.

It was just 26 years ago that Congress enacted landmark legislation, the Women's Business Ownership Act of 1988 that eliminated requirements that women obtain the signature of their husband or other man to secure a business loan.

Between 1997 and 2013, the number of women-owned businesses in the United States grew by 59 percent, but significant barriers for women still exist and there is still much more work to do.

Last week, the Small Business Committee released a report entitled ''21st Century Barriers to Women's Entrepreneurship'' that assesses the current challenges faced by women-owned businesses. The report also makes policy recommendations to increase economic opportunity for women and help to put them on a level playing field with other business owners.

Our committee report makes four critical findings and includes policy recommendations to help remedy the business climate for women entrepreneurs.

First, women business owners face challenges in getting access to capital. The report highlights a study by the Urban Institute finding that only 4 percent of the total value of all conventional small business loans goes to women entrepreneurs. That means only $1 of every $23 is being loaned to a women-owned business. The report also notes that women are forced to rely on personal savings, loans from family or friends, or high interest credit because they cannot get traditional small business lending from banks.

Second, the report finds that women business owners still face challenges in getting access to loans of the right size. Women-owned businesses have been very successful with the SBA's Microloan program, under which they can obtain loans of up to $50,000 through intermediaries that also provide assistance in the development of business plans. However, this program has not been updated since 1991.

The report highlights the importance of reauthorizing the Intermediary Lending Program that expired in 2013 and provided capital for women business owners who were ready to take out loans that exceeded the $50,000 provided by the SBA's Microloan Program, but were not yet able to take advantage of the SBA's 7(a) lending program.

Third, the report finds that women entrepreneurs face challenges obtaining relevant business training and counseling. Women's Business Centers provide specialized counseling and training designed to address the unique challenges women face in starting a small business. The report shows that the Women's Business Center program has not been re-authorized since the 1990s and is in need of a 21st century modernization.

Last, the committee report finds that women business owners face challenges getting access to Federal contracts. Despite the growing number of businesses owned by women, the Federal Government has never met its goal of awarding 5 percent of its contracts to women-owned small businesses. Our report notes that if the government met this goal, women-owned small businesses would have access to additional market opportunity worth up to $4 billion a year.

That is why we are introducing the Women's Small Business Ownership Act. This legislation follows the policy recommendations made in the committee report and helps to address the glass ceiling many women entrepreneurs still encounter in the 21st century. While women-owned businesses as a whole continue to grow and succeed, to do so many women must overcome barriers men do not face.

The Women's Small Business Ownership Act increases the flow of capital to women business owners by modernizing the SBA's Microloan program and reauthorizing the Intermediary Lending Program. Women have been particularly successful in using microloans, which are loans of under $50,000, and receive about half of all SBA Microloans.

The Microloan program would be modernized by increasing the total amount lenders can loan, as well as allowing lenders to provide flexible terms and improved technical assistance to better suit the needs of borrowers.

The Intermediary Lending Program is also an important program, which this legislation reauthorizes to address a gap in lending options for small businesses, including women-owned small businesses that are unable to obtain financing from traditional lenders. The Intermediary Lending Program offers low-interest loans of between $50,000 and $200,000 and closes the gap that can exist for small businesses that have outgrown the SBA's Microloan program, but are not yet able to take advantage of SBA's other lending guarantee programs.

This legislation removes barriers to the federal contracting marketplace by allowing sole source contracts to be awarded to women-owned small businesses. Every other small business in a unique socioeconomic category, including HUB Zone firms, service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses, and small disadvantaged businesses, can receive a non-competitive or sole source contract, but women's small businesses cannot. Women-owned companies deserve parity with other programs and a fair shot to grow their businesses.

The Women's Small Business Ownership Act ensures that the SBA's Women's Business Centers are adequately and effectively meeting the needs of women entrepreneurs in the 21st century. It provides the resources for Women's Business Centers to provide the technical support and counseling tailored to the unique challenges for women-owned businesses.

Women make up 51 percent of the population and have tremendous potential as business owners and job-creators. We need to empower women to break through the glass ceiling so it will be easier for even more women to succeed in the 21st century, grow the U.S. economy and create more U.S. jobs.

When women have equal opportunity to access capital, obtain the right business counseling, and compete for federal contracts, the economy grows and the country moves forward.

Mr. President, I ask for unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 2693

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Women's Small Business Ownership Act of 2014''.

SEC. 2. DEFINITION.

In this Act—

(1) the terms ''Administration'' and ''Administrator'' mean the Small Business Administration and the Administrator thereof, respectively;

(2) the term ''disability'' has the meaning given that term in section 3 of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12102);

(3) the term ''microloan program'' means the program established under section 7(m) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 636(m));

(4) the term ''rural small business concern'' means a small business concern located in a rural area, as that term is defined in section 1393(a)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986; and

(5) the terms ''small business concern'', ''small business concern owned and controlled by veterans'', and ''small business concern owned and controlled by women'' have the meanings given those terms under section 3 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 632).

SEC. 3. OFFICE OF WOMEN'S BUSINESS OWNERSHIP.

Section 29(g) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 656(g)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2)—

(A) in subparagraph (B)—

(i) in clause (i), by striking ''in the areas'' and all that follows through the end of subclause (I), and inserting the following: ''to

address issues concerning the management, operations, manufacturing, technology, finance, retail and product sales, international trade, Government contracting, and other disciplines required for—

''(I) starting, operating, and increasing the business of a small business concern;''; and

(ii) in clause (ii), by striking ''Women's Business Center program'' each place that term appears and inserting ''women's business center program''; and

(B) in subparagraph (C), by inserting before the period at the end the following: '', the National Women's Business Council, and any association of women's business centers''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(3) TRAINING.—The Administrator may provide annual programmatic and financial examination training for women's business ownership representatives and district office technical representatives of the Administration to enable representatives to carry out their responsibilities.

''(4) PROGRAM AND TRANSPARENCY IMPROVEMENTS.—The Administrator shall maximize the transparency of the women's business center financial assistance proposal process and the programmatic and financial examination process by—

''(A) providing public notice of any announcement for financial assistance under subsection (b) or a grant under subsection (l);

''(B) in the announcement described in subparagraph (A), outlining award and program evaluation criteria and describing the weighting of the criteria for financial assistance under subsection (b) and grants under subsection (l); and

''(C) not later than 60 days after the completion of a site visit to the women's business center (whether conducted for an audit, performance review, or other reason), when feasible, providing to each women's business center a copy of any site visit reports or evaluation reports prepared by district office technical representatives or officers or employees of the Administration.''.

SEC. 4. WOMEN'S BUSINESS CENTER PROGRAM.

(a) WOMEN'S BUSINESS CENTER FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.—Section 29 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 656) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) by striking paragraph (4);

(B) by redesignating paragraphs (2) and (3) as paragraphs (4) and (5), respectively;

(C) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following:

''(2) the term 'association of women's business centers' means an organization—

''(A) that represents not less than 51 percent of the women's business centers that participate in a program under this section; and

''(B) whose primary purpose is to represent women's business centers;

''(3) the term 'eligible entity' means—

''(A) a private nonprofit organization;

''(B) a State, regional, or local economic development organization;

''(C) a development, credit, or finance corporation chartered by a State;

''(D) a junior or community college, as defined in section 312(f) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1058(f)); or

''(E) any combination of entities listed in subparagraphs (A) through (D);''; and

(D) by adding after paragraph (5), as so redesignated, the following:

''(6) the term 'women's business center' means a project conducted by an eligible entity under this section.'';

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) by redesignating paragraphs (1), (2), and (3) as subparagraphs (A), (B), and (C), and adjusting the margins accordingly;

(B) by striking ''The Administration'' and all that follows through ''5-year projects'' and inserting the following:

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administration may provide financial assistance to an eligible entity to conduct a project under this section'';

(C) by striking ''The projects shall'' and inserting the following:

''(2) USE OF FUNDS.—The project shall be designed to provide training and counseling that meets the needs of women, especially socially and economically disadvantaged women, and shall''; and

(D) by adding at the end the following:

''(3) AMOUNT OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.—The Administrator may award financial assistance under this subsection of not more than $250,000 per project year.

''(4) CONSULTATION WITH ASSOCIATIONS OF WOMEN'S BUSINESS CENTERS.—The Administrator shall seek advice, input, and recommendations for policy changes from any association of women's business centers to develop—

''(A) a training program for the staff of women's business centers; and

''(B) recommendations to improve the policies and procedures for governing the general operations and administration of the women's business center program, including grant program improvements under subsection (g)(4).'';

(3) in subsection (c)—

(A) in paragraph (1) by striking ''the recipient organization'' and inserting ''an eligible entity'';

(B) in paragraph (3), in the second sentence, by striking ''a recipient organization'' and inserting ''an eligible entity'';

(C) in paragraph (4)—

(i) by striking ''recipient of assistance'' and inserting ''eligible entity'';

(ii) by striking ''such organization'' and inserting ''the eligible entity''; and

(iii) by striking ''recipient'' and inserting ''eligible entity''; and

(D) by adding at end the following:

''(5) SEPARATION OF PROJECT AND FUNDS.—An eligible entity shall—

''(A) carry out a project under this section separately from other projects, if any, of the eligible entity; and

''(B) separately maintain and account for any financial assistance under this section.'';

(4) in subsection (e)—

(A) by striking ''applicant organization'' and inserting ''eligible entity'';

(B) by striking ''a recipient organization'' and inserting ''an eligible entity''; and

(C) by striking ''site'';

(5) by striking subsection (f) and inserting the following:

''(f) APPLICATIONS AND CRITERIA FOR INITIAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.—

''(1) APPLICATION.—Each eligible entity desiring financial assistance under subsection (b) shall submit to the Administrator an application that contains—

''(A) a certification that the eligible entity—

''(i) has designated an executive director or program manager, who may be compensated using financial assistance under subsection (b) or other sources, to manage the center;

''(ii) as a condition of receiving financial assistance under subsection (b), agrees—

''(I) to receive a site visit at the discretion of the Administrator as part of the final selection process;

''(II) to undergo an annual programmatic and financial examination; and

''(III) to remedy any problems identified pursuant to the site visit or examination under subclause (I) or (II); and

''(iii) meets the accounting and reporting requirements established by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget;

''(B) information demonstrating that the eligible entity has the ability and resources to meet the needs of the market to be served by the women's business center for which financial assistance under subsection (b) is sought, including the ability to obtain the non-Federal contribution required under subsection (c);

''(C) information relating to the assistance to be provided by the women's business center for which financial assistance under subsection (b) is sought in the area in which the women's business center is located;

''(D) information demonstrating the experience and effectiveness of the eligible entity in—

''(i) conducting financial, management, and marketing assistance programs, as described in subsection (b)(2), which are designed to teach or upgrade the business skills of women who are business owners or potential business owners;

''(ii) providing training and services to a representative number of women who are socially and economically disadvantaged; and

''(iii) working with resource partners of the Administration and other entities, such as universities; and

''(E) a 5-year plan that describes the ability of the women's business center for which financial assistance is sought—

''(i) to serve women who are business owners or potential business owners by conducting training and counseling activities; and

''(ii) to provide training and services to a representative number of women who are socially and economically disadvantaged.

''(2) REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF APPLICATIONS FOR INITIAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall—

''(i) review each application submitted under paragraph (1), based on the information described in such paragraph and the criteria set forth under subparagraph (B) of this paragraph; and

''(ii) to the extent practicable, as part of the final selection process, conduct a site visit to each women's business center for which financial assistance under subsection (b) is sought.

''(B) SELECTION CRITERIA.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall evaluate applicants for financial assistance under subsection (b) in accordance with selection criteria that are—

''(I) established before the date on which applicants are required to submit the applications;

''(II) stated in terms of relative importance; and

''(III) publicly available and stated in each solicitation for applications for financial assistance under subsection (b) made by the Administrator.

''(ii) REQUIRED CRITERIA.—The selection criteria for financial assistance under subsection (b) shall include—

''(I) the experience of the applicant in conducting programs or ongoing efforts designed to teach or enhance the business skills of women who are business owners or potential business owners;

''(II) the ability of the applicant to begin a project within a minimum amount of time, as established under the program announcement or by regulation;

''(III) the ability of the applicant to provide training and services to a representative number of women who are socially and economically disadvantaged; and

''(IV) the location for the women's business center proposed by the applicant, including whether the applicant is located in a State in which there is not a women's business center receiving funding from the Administration.

''(C) PROXIMITY.—If the principal place of business of an applicant for financial assistance under subsection (b) is located less than 50 miles from the principal place of business of a women's business center that received funds under this section on or before the date of the application, the applicant shall not be eligible for the financial assistance, unless the applicant submits a detailed written justification of the need for an additional center in the area in which the applicant is located.

''(D) RECORD RETENTION.—The Administrator shall maintain a copy of each application submitted under this subsection for not less than 7 years.''; and

(6) in subsection (m)—

(A) by striking paragraph (3) and inserting the following:

''(3) APPLICATION AND APPROVAL FOR RENEWAL GRANTS.—

''(A) SOLICITATION OF APPLICATIONS.—The Administrator shall solicit applications and award grants under this subsection for the first fiscal year beginning after the date of enactment of the Women's Small Business Ownership Act of 2014, and every third fiscal year thereafter.

''(B) CONTENTS OF APPLICATION.—Each eligible entity desiring a grant under this subsection shall submit to the Administrator an application that contains—

''(i) a certification that the applicant—

''(I) is an eligible entity;

''(II) has designated an executive director or program manager to manage the women's business center operated by the applicant; and

''(III) as a condition of receiving a grant under this subsection, agrees—

''(aa) to receive a site visit as part of the final selection process;

''(bb) to submit, for the 2 full fiscal years before the date on which the application is submitted, annual programmatic and financial examination reports or certified copies of the compliance supplemental audits under OMB Circular A–133 of the applicant; and

''(cc) to remedy any problem identified pursuant to the site visit or examination under item (aa) or (bb);

''(ii) information demonstrating that the applicant has the ability and resources to meet the needs of the market to be served by the women's business center for which a grant under this subsection is sought, including the ability to obtain the non-Federal contribution required under paragraph (4)(C);

''(iii) information relating to assistance to be provided by the women's business center in the area served by the women's business center for which a grant under this subsection is sought;

''(iv) information demonstrating that the applicant has worked with resource partners of the Administration and other entities;

''(v) a 3-year plan that describes the ability of the women's business center for which a grant under this subsection is sought—

''(I) to serve women who are business owners or potential business owners by conducting training and counseling activities; and

''(II) to provide training and services to a representative number of women who are socially and economically disadvantaged; and

''(vi) any additional information that the Administrator may reasonably require.

''(C) REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF APPLICATIONS FOR GRANTS.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall—

''(I) review each application submitted under subparagraph (B), based on the information described in such subparagraph and the criteria set forth under clause (ii) of this subparagraph; and

''(II) at the discretion of the Administrator, and as part of the final selection process, conduct a site visit to each women's business center for which a grant under this subsection is sought.

''(ii) SELECTION CRITERIA.—

''(I) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall evaluate applicants for grants under this subsection in accordance with selection criteria that are—

''(aa) established before the date on which applicants are required to submit the applications;

''(bb) stated in terms of relative importance; and

''(cc) publicly available and stated in each solicitation for applications for grants under this subsection made by the Administrator.

''(II) REQUIRED CRITERIA.—The selection criteria for a grant under this subsection shall include—

''(aa) the total number of entrepreneurs served by the applicant;

''(bb) the total number of new startup companies assisted by the applicant;

''(cc) the percentage of clients of the applicant that are socially or economically disadvantaged; and

''(dd) the percentage of individuals in the community served by the applicant who are socially or economically disadvantaged.

''(iii) CONDITIONS FOR CONTINUED FUNDING.—In determining whether to make a grant under this subsection, the Administrator—

''(I) shall consider the results of the most recent evaluation of the women's business center for which a grant under this subsection is sought, and, to a lesser extent, previous evaluations; and

''(II) may withhold a grant under this subsection, if the Administrator determines that the applicant has failed to provide the information required to be provided under this paragraph, or the information provided by the applicant is inadequate.

''(D) NOTIFICATION.—Not later than 60 days after the date of each deadline to submit applications, the Administrator shall approve or deny any application under this paragraph and notify the applicant for each such application of the approval or denial.

''(E) RECORD RETENTION.—The Administrator shall maintain a copy of each application submitted under this paragraph for not less than 7 years.''; and

(B) by striking paragraph (5) and inserting the following:

''(5) AWARD TO PREVIOUS RECIPIENTS.—There shall be no limitation on the number of times the Administrator may award a grant to an applicant under this subsection.''.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 29 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 656) is amended—

(1) in subsection (h)(2), by striking ''to award a contract (as a sustainability grant) under subsection (l) or'';

(2) in subsection (j)(1), by striking ''The Administration'' and inserting ''Not later than November 1 of each year, the Administrator'';

(3) in subsection (k)—

(A) by striking paragraphs (1) and (4);

(B) by redesignating paragraph (3) as paragraph (4);

(C) by inserting before paragraph (2) the following:

''(1) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be appropriated to the Administration to carry out this section, to remain available until expended, $26,750,000 for each of fiscal years 2015 through 2019.''; and

(D) by inserting after paragraph (2) the following:

''(3) CONTINUING GRANT AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT AUTHORITY.—

''(A) PROMPT DISBURSEMENT.—Upon receiving funds to carry out this section for a fiscal year, the Administrator shall, to the extent practicable, promptly reimburse funds to any women's business center awarded financial assistance under this section if the center meets the eligibility requirements under this section.

''(B) SUSPENSION OR TERMINATION.—If the Administrator has entered into a grant or cooperative agreement with a women's business center under this section, the Administrator may not suspend or terminate the grant or cooperative agreement, unless the Administrator—

''(i) provides the women's business center with written notification setting forth the reasons for that action; and

''(ii) affords the women's business center an opportunity for a hearing, appeal, or other administrative proceeding under chapter 5 of title 5, United States Code.'';

(4) in subsection (m)—

(A) in paragraph (2), by striking ''subsection (b) or (l)'' and inserting ''this subsection or subsection (b)''; and

(B) in paragraph (4)(D), by striking ''or subsection (l)''; and

(5) by redesignating subsections (m), (n), and (o), as amended by this Act, as subsections (l), (m), and (n), respectively.

(c) EFFECT ON EXISTING GRANTS.—

(1) TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—A nonprofit organization receiving a grant under section 29(m) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 656(m)), as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this Act, shall continue to receive the grant under the terms and conditions in effect for the grant on the day before the date of enactment of this Act, except that the nonprofit organization may not apply for a renewal of the grant under section 29(m)(5) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 656(m)(5)), as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this Act.

(2) LENGTH OF RENEWAL GRANT.—The Administrator may award a grant under section 29(l) of the Small Business Act, as so redesignated by subsection (a)(5) of this section, to a nonprofit organization receiving a grant under section 29(m) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 656(m)), as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this Act, for the period—

(A) beginning on the day after the last day of the grant agreement under such section 29(m); and

(B) ending at the end of the third fiscal year beginning after the date of enactment of this Act.

SEC. 5. MATCHING REQUIREMENTS UNDER WOMEN'S BUSINESS CENTER PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 29(c) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 656(c)), as amended by section 4 of this Act, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking ''As a condition'' and inserting ''Subject to paragraph (6), as a condition''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(6) WAIVER OF NON-FEDERAL SHARE RELATING TO TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND COUNSELING.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Upon request by a recipient organization, and in accordance with this paragraph, the Administrator may waive, in whole or in part, the requirement to obtain non-Federal funds under this subsection for the technical assistance and counseling activities of the recipient organization carried out using financial assistance under this section for a fiscal year. The Administrator may not waive the requirement for a recipient organization to obtain non-Federal funds under this paragraph for more than a total of 2 consecutive fiscal years.

''(B) CONSIDERATIONS.—In determining whether to waive the requirement to obtain

non-Federal funds under this paragraph, the Administrator shall consider—

''(i) the economic conditions affecting the recipient organization;

''(ii) the impact a waiver under this clause would have on the credibility of the women's business center program under this section;

''(iii) the demonstrated ability of the recipient organization to raise non-Federal funds; and

''(iv) the performance of the recipient organization.

''(C) LIMITATION.—The Administrator may not waive the requirement to obtain non-Federal funds under this paragraph if granting the waiver would undermine the credibility of the women's business center program under this section.

''(7) SOLICITATION.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a recipient organization may—

''(A) solicit cash and in-kind contributions from private individuals and entities to be used to carry out the activities of the recipient organization under the project conducted under this section; and

''(B) use amounts made available by the Administration under this section for the cost of such solicitation and management of the contributions received.''.

(b) REGULATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall—

(A) except as provided in paragraph (2), and not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, publish in the Federal Register proposed regulations by the Administrator to carry out the amendments made to section 29 of the Small Business Act by this Act; and

(B) accept public comments on such proposed regulations for not less than 60 days.

(2) EXISTING PROPOSED REGULATIONS.—Paragraph (1)(A) shall not apply to the extent proposed regulations by the Administrator have been published on the date of enactment of this Act that are sufficient to carry out the amendments made to section 29 of the Small Business Act by this Act.

SEC. 6. STUDY AND REPORT ON ECONOMIC ISSUES FACING WOMEN'S BUSINESS CENTERS.

(a) STUDY.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a broad study of the unique economic issues facing women's business centers located in covered areas to identify—

(1) the difficulties such centers face in raising non-Federal funds;

(2) the difficulties such centers face in competing for financial assistance, non-Federal funds, or other types of assistance;

(3) the difficulties such centers face in writing grant proposals; and

(4) other difficulties such centers face because of the economy in the type of covered area in which such centers are located.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to Congress a report containing the results of the study under subsection (a), which shall include recommendations, if any, regarding how to—

(1) address the unique difficulties women's business centers located in covered areas face because of the type of covered area in which such centers are located;

(2) expand the presence of, and increase the services provided by, women's business centers located in covered areas; and

(3) best use technology and other resources to better serve women business owners located in covered areas.

(c) DEFINITION OF COVERED AREA.—In this section, the term ''covered area'' means—

(1) any State that is predominantly rural, as determined by the Administrator;

(2) any State that is predominantly urban, as determined by the Administrator; and

(3) any State or territory that is an island.

SEC. 7. STUDY AND REPORT ON OVERSIGHT OF WOMEN'S BUSINESS CENTERS.

(a) STUDY.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study of the oversight of women's business centers by the Administrator, which shall include—

(1) an analysis of the coordination by the Administrator of the activities of women's business centers with the activities of small business development centers, the Service Corps of Retired Executives, and Veteran Business Outreach Centers;

(2) a comparison of the types of individuals and small business concerns served by women's business centers and the types of individuals and small business concerns served by small business development centers, the Service Corps of Retired Executives, and Veteran Business Outreach Centers; and

(3) an analysis of performance data for women's business centers that evaluates how well women's business centers are carrying out the mission of women's business centers and serving individuals and small business concerns.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to Congress a report containing the results of the study under subsection (a), which shall include recommendations, if any, for eliminating the duplication of services provided by women's business centers, small business development centers, the Service Corps of Retired Executives, and Veteran Business Outreach Centers.

SEC. 8. SOLE SOURCE CONTRACTS FOR SMALL BUSINESS CONCERNS OWNED AND CONTROLLED BY WOMEN.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 8(m) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 637(m)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(7) AUTHORITY FOR SOLE SOURCE CONTRACTS FOR ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED SMALL BUSINESS CONCERNS OWNED AND CONTROLLED BY WOMEN IN UNDERREPRESENTED INDUSTRIES.—A contracting officer may award a sole source contract under this subsection to a small business concern owned and controlled by women that meets the requirements under paragraph (2)(A) if—

''(A) the small business concern owned and controlled by women is in an industry in which small business concerns owned and controlled by women are underrepresented, as determined by the Administrator;

''(B) the contracting officer determines that the small business concern owned and controlled by women is a responsible contractor with respect to performance of the contract opportunity;

''(C) the anticipated award price of the contract, including options, is not more than—

''(i) $6,500,000, in the case of a contract opportunity assigned a North American Industry Classification System code for manufacturing; or

''(ii) $4,000,000, in the case of any other contract opportunity; and

''(D) in the estimation of the contracting officer, the contract award can be made at a fair and reasonable price.

''(8) AUTHORITY FOR SOLE SOURCE CONTRACTS FOR SMALL BUSINESS CONCERNS OWNED AND CONTROLLED BY WOMEN IN SUBSTANTIALLY UNDERREPRESENTED INDUSTRIES.—A contracting officer may award a sole source contract under this subsection to a small business concern owned and controlled by women that meets the requirements under paragraph (2)(E) if—

''(A) the small business concern owned and controlled by women is in an industry in which small business concerns owned and controlled by women are substantially underrepresented, as determined by the Administrator;

''(B) the contracting officer determines that the small business concern owned and controlled by women is a responsible contractor with respect to performance of the contract opportunity;

''(C) the anticipated award price of the contract, including options, is not more than—

''(i) $6,500,000, in the case of a contract opportunity assigned a North American Industry Classification System code for manufacturing; or

''(ii) $4,000,000, in the case of any other contract opportunity; and

''(D) in the estimation of the contracting officer, the contract award can be made at a fair and reasonable price.''.

(b) REPORTING ON GOALS FOR SOLE SOURCE CONTRACTS FOR SMALL BUSINESS CONCERNS OWNED AND CONTROLLED BY WOMEN.—Section 15(h)(2)(E)(viii) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 644(h)(2)(E)(viii)) is amended—

(1) in subclause (IV), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(2) by redesignating subclause (V) as subclause (VIII); and

(3) by inserting after subclause (IV) the following:

''(V) through sole source contracts awarded under section 8(m)(7);

''(VI) through sole source contracts awarded under section 8(m)(8);

''(VII) by industry for contracts described in subclause (III), (IV), (V), or (VI); and''.

(c) DEADLINE FOR REPORT ON UNDERREPRESENTED INDUSTRIES ACCELERATED.—Section 29(o)(2) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 656(o)(2)) is amended—

(1) by striking ''5 years after the date of enactment of this subsection'' and inserting ''January 2, 2015''; and

(2) by striking ''5-year period'' and inserting ''2-year or 5-year period, as applicable,''.

(d) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 8(m) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 637(m)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2)(C), by striking ''paragraph (3)'' and inserting ''paragraph (4)''; and

(2) in paragraph (5), by striking ''paragraph (2)(F)'' each place it appears and inserting ''paragraph (2)(E)''.

SEC. 9. SMALL BUSINESS INTERMEDIARY LENDING PROGRAM.

Section 7(l) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 636(l)) is amended—

(1) in the subsection heading, by striking ''PILOT'';

(2) in paragraph (1)(B), by striking ''pilot'';

(3) in paragraph (2)—

(A) by striking ''3-year''; and

(B) by striking ''pilot'';

(4) in paragraph (4)—

(A) by striking subparagraph (B) and inserting the following:

''(B) LOAN LIMITS.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—No single loan to an eligible intermediary under this subsection may exceed $1,000,000.

''(ii) TOTAL AMOUNT.—The total amount outstanding and committed to an eligible intermediary by the Administrator under the Program may not exceed $5,000,000.''; and

(B) by striking subparagraph (G) and inserting the following:

''(G) MAXIMUM AMOUNTS.—The Administrator may make loans under the Program—

''(i) during each of fiscal years 2015, 2016, and 2017, in a total amount of not more than $20,000,000; and

''(ii) during fiscal year 2018 and each fiscal year thereafter, using such amounts as are made available for the Program.''; and

(5) by striking paragraph (6).

SEC. 10. ACCESS TO CAPITAL FOR SMALL BUSINESS CONCERNS.

(a) MICROLOAN PROGRAM.—Section 7(m) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 636(m)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)(B)(i), by striking ''short-term,'';

(2) in paragraph (3)(C), by striking ''$5,000,000'' and inserting ''$7,000,000'';

(3) in paragraph (4)—

(A) by striking subparagraph (E); and

(B) by redesignating subparagraph (F) as subparagraph (E);

(4) in paragraph (6)—

(A) in subparagraph (A), by striking ''short-term,''; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

''(F) REPORT TO COMMERCIAL CREDIT REPORTING AGENCIES.—The Administrator shall establish a process under which an intermediary that makes a loan to a small business concern under this paragraph shall provide to 1 or more of the commercial credit reporting agencies, through the Administration or independently, including through third party intermediaries, information on the small business concern that is relevant to credit reporting, including the payment activity of the small business concern on the loan.'';

(5) in paragraph (7)—

(A) by striking ''PROGRAM'' and all that follows through ''Under'' and inserting the following: ''NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS.—Under''; and

(B) by striking subparagraph (B);

(6) in paragraph (8), by striking ''such intermediaries'' and all the follows through the period at the end and inserting the following: ''intermediaries that serve a diversity of geographic areas in the United States to ensure appropriate availability of loans for small business concerns in all industries that are located in metropolitan, nonmetropolitan, and rural areas.''; and

(7) in paragraph (11)(B), by striking ''short-term,''.

(b) GUARANTEE FEE WAIVER.—During fiscal year 2016, the Administrator may not collect a guarantee fee under section 7(a)(18)(A)(i) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 636(a)(18)(A)(i)) with respect to a loan guaranteed under section 7(a) of such Act, unless amounts are made available to the Administrator to subsidize the cost of guaranteeing such loans for fiscal year 2016.

(c) ANNUAL REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, and every year thereafter, the Office of Capital Access of the Administration shall submit to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship of the Senate and the Committee on Small Business of the House of Representatives a report on assistance provided by the Administration under—

(A) section 7(a) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 636(a));

(B) the microloan program;

(C) part A of title III of the Small Business Investment Act of 1958 (15 U.S.C. 681 et seq.); and

(D) section 502 of the Small Business Investment Act of 1958 (15 U.S.C. 696).

(2) REQUIREMENT.—Each report required under paragraph (1) shall include, for the year preceding the date on which the report is submitted—

(A) for each type of assistance described under subparagraphs (A), (B), and (D) of paragraph (1)—

(i) the number of loans made by the Administration;

(ii) the total amount of loans made by the Administration;

(iii) the percentage of the number and total amount of loans made by the Administration to—

(I) rural small business concerns;

(II) small business concerns owned and controlled by individuals with a disability;

(III) small business concerns owned and controlled by low-income individuals, broken down by each racial or ethnic minority group of which those individuals are members;

(IV) small business concerns owned and controlled by veterans;

(V) small business concerns owned and controlled by women; and

(VI) small business concerns owned and controlled by members of a racial or ethnic minority group, broken down by each such racial or ethnic minority group; and

(iv) the number of jobs created and retained by borrowers as a result of such assistance; and

(B) for assistance described under subparagraph (C) of paragraph (1)—

(i) the number of investments made by small business investment companies;

(ii) the total amount of equity capital provided and loans made by small business investment companies;

(iii) the percentage of the number of investments and loans made and total amount of equity capital provided by small business investment companies to—

(I) rural small business concerns;

(II) small business concerns owned and controlled by individuals with a disability;

(III) small business concerns owned and controlled by low-income individuals, broken down by each racial or ethnic minority group of which those individuals are members;

(IV) small business concerns owned and controlled by veterans;

(V) small business concerns owned and controlled by women; and

(VI) small business concerns owned and controlled by members of a racial or ethnic minority group, broken down by each such racial or ethnic minority group;

(iv) the number of jobs created and retained by small business concerns as a result of investments made by small business investment companies; and

(v) the number of licenses issued by the Administration under section 301(c) of the Small Business Investment Act (15 U.S.C. 681(c)), including the percentage of licenses issued to entities headed by a woman or a member of a racial or ethnic minority, respectively.

SEC. 11. SENSE OF THE SENATE.

It is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) access to capital for small business concerns owned and controlled by women comes from a variety of sources, including important contributions and early investments from angel capital and other venture capital investors; and

(2) those investors should continue to work to develop small business concerns owned and controlled by women to expand the rate at which those women receive venture investment.

By Mr. LEVIN (for himself, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. REED):

S. 2704. A bill to prohibit the award of Federal Government contracts to inverted domestic corporations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, earlier today I, along with Senator DICK DURBIN and Senator JACK REED, introduced the No Federal Contracts for Corporate Deserters Act. Our bill will put a stop to companies that renounce their U.S. citizenship but come back to try to seek taxpayer funded government contracts. There is an existing law on the books that is supposed to ban Federal contracts with inverted corporations, but just like with the tax code, after about a decade of lawyers looking for loopholes in the law, a number of corporations have found them. This bill would bring that ban up-to-date.

Over the last few months, there has been a growing rush of U.S. corporations seeking to swear off their U.S. citizenship and move their mailboxes, for tax purposes, to a low-tax jurisdiction. I don't think that is right, and it is time we put a stop to it, which we can do by passing the Stop Corporate Inversions Act I introduced 2 months ago with 22 cosponsors.

Most Americans agree with us that taxpayer dollars shouldn't be used for contracts with companies that move their addresses abroad to dodge U.S. laws. And because of that, Congress has passed a series of restrictions on contracting with inverted corporations over the last decade. We passed one in 2002, and another in 2006 and 2007. Since fiscal year 2008, a government-wide provision has been included in every annual appropriations bill banning contracts with inverted corporations.

Our bill would strengthen that ban by closing a number of loopholes in the current law. Those loopholes have allowed some inverted corporations to continue collecting revenue from American taxpayers, while at the same time, shifting their tax burden onto those same American taxpayers. Our bill also makes the existing ban, which has been included in annual appropriations bills, permanent.

Some may say that the real reason for inversions is that our tax rate is too high. It is true the top corporate rate is 35 percent. But the effective tax rate—what corporations really pay—is about 12 percent. When companies can go to places like Ireland or the Caribbean and negotiate sweetheart deals to pay little or no taxes, there will always be tax incentives for companies to abandon their country instead of paying their tax bill, no matter what our tax rate is.

Some may say that we should wait for tax reform to address this issue. There are two reasons why we shouldn't. First, if it happens at all, tax reform is months or years away; these inversions are happening now. Second, this is a bill about contracting. This bill doesn't amend the tax code. I expect it will be referred to the Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee, not to the Finance Committee. So even Senators who believe that fixing the tax inversions problem should wait until comprehensive tax reform should be able to support this bill.

In the past, in similar circumstances, Congress has chosen to act—overwhelmingly, and in a bipartisan fashion. This should not be a partisan

issue. This is about fairness. It is simply unfair to businesses who don't invert to have to compete with companies that do invert. This is about putting American families who work hard and pay their share. We shouldn't sacrifice the interests of those families. We shouldn't ask them to send their hard-earned tax dollars to contractors who skip out on their tax obligations. I look forward to working with my colleagues to move this bill forward.

By Mr. DURBIN:

S. 2711. A bill to reauthorize the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, today I am introducing the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, USCIRF, Reform and Reauthorization Act of 2014.

This legislation would reauthorize the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, also known as USCIRF, while making important reforms to the Commission to encourage bipartisanship, enhance coordination with the State Department, and improve Congressional oversight.

I strongly support USCIRF's mission of promoting and protecting international religious freedom. My legislation will help USCIRF to more effectively pursue this mission.

In 2011, I authored a number of reforms in the previous USCIRF reauthorization legislation, including term limits for Commissioners; a prohibition on employee discrimination; a requirement that Commissioners follow federal travel regulations; and maintaining nine Commissioners, rather than five Commissioners, as called for by the House-passed reauthorization. I have heard from USCIRF that these reforms have strengthened the Commission, and the legislation I am introducing today will build on these reforms.

The USCIRF Reform and Reauthorization Act is supported by a broad swath of religious and civic leaders and faith organizations, including, Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good; the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America; United Methodist Church, General Board of Church and Society; HIAS; Muslim Public Affairs Council; Cardinal Theodore E. McCarrick, Archbishop Emeritus of Washington and former USCIRF Commissioner; Dr. William J. Shaw, Immediate Past President of the National Baptist Convention, USA. Inc. and former USCIRF Commissioner; former Congressman and USCIRF Commissioner Sam Gejdenson; Sister Simone Campbell, Executive Director of NETWORK, A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby; Rateb Rabie, President of the Holy Land Christian Ecumenical Foundation; Dr. Azizah Al-Hibri, former USCIRF Commissioner and Founder and Chair of KARAMAH: Muslim Women Lawyers for Human Rights; Rev. Drew Christiansen, S.J., Distinguished Professor of Ethics and Global Development at Georgetown University; Dr. Alfred Rotondaro, Senior Fellow at the Center for American Progress; Dr. Laila Al-Marayati, former USCIRF Commissioner; and Benjamin Palumbo, Board of Trustees, Catholics United.

There is bipartisan agreement about the need for our government to promote and protect international religious freedom. USCIRF is, by design, a bipartisan organization, with Commissioners appointed by the President and Congressional leaders, and USCIRF can most effectively promote religious freedom by doing so on a bipartisan basis. This issue is too important to be stymied by the excessive partisanship which too often leads to political gridlock in Washington.

It is to be expected that the members of a bipartisan Commission will not always reach consensus. However, I am troubled that some Commissioners have on occasion engaged in partisan rhetoric that is not conducive to USCIRF's bipartisan mission and does not represent USCIRF's official views.

For example, one Commissioner recently appeared on Fox News' Hannity program, and, after identifying himself as a member of USCIRF, claimed that former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton had failed to take steps to combat Boko Haram in Nigeria and accused the Obama Administration of having ''no strategy'' for combating terrorism. Mother Commissioner testified in Congress on behalf of USCIRF and said that the Obama Administration ''sends a message to other countries that we don't care'' about religious freedom.

The USCIRF Reform and Reauthorization Act will facilitate bipartisanship by taking a number of steps. First, the legislation will codify USCIRF's existing procedures for the election of a Chair and Vice Chair so that these positions rotate annually between Commissioners appointed by elected officials of each political party. This will help ensure continued bipartisan leadership at the Commission.

Second, this bill will establish a dedicated bipartisan staff as a complement to nonpartisan professional staff. The legislation permits Commissioners appointed by elected officials of each political party to appoint designated Staff Directors and three designated staff members. This will help foster a bipartisan environment at USCIRF.

Third, the bill will codify procedures for publishing the views of the Commission. The bill encourages Commissioners to reach consensus on statements on behalf of the Commission. When consensus is not possible, the bill requires a statement to be approved by at least six of the nine Commissioners. This supermajority requirement is current USCIRF policy for the approval of statements that are circulated electronically. Codifying this policy will ensure that at least one Commissioner of each political party supports every Commission statement.

USCIRF has noted that it is the only organization of its kind in the world. The Government Accountability Office, GAO, recently issued a report on USCIRF which highlights some of the challenges inherent to USCIRF's unique mission.

The GAO notes that there are two governmental entities charged with promoting international religious freedom: USCIRF and the State Department's Office of International Religious Freedom. The GAO found that these overlapping missions and ''the lack of a definition regarding how State and the Commission are to interact has sometimes created foreign policy tensions that State has had to mitigate.'' The GAO notes that State Department officials highlighted several instances ''when the Commission's approach with foreign government officials created bilateral tensions.''

The GAO's concerns about the overlap between State and USCIRF are serious enough that it included USCIRF in its annual duplication report. As my colleagues know, Senator COBURN authored legislation requiring GAO to issue this report to identify unnecessary duplication in the federal government.

I am concerned that the lack of coordination between the State Department and USCIRF may undermine our government's efforts to promote international religious freedom by sending mixed messages to foreign governments and human-rights activists who are fighting to defend religious freedom in their countries.

Consider another example. The State Department and USCIRF both produce an annual report on international religious freedom. Under current law, USCIRF is required to publish its report ''[n]ot later than May 1 of each year,'' but the State Department's report is often not completed before May 1. This forces USCIRF to issue its report prior to publication of the State Department report, which leads to unnecessary duplication of efforts, saps USCIRF's limited staff resources, and prevents USCIRF from opining on the State Department report.

The USCIRF Reform and Reauthorization Act will enhance cooperation between USCIRF and the State Department with two measures. First, it clarifies that the Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom, as an ex officio member of USCIRF, is permitted to attend all Commission meetings. GAO's duplication report specifically highlights the failure to define the role of the Ambassador at Large as an ex officio member of USCIRF.

Second, this legislation requires USCIRF to publish its annual report after reviewing the State Department's annual report on International Religious Freedom. This division of labor takes advantage of the State Department's worldwide presence and much larger staff to draft a comprehensive report. It also takes advantage of

USCIRF's unique role to provide an independent and bipartisan commentary on the State Department report.

USCIRF is a part of the legislative branch and it is ultimately the responsibility of Congress to oversee USCIRF's work and ensure that it is effectively pursuing its mission. The need for greater Congressional oversight of USCIRF has been highlighted by concerns about USCIRF's practices, including, for example, the work environment at USCIRF for religious minorities, particularly prior to the 2011 reauthorization.

In the past, human rights advocates made allegations about financial improprieties at USCIRF, particularly that USCIRF Commissioners had made lavish travel arrangements. As a result, in 2011 I authored a provision clarifying that USCIRF Commissioners are subject to Federal travel regulations.

I was troubled to learn about more allegations of financial irregularities at USCIRF only a few weeks after the last reauthorization. In early 2012, USCIRF staff notified my office that USCIRF's office manager had been involved in embezzlement and fraud for several years. The office manager subsequently pled guilty and was sentenced to 20 months in prison for embezzling $217,000 from 2007–2011. This is a significant amount of taxpayer money in any circumstance, but particularly for a small organization like USCIRF.

I am also concerned about unresolved claims that USCIRF, an organization charged with protecting religious freedom, discriminated against a former employee on the basis of her religion.

In 2011, I included language in the last USCIRF reauthorization providing anti-discrimination protections to USCIRF employees and allowing pending civil rights claims to proceed. The impetus for this provision was a lawsuit filed by a former USCIRF employee, who claimed that her permanent employment offer was rescinded after the Commissioners learned of her prior job with a Muslim civil rights organization. USCIRF did not deny the discrimination claim. Instead, they argued that USCIRF employees do not have federal civil rights protections.

Unfortunately, the lawsuit is still pending. I understand that USCIRF's lawyers have refused to enter into settlement negotiations with the Commission's former employee and instead are aggressively litigating the case.

As Christianity Today said, ''the trial will be one of the most ironic in American history, with the congressional commission charged with monitoring religious freedom around the world defending its own employment practices in court.''

In light of these concerns, the USCIRF Reform and Reauthorization Act would improve Congressional oversight by reauthorizing the Commission for two years. A 2-year reauthorization period will allow the Commission to continue to pursue its important mission while Congress closely monitors USCIRF's activities to assure the reforms in this legislation are fully implemented.

I strongly support the mission of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom to protect and promote international religious freedom. I believe the reforms in my legislation will help USCIRF more effectively pursue this mission.

I urge my colleagues to support the USCIRF Reform and Reauthorization Act so that USCIRF can quickly be reauthorized with these important reforms.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 2711

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''United States Commission on International Religious Freedom Reform and Reauthorization Act of 2014''.

SEC. 2. ESTABLISHMENT AND COMPOSITION.

(a) LEADERSHIP.—Subsection (d) of section 201 of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (22 U.S.C. 6431(d)) is amended to read as follows:

''(d) ELECTION OF CHAIR.—At the first meeting of the Commission after May 30 of each year, a majority of the Members of the Commission present and voting shall elect the Chair and Vice Chair of the Commission, subject to the following requirements:

''(1) INITIAL ELECTIONS.—At the first meeting of the Commission after May 30, 2015, the Members of the Commission shall elect as Chair a Commissioner appointed by an elected official of the political party that is not the political party of the President, and as Vice Chair a Commissioner appointed by an elected official of the political party of the President.

''(2) FUTURE ELECTIONS.—At the first meeting of the Commission after May 30, 2016, the Members of the Commission shall elect as Chair a Commissioner appointed by an elected official of the political party of the President, and as Vice Chair a Commissioner appointed by an elected official of the political party that is not the political party of the President. Thereafter, positions of Chair and Vice Chair shall continue to rotate on an annual basis between Commissioners appointed by elected officials of each political party.

''(3) TERM LIMITS.—No Member of the Commission is eligible to be elected as Chair of the Commission for a second term, and no Member of the Commission is eligible to be elected as Vice Chair of the Commission for a second term.''.

(b) ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS OF AMBASSADOR AT LARGE FOR INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM.—Subsection (f) of such section (22 U.S.C. 6431(f)) is amended by adding at the end the following: ''The Ambassador at Large shall be given advance notice of all Commission meetings and may attend all Commission meetings as a non-voting Member of the Commission.''.

(c) APPOINTMENTS IN CASES OF VACANCIES.—Subsection (g) of such section (22 U.S.C. 6431(g)) is amended by striking the second sentence.

SEC. 3. POWERS OF THE COMMISSION.

Section 203(e) of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (22 U.S.C. 6432a) is amended to read as follows:

''(e) VIEWS OF THE COMMISSION.—The Members of the Commission may speak in their capacity as private citizens. Statements on behalf of the Commission shall be issued in writing over the names of the Members. Members of the Commission shall make every effort to reach consensus on all statements on behalf of the Commission, including testimony, press releases, and articles by Commissioners or Commission staff. When a statement supported by all Commissioners is not possible, the Commission shall issue a statement only if such statement is approved by an affirmative vote of at least six of the nine Members of the Commission and each Member of the Commission may include the individual or dissenting views of the Member. The Commission shall in its written statements clearly describe its statutory authority, distinguishing that authority from that of appointed or elected officials of the United States Government. Oral statements, where practicable, shall include a similar description.''.

SEC. 4. COMMISSION PERSONNEL MATTERS.

(a) STAFF DIRECTORS.—Section 204 of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (22 U.S.C. 6432b) is amended by striking subsections (a), (b), and (c) and inserting the following new subsections:

''(a) COMMITTEE FUNCTIONS.—Subject to subsection (c), the Commission may appoint and fix the pay of such staff personnel as it deems desirable. All decisions pertaining to the hiring, firing, and fixing of pay of personnel of the Commission shall be by an affirmative vote of at least six of the nine Members of the Commission, except that—

''(1) Members of the Commission appointed by an elected official of the political party of the President, by a majority vote thereof, shall be entitled to appoint, terminate, and fix the pay of a Majority Staff Director and shall have the authority to appoint, terminate, and fix the pay of three professional staff members who shall be responsible to the Members of the Commission of the political party of the President; and

''(2) Members of the Commission appointed by an elected official of the political party that is not the political party of the President, by a majority vote thereof, shall be entitled to appoint, terminate, and fix the pay of a Minority Staff Director and shall have the authority to appoint, terminate, and fix the pay of three professional staff members who shall be responsible to the Members of the Commission of the political party that is not the political party of the President.

''(b) STAFF APPOINTMENTS AND COMPENSATION.—All staff appointments shall be made without regard to the provisions of chapter 51 and subchapter III of chapter 53 of title 5 relating to classification of positions and General Schedule pay rates, except that the rate of pay for the Majority Staff Director, Minority Staff Director, and other personnel may not exceed the rate payable for level V of the Executive Schedule under section 5316 of such title.

''(c) QUALIFICATIONS OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF.—The Commission shall ensure that the professional staff of the Commission consists of persons with expertise in areas relevant to the issue of international religious freedom, including foreign affairs, direct experience abroad, human rights, and international law.''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Subsection (e) of such section (22 U.S.C. 6432b(e)) is amended by striking ''The Executive Director'' both places it appears and inserting ''The Majority Staff Director and the Minority Staff Director''.

SEC. 5. REPORT OF COMMISSION.

(a) REPORT PUBLICATION DATE.—Section 205(a) of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (22 U.S.C. 6433(a)) is amended by striking ''Not later than May 1 of each year'' and inserting ''Each year, not earlier than 30 days after, and not later than 90 days after, the publication of the Department of State's Annual Report on International Religious Freedom''.

(b) CONSENSUS ON REPORTS.—Section 205(c) of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (22 U.S.C. 6433(c)) is amended to read as follows:

''(c) INDIVIDUAL OR DISSENTING VIEWS.—Members of the Commission shall make every effort to reach consensus on the report. When a report supported by all Commissioners is not possible, the report shall be approved by an affirmative vote of at least six of the nine Members of the Commission and each Member of the Commission may include the individual or dissenting views of the Member.''.

SEC. 6. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

Section 207(a) of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (22 U.S.C. 6435(a)) is amended by striking ''2014'' and inserting ''2016''.

SEC. 7. TERMINATION.

Section 209 of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (22 U.S.C. 6436) is amended by striking ''September 30, 2014'' and inserting ''September 30, 2016''.

By Mr. DURBIN:

S. 2712. A bill to amend section 455(m) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 in order to allow adjunct faculty members to qualify for public service loan forgiveness; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, today I introduced the Adjunct Faculty Loan Fairness Act, a bill that would make adjunct professors eligible to participate in the Public Service Student Loan Forgiveness Program.

Contingent faculty members are like full-time instructors. They have advanced degrees. They teach classes and spend many hours outside the classroom preparing for class. They hold office hours, grade papers and give feedback to students. They provide advice and write letters of recommendation. Students rely on them. Since most adjuncts have advanced degrees and, as almost 75 percent of graduate degree recipients have an average of $61,000 in student loans, they are also among the 40 million Americans with student debt.

The Public Service Loan Forgiveness program is meant to encourage graduates to go into public service by offering student loan forgiveness for eligible federal loans after ten years of full-time work in government or the non-profit sector. Public service fields like nursing, military service, and public health qualify. And many education jobs qualify, including full-time work at public universities and part-time work at community colleges in high-needs subject areas or areas of shortage. But other faculty members who work part-time are not eligible for loan forgiveness because the law requires an annual average of 30 hours per week to qualify for the program. For adjunct faculty working at several schools on a contingent basis, this requirement can be difficult or impossible to meet, even when they are putting in more than 30 hours of work each week.

The number of faculty hours given for each class is calculated differently at different schools. Some give one hour per hour in the classroom while others actually take into consideration the time required outside the classroom. So, even as these faculty members are working hard and as their options for tenured, full-time positions become slimmer, more of them are overworked and undervalued for their work in public service.

The Adjunct Faculty Loan Fairness Act of 2014 would solve this by amending the Higher Education Act to expand the definition of a ''public service job'' to include a part-time faculty member who teaches at least one course at an eligible institution of higher education. They would still have to meet all the other requirements to qualify for the program, including making 120 on-time payments while employed at a qualifying institution, and they could not be employed full-time elsewhere at the same time.

This bill would benefit someone like David Weiss, an adjunct professor from St. Paul, Minnesota, who graduated with $48,000 in student debt and, after 12 years of on-time payments, has $35,000 left. Like most adjuncts, David has dealt with uncertain job security. In good years, he is able to teach 5 to 7 courses a year, but recently he has only been offered two to three courses. He supplements his income from teaching with other part-time work. This bill would ensure that David and many thousands like him, could obtain credit towards PSLF for payments made while teaching whether or not he was teaching one course or 7.

Unfortunately, for all their contributions to the college programs and the students they work with, adjunct faculty don't have the same employment benefits or job security as their colleagues. The number of classes they teach every semester varies. To make ends meet, these professors often end up teaching classes at more than one school in the same semester, getting paid about $3,000 per class and making an average annual income that hovers around minimum wage. This also means that, in some parts of the country, they spend as much time commuting as they do teaching.

Nationally, ⅔ of all higher education faculty work on a contingent basis, with low pay and little or no benefits or job security. In the past, these were a minority of professors who were hired to teach an occasional class because they could bring experience to the classroom in a specific field or industry. Over time, as university budgets have tightened and it has gotten more expensive to hire full-time, tenure track professors, higher education institutions have increasingly hired adjuncts.

From 1991 to 2011, the number of part-time faculty in the U.S. increased two and a half times from 291,000 to over 760,000. At the same time, the percentage of professors holding tenure-track positions has been steadily decreasing—from 45 percent of all instructors in 1975 to only 24 percent in 2011. The number of full-time instructors, tenured and non-tenured, now makes up only about 50 percent of professors on U.S. campuses. The other 50 percent of the 1.5 million faculty employees at public and non-profit colleges and universities in the U.S. work on a part-time, contingent basis.

Illinois colleges rely heavily on adjuncts. In 2012, 53 percent of all faculty at public and not-for-profit colleges and universities in the State, more than 30,400 faculty employees, worked on a part-time basis. This is a 52.6 percent increase in part-time faculty in Illinois compared to a 13 percent increase in full-time faculty since 2002.

Not surprisingly, in Illinois, 69 percent of all part-time faculty work in Chicago, where the cost of living is 16 percent higher than the U.S. average. Based on an average payment of $3,000 per class an adjunct professor must teach between seventeen and thirty classes a year to pay for rent and utilities in Chicago.

They would have to teach up to 7 classes to afford groceries for a family of four and two to four classes per year just to cover student loan payments. Because they are part-time, they are not eligible for vacation time, paid sick days, or group health-care. So they would have to teach an additional two to three classes to afford family coverage from the lowest priced health insurance offered on Get Covered Illinois, the official health marketplace.

Even though these professors are working in a relatively low-paying field, teaching our students, their part-time status also means they aren't eligible for the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program.

This bill does not completely fix this growing reliance on part-time professors who are underpaid and undervalued. But it would ensure that members of the contingent faculty workforce are no longer excluded from the loan forgiveness program for public servants. I hope my colleagues will join me in the effort to provide this benefit to faculty members who provide our students with a quality education.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

S. 2712

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Adjunct Faculty Loan Fairness Act of 2014''.

SEC. 2. LOAN FORGIVENESS FOR ADJUNCT FACULTY.

Section 455(m)(3)(B)(ii) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1087e(m)(3)(B)(ii)) is amended—

(1) by striking ''teaching as'' and inserting the following: ''teaching—

''(I) as'';

(2) by striking '', foreign language faculty, and part-time faculty at community colleges), as determined by the Secretary.'' and inserting ''and foreign language faculty), as determined by the Secretary; or''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(II) as a part-time faculty member or instructor who—

''(aa) teaches not less than 1 course at an institution of higher education (as defined in section 101(a)), a postsecondary vocational institution (as defined in section 102(c)), or a Tribal College or University (as defined in section 316(b)); and

''(bb) is not employed on a full-time basis by any other employer.''.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 529—RECOGNIZING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE UNITED STATES AND COMMENDING ITS MEMBERS FOR THEIR COURAGE AND SACRIFICE IN SERVICE TO THE UNITED STATES

Mr. TOOMEY submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 529

Whereas on September 17, 1914, members of the American Veterans of Foreign Service and the National Society of the Army of the Philippines merged their organizations and voted in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, to adopt the name ''Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States'';

Whereas the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States remains active in communities at the international, national, State, and local levels with more than 2,000,000 members;

Whereas the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States provides financial, social, and emotional support to members of the Armed forces, veterans, and their dependents throughout the United States;

Whereas the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States works on behalf of service members of the United States by calling on Congress for better health care and benefits for veterans;

Whereas the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States annually donates more than 13,000,000 volunteer hours of community service; and

Whereas the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States has played an instrumental role in each significant veterans legislation passed since its founding and continues to play such a role: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) congratulates the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States on its 100th anniversary as a national organization with a mission to—

(A) foster camaraderie among United States veterans of overseas conflicts;

(B) serve veterans, the military, and communities across the United States; and

(C) advocate on behalf of all veterans;

(2) commends the members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States for their courage and sacrifice in service to the United States; and

(3) encourages all individuals of the United States to express their appreciation for the honor, courage, and bravery of United States veterans and for the service of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States.

SENATE RESOLUTION 530—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE ON THE CURRENT SITUATION IN IRAQ AND THE URGENT NEED TO PROTECT RELIGIOUS MINORITIES FROM PERSECUTION FROM THE SUNNI ISLAMIST INSURGENT AND TERRORIST GROUP THE ISLAMIC STATE, FORMERLY KNOWN AS THE ISLAMIC STATE OF IRAQ AND THE LEVANT (ISIL), AS IT EXPANDS ITS CONTROL OVER AREAS IN NORTHWESTERN IRAQ

Mr. PORTMAN (for himself, Mr. ALEXANDER, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. BOOZMAN, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. ENZI, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. HELLER, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. JOHANNS, Mr. KIRK, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. LEE, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. MORAN, Mr. RISCH, Mr. JOHNSON of Wisconsin, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. SESSIONS, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. THUNE, Mr. WICKER, Mr. HATCH, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. VITTER, and Ms. AYOTTE) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 530

Whereas Iraq is currently embroiled in a surge of violence arising from an Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL)-led offensive that began in Anbar province and has spread to key locations such as Mosul, Tikrit, and Samarra and continues to engulf the region in violence and instability;

Whereas, on June 29, 2014, ISIL leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi renamed the group the Islamic State and pronounced himself Caliph of a new Islamic Caliphate encompassing the areas under his control, and Mr. al-Baghdadi has a stated mission of spreading the Islamic State and caliphate across the region through violence against Shiites, non-Muslims, and unsupportive Sunnis;

Whereas Iraq's population is approximately 31,300,000 people, with 97 percent identifying themselves as Muslim and the approximately 3 percent of religious minorities groups comprising of Christians, Yezidis, Sabean-Mandaeans, Bahais, Shabaks, Kakais, and Jews;

Whereas the Iraqi Christian population is estimated to be between 400,000 and 850,000, with two-thirds being Chaldean, one-fifth Assyrian, and the remainder consisting of Syriacs, Protestants, Armenians, and Anglicans;

Whereas the Iraqi constitution provides for religious freedom by stating that ''no law may be enacted that contradicts the principles of democracy,'' ''no law may be enacted that contradicts the rights and basic freedoms stipulated in this Constitution,'' and ''[this Constitution] guarantees the full religious rights to freedom of religious belief and practice of all individuals such as Christians, Yazidis, and Mandean Sabeans'';

Whereas over 1,000,000 people have been displaced by violence in Iraq, and reports have surfaced of targeted harassment, persecution, and killings of Iraqi religious minorities by the Islamic State with little to no protection from the Government of Iraq and other security forces;

Whereas the fall of Mosul in particular has sparked enough anxiety among the Christian population that, for the first time in 1,600 years, there was no Mass in that city;

Whereas over 50 percent of Iraq's Christian population has fled since the fall of Saddam Hussein, and the government under Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki has not upheld its commitment to protect the rights of religious minorities;

Whereas the United States Government has provided over $73,000,000 of cumulative assistance to Iraq's minority populations since 2003 through economic development, humanitarian services, and capacity development;

Whereas 84,902 Iraqis have resettled to the United States between 2007 and 2013 and over 300,000 Chaldean and Assyrians currently reside throughout the country, particularly in Michigan, California, Arizona, Illinois, and Ohio; and

Whereas President Barack Obama recently declared on Religious Freedom Day, ''Foremost among the rights Americans hold sacred is the freedom to worship as we choose . . . we also remember that religious liberty is not just an American right; it is a universal human right to be protected here at home and across the globe. This freedom is an essential part of human dignity, and without it our world cannot know lasting peace'': Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) reaffirms its commitment to promoting and protecting religious freedom around the world and providing relief to minority groups facing persecution;

(2) calls on the Department of State to work with the Kurdistan Regional Government, the Government of Iraq, neighboring countries, the diaspora community in the United States, and other key stakeholders to help secure safe havens for those seeking safety and protection from religious persecution in Iraq;

(3) respectfully requests the addition of a Special Representative for Religious Minorities to be included in Iraq's government; and

(4) urges the President to ensure the timely processing of visas for Iraq's minority groups fleeing religious persecution, in accordance with existing United States immigration law and national security screening procedures.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 3706. Mrs. MCCASKILL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 2410, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2015 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3707. Mrs. MCCASKILL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 2410, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3708. Mrs. MCCASKILL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 2410, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3709. Mrs. MCCASKILL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 2410, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3710. Mrs. MCCASKILL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her

to the bill S. 2410, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3711. Mrs. MCCASKILL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 2410, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3712. Mrs. MCCASKILL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 2410, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3713. Mr. BEGICH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2410, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3714. Mr. BEGICH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2410, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3715. Mr. CASEY (for himself, Ms. AYOTTE, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. WARNER, and Mrs. SHAHEEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2410, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3716. Mr. MCCAIN (for himself, Mr. FLAKE, and Mr. BARRASSO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2648, making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3717. Mr. RISCH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2410, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2015 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3718. Mr. RISCH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2410, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3719. Mr. WICKER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2648, making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3720. Mr. CRUZ (for himself, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. VITTER, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. LEE, Mr. JOHANNS, and Mr. BOOZMAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2648, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3721. Mr. WHITEHOUSE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2410, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2015 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3722. Mr. REED (for himself and Mr. HELLER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2648, making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 3706. Mrs. MCCASKILL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 2410, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2015 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle H of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1087. REPORT ON POW/MIA POLICIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the congressional defense committees a report on policies and proposals for providing access to information and documents to the next of kin of missing service personnel, including under chapter 76 of title 10, United States Code, as amended by section 911.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The report required under subsection (a) shall include the following elements:

(1) A description of information and documents to be provided to the next of kin, including the status of recovery efforts and service records.

(2) A description of the Department's plans, if any, to review the classification status of records related to past covered conflicts and missing service personnel.

(3) An assessment of whether it is feasible and advisable to develop a public interface for any database of missing personnel being developed.

SA 3707. Mrs. MCCASKILL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 2410, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2015 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle C of title VIII, add the following:

SEC. 846. PROGRAM FRAUD CIVIL REMEDIES STATUTE FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE AND THE NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION.

(a) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this section is to provide the Secretary of Defense and the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration with an effective administrative remedy to obtain recompense for the Department of Defense and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration for losses resulting from the submission to the Department or the Administration, respectively, of false, fictitious, or fraudulent claims and statements.

(b) PROGRAM FRAUD CIVIL REMEDIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Part IV of subtitle A of title 10, United States Code, is amended by inserting after chapter 163 the following new chapter:

"CHAPTER 164—ADMINISTRATIVE REMEDIES FOR FALSE CLAIMS AND STATEMENTS

"Sec.
"2751. Applicability of chapter; definitions.
"2752. False claims and statements; liability.
"2753. Hearing and determinations.
"2754. Payment; interest on late payments.
"2755. Judicial review.
"2756. Collection of civil penalties and assessments.
"2757. Right to administrative offset.
"2758. Limitations.
"2759. Effect on other laws.
"2751. Applicability of chapter; definitions.

"§ 2751. Applicability of chapter; definitions

"(a) APPLICABILITY OF CHAPTER.—This chapter applies to the following agencies:

"(1) The Department of Defense.

"(2) The National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

"(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this chapter:

"(1) HEAD OF AN AGENCY.—The term 'head of an agency' means the Secretary of Defense and the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

"(2) CLAIM.—The term 'claim' means any request, demand, or submission—

"(A) made to the head of an agency for property, services, or money (including money representing grants, loans, insurance, or benefits);

"(B) made to a recipient of property, services, or money received directly or indirectly from the head of an agency or to a party to a contract with the head of an agency—

"(i) for property or services if the United States—

"(I) provided such property or services;

"(II) provided any portion of the funds for the purchase of such property or services; or

"(III) will reimburse such recipient or party for the purchase of such property or services; or

"(ii) for the payment of money (including money representing grants, loans, insurance, or benefits) if the United States—

"(I) provided any portion of the money requested or demanded; or

"(II) will reimburse such recipient or party for any portion of the money paid on such request or demand; or

"(C) made to the head of an agency which has the effect of decreasing an obligation to pay or account for property, services, or money.

"(3) KNOWS OR HAS REASON TO KNOW.—The term 'knows or has reason to know', for purposes of establishing liability under section 2752 of this title, means that a person, with respect to a claim or statement—

"(A) has actual knowledge that the claim or statement is false, fictitious, or fraudulent;

"(B) acts in deliberate ignorance of the truth or falsity of the claim or statement; or

"(C) acts in reckless disregard of the truth or falsity of the claim or statement, and no proof of specific intent to defraud is required.

"(4) RESPONSIBLE OFFICIAL.—The term 'responsible official' means a designated debarring and suspending official of the agency named in subsection (a).

"(5) RESPONDENT.—The term 'respondent' means a person who has received notice from a responsible official asserting liability under section 2752 of this title.

"(6) STATEMENT.—The term 'statement' means any representation, certification, affirmation, document, record, or an accounting or bookkeeping entry made—

"(A) with respect to a claim or to obtain the approval or payment of a claim (including relating to eligibility to make a claim); or

"(B) with respect to (including relating to eligibility for)—

"(i) a contract with, or a bid or proposal for a contract with, the head of an agency; or

"(ii) a grant, loan, or benefit from the head of an agency.

"(c) CLAIMS.—For purposes of paragraph (2) of subsection (b)—

"(1) each voucher, invoice, claim form, or other individual request or demand for property, services, or money constitutes a separate claim;

"(2) each claim for property, services, or money is subject to this chapter regardless of whether such property, services, or money is actually delivered or paid; and

"(3) a claim shall be considered made, presented, or submitted to the head of an agency, recipient, or party when such claim is actually made to an agent, fiscal intermediary, or other entity acting for or on behalf of such authority, recipient, or party.

"(d) STATEMENTS.—For purposes of paragraph (6) of subsection (b)—

''(1) each written representation, certification, or affirmation constitutes a separate statement; and

''(2) a statement shall be considered made, presented, or submitted to the head of an agency when such statement is actually made to an agent, fiscal intermediary, or other entity acting for or on behalf of such authority.

''§ 2752. False claims and statements; liability

''(a) FALSE CLAIMS.—Any person who makes, presents, or submits, or causes to be made, presented, or submitted, to the head of an agency a claim that the person knows or has reason to know—

''(1) is false, fictitious, or fraudulent;

''(2) includes or is supported by any written statement which asserts a material fact this is false, fictitious, or fraudulent;

''(3) includes or is supported by any written statement that—

''(A) omits a material fact;

''(B) is false, fictitious, or fraudulent as a result of such omission; and

''(C) is made, presented, or submitted by a person who has a duty to include such material fact; or

''(4) is for payment for the provision of property or services which the person has not provided as claimed,

shall, in addition to any other remedy that may be prescribed by law, be subject to a civil penalty of not more than $5,000 for each such claim. Such person shall also be subject to an assessment of not more than twice the amount of such claim, or the portion of such claim which is determined by the responsible official to be in violation of the preceding sentence.

''(b) FALSE STATEMENTS.—Any person who makes, presents, submits, or causes to be made, presented, or submitted, a written statement in conjunction with a procurement program or acquisition of the an agency named in section 2751(a) of this title that—

''(1) the person knows or has reason to know—

''(A) asserts a material fact that is false, fictitious, or fraudulent; or

''(B)(i) omits a material fact; and

''(ii) is false, fictitious, or fraudulent as a result of such omission;

''(2) in the case of a statement described in subparagraph (B) of paragraph (1), is a statement in which the person making, presenting, or submitting such statement has a duty to include such material fact; and

''(3) contains or is accompanied by an express certification or affirmation of the truthfulness and accuracy of the contents of the statement,

shall be subject to, in addition to any other remedy that may be prescribed by law, a civil penalty of not more than $5,000 for each such statement.

''§ 2753. Hearing and determinations

''(a) TRANSMITTAL OF NOTICE TO ATTORNEY GENERAL.—If a responsible official determines that there is adequate evidence to believe that a person is liable under section 2752 of this title, the responsible official shall transmit to the Attorney General, or any other officer or employee of the Department of Justice designated by the Attorney General, a written notice of the intention of such official to initiate an action under this section. The notice shall include the following:

''(1) A statement of the reasons for initiating an action under this section.

''(2) A statement specifying the evidence which supports liability under section 2752 of this title.

''(3) A description of the claims or statements for which liability under section 2752 of this title is alleged.

''(4) An estimate of the penalties and assessments that will be demanded under section 2752 of this title.

''(5) A statement of any exculpatory or mitigating circumstances which may relate to such claims or statements.

''(b) STATEMENT FROM ATTORNEY GENERAL.—(1) Within 90 days after receipt of a notice from a responsible official under subsection (a), the Attorney General, or any other officer or employee of the Department of Justice designated by the Attorney General, shall transmit a written statement to the responsible official which specifies—

''(A) that the Attorney General, or any other officer or employee of the Department of Justice designated by the Attorney General, approves or disapproves initiating an action under this section based on the allegations of liability stated in such notice; and

''(B) in any case in which the initiation of an action under this section is disapproved, the reasons for such disapproval.

''(2) If at any time after the initiation of an action under this section the Attorney General, or any other officer or employee of the Department of Justice designated by the Attorney General, transmits to a responsible official a written determination that the continuation of any action under this section may adversely affect any pending or potential criminal or civil action, such action shall be immediately stayed and may be resumed only upon written authorization from the Attorney General, or any other officer or employee of the Department of Justice designated by the Attorney General.

''(c) LIMITATION ON AMOUNT OF CLAIM THAT MAY BE PURSUED UNDER THIS SECTION.—No action shall be initiated under this section, nor shall any assessment be imposed under this section, if the total amount of the claim determined by the responsible official to violate section 2752(a) of this title exceeds $500,000. The $500,000 threshold does not include penalties or any assessment permitted under section 2752(a) of this title greater than the amount of the claim determined by the responsible official to violate such section.

''(d) PROCEDURES FOR RESOLVING CLAIMS.—(1) Upon receiving approval under subsection (b) to initiate an action under this section, the responsible official shall mail, by registered or certified mail, or other similar commercial means, or shall deliver, a notice to the person alleged to be liable under section 2752 of this title. Such notice shall specify the allegations of liability against such person, specify the total amount of penalties and assessments sought by the United States, advise the person of the opportunity to submit facts and arguments in opposition to the allegations set forth in the notice, advise the person of the opportunity to submit offers of settlement or proposals of adjustment, and advise the person of the procedures of the agency governing the resolution of actions initiated under this section.

''(2) Within 30 days after receiving a notice under paragraph (1), or any additional period of time granted by the responsible official, the respondent may submit in person, in writing, or through a representative, facts and arguments in opposition to the allegations set forth in the notice, including any additional information that raises a genuine dispute of material fact.

''(3) If the respondent fails to respond within 30 days, or any additional time granted by the responsible official, the responsible official may issue a written decision disposing of the matters raised in the notice. Such decision shall be based on the record before the responsible official. If the responsible official concludes that the respondent is liable under section 2752 of this title, the decision shall include the findings of fact and conclusions of law which the responsible official relied upon in determining that the respondent is liable, and the amount of any penalty or assessment to be imposed on the respondent. Any such determination shall be based on a preponderance of the evidence. The responsible official shall promptly send to the respondent a copy of the decision by registered or certified mail, or other similar commercial means, or shall hand deliver a copy of the decision.

''(4) If the respondent makes a timely submission, and the responsible official determines that the respondent has not raised any genuine dispute of material fact, the responsible official may issue a written decision disposing of the matters raised in the notice. Such decision shall be based on the record before the responsible official. If the responsible official concludes that the respondent is liable under section 2752 of this title, the decision shall include the findings of fact and conclusions of law which the responsible official relied upon in determining that the respondent is liable, and the amount of any penalty or assessment to be imposed on the respondent. Any such determination shall be based on a preponderance of the evidence. The responsible official shall promptly send to the respondent a copy of the decision by registered or certified mail, or other similar commercial means, or shall hand deliver a copy of the decision.

''(5) If the respondent makes a timely submission, and the responsible official determines that the respondent has raised a genuine dispute of material fact, the responsible official shall commence a hearing to resolve the genuinely disputed material facts by mailing by registered or certified mail, or other similar commercial means, or by hand delivery of, a notice informing the respondent of—

''(A) the time, place, and nature of the hearing;

''(B) the legal authority under which the hearing is to be held;

''(C) the material facts determined by the responsible official to be genuinely in dispute that will be the subject of the hearing; and

''(D) a description of the procedures for the conduct of the hearing.

''(6) The responsible official and any person against whom liability is asserted under this chapter may agree to a compromise or settle an action at any time. Any compromise or settlement must be in writing.

''(e) RESPONDENT ENTITLED TO COPY OF THE RECORD.—At any time after receiving a notice under paragraph (1) of subsection (d), the respondent shall be entitled to a copy of the entire record before the responsible official.

''(f) HEARINGS.—Any hearing commenced under this section shall be conducted by the responsible official, or a fact-finder designated by the responsible official, solely to resolve genuinely disputed material facts identified by the responsible official and set forth in the notice to the respondent.

''(g) PROCEDURES FOR HEARINGS.—(1) Each hearing shall be conducted under procedures prescribed by the head of the agency. Such procedures shall include the following:

''(A) The provision of written notice of the hearing to the respondent, including written notice of—

''(i) the time, place, and nature of the hearing;

''(ii) the legal authority under which the hearing is to be held;

''(iii) the material facts determined by the responsible official to be genuinely in dispute that will be the subject of the hearing; and

''(iv) a description of the procedures for the conduct of the hearing.

''(B) The opportunity for the respondent to present facts and arguments through oral or documentary evidence, to submit rebuttal evidence, and to conduct such cross-examination as may be required to resolve any genuinely disputed material facts identified by the responsible official.

''(C) The opportunity for the respondent to be accompanied, represented, and advised by counsel or such other qualified representative as the head of the agency may specify in such procedures.

''(2) For the purpose of conducting hearings under this section, the responsible official is authorized to administer oaths or affirmations.

''(3) Hearings shall be held at the responsible official's office, or at such other place as may be agreed upon by the respondent and the responsible official.

''(h) DECISION FOLLOWING HEARING.—The responsible official shall issue a written decision within 60 days after the conclusion of the hearing. That decision shall set forth specific findings of fact resolving the genuinely disputed material facts that were the subject of the hearing. The written decision shall also dispose of the matters raised in the notice required under paragraph (1) of subsection (d). If the responsible official concludes that the respondent is liable under section 2752 of this title, the decision shall include the findings of fact and conclusions of law which the responsible official relied upon in determining that the respondent is liable, and the amount of any penalty or assessment to be imposed on the respondent. Any decisions issued under this subsection shall be based on the record before the responsible official and shall be supported by a preponderance of the evidence. The responsible official shall promptly send to the respondent a copy of the decision by registered or certified mail, or other similar commercial means, or shall hand deliver a copy of the decision.

''§ 2754. Payment; interest on late payments

''(a) PAYMENT OF ASSESSMENTS AND PENALTIES.—A respondent shall render payment of any assessment and penalty imposed by a responsible official, or any amount otherwise agreed to as part of a settlement or adjustment, not later than the date—

''(1) that is 30 days after the date of the receipt by the respondent of the responsible official's decision; or

''(2) as otherwise agreed to by the respondent and the responsible official.

''(b) INTEREST.—If there is an unpaid balance as of the date determined under subsection (a), interest shall accrue from that date on any unpaid balance. The rate of interest charged shall be the rate in effect as of that date that is published by the Secretary of the Treasury under section 3717 of title 31.

''(c) TREATMENT OF RECEIPTS.—All penalties, assessments, or interest paid, collected, or otherwise recovered under this chapter shall be deposited into the Treasury as miscellaneous receipts as provided in section 3302 of title 31.

''§ 2755. Judicial review

''A decision by a responsible official under section 2753(d) or 2753(h) of this title shall be final. Any such final decision is subject to judicial review only under chapter 7 of title 5.

''§ 2756. Collection of civil penalties and assessments

''(a) JUDICIAL ENFORCEMENT OF CIVIL PENALTIES AND ASSESSMENTS.—The Attorney General shall be responsible for judicial enforcement of any civil penalty or assessment imposed under this chapter.

''(b) CIVIL ACTIONS FOR RECOVERY.—Any penalty or assessment imposed in a decision by a responsible official, or amounts otherwise agreed to as part of a settlement or adjustment, along with any accrued interest, may be recovered in a civil action brought by the Attorney General. In any such action, no matter that was raised or that could have been raised in a proceeding under this chapter or pursuant to judicial review under section 2755 of this title may be raised as a defense, and the determination of liability and the determination of amounts of penalties and assessments shall not be subject to review.

''(c) JURISDICTION OF UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURTS.—The district courts of the United States shall have jurisdiction of any action commenced by the United States under subsection (b).

''(d) JOINING AND CONSOLIDATING ACTIONS.—Any action under subsection (b) may, without regard to venue requirements, be joined and consolidated with or asserted as a counterclaim, cross-claim, or setoff by the United States in any other civil action which includes as parties the United States, and the person against whom such action may be brought.

''(e) JURISDICTION OF UNITED STATES COURT OF FEDERAL CLAIMS.—The United States Court of Federal Claims shall have jurisdiction of any action under subsection (b) to recover any penalty or assessment, or amounts otherwise agreed to as part of a settlement or adjustment, along with any accrued interest, if the cause of action is asserted by the United States as a counterclaim in a matter pending in such court. The counterclaim need not relate to the subject matter of the underlying claim.

''§ 2757. Right to administrative offset

''The amount of any penalty or assessment that has been imposed by a responsible official, or any amount agreed upon in a settlement or compromise, along with any accrued interest, may be collected by administrative offset.

''§ 2758. Limitations

''(a) LIMITATION ON PERIOD FOR INITIATION OF ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION.—An action under section 2752 of this title with respect to a claim or statement shall be commenced within six years after the date on which such claim or statement is made, presented, or submitted.

''(b) LIMITATION PERIOD FOR INITIATION OF CIVIL ACTION FOR RECOVERY OF ADMINISTRATIVE PENALTY OR ASSESSMENT.—A civil action to recover a penalty or assessment under section 2756 of this title shall be commenced within three years after the date of the decision of the responsible official imposing the penalty or assessment.

''§ 2759. Effect on other laws

''(a) RELATIONSHIP TO TITLE 44 AUTHORITIES.—This chapter does not diminish the responsibility of the head of an agency to comply with the provisions of chapter 35 of title 44, relating to coordination of Federal information policy.

''(b) RELATIONSHIP TO TITLE 31 AUTHORITIES.—The procedures set forth in this chapter apply to the agencies named in section 2751(a) of this title in lieu of the procedures under chapter 38 of title 31, relating to administrative remedies for false claims and statements.

''(c) RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER AUTHORITIES.—Any action, inaction, or decision under this chapter shall be based solely upon the information before the responsible official and shall not limit or restrict any agency of the Government from instituting any other action arising outside this chapter, including suspension or debarment, based upon the same information. Any action, inaction, or decision under this chapter shall not restrict the ability of the Attorney General to bring judicial action, based upon the same information as long as such action is not otherwise prohibited by law.''.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The tables of chapters at the beginning of subtitle A, and at the beginning of part IV of subtitle A, of such title are each amended by inserting after the item relating to chapter 163 the following new item:

''164. Administrative Remedies for False Claims and Statements ..... 2751''.

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 3801(a)(1) of title 31, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), by inserting ''(other than the Department of Defense)'' after ''executive department'';

(2) by striking subparagraph (B);

(3) by redesignating subparagraphs (C), (D), (E), and (F) as subparagraphs (B), (C), (D), and (E), respectively; and

(4) in subparagraph (B), as redesignated by paragraph (3), by inserting ''(other than the National Aeronautics and Space Administration)'' after ''not an executive department''.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Chapter 164 of title 10, United States Code, as added by subsection (b), and the amendments made by subsection (c), shall apply to any claim or statement made, presented, or submitted on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 3708. Mrs. MCCASKILL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 2410, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2015 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle E of title V, add the following:

SEC. 557. ADDITIONAL ELEMENTS IN MILITARY JUSTICE REVIEW COMMITTEE COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF MILITARY JUSTICE REFORM.

The Secretary of Defense shall provide that the matters considered by the Military Justice Review Committee in its current comprehensive review of military justice reform shall include the following:

(1) A recommendation as to the feasibility and advisability of specifying separately as an offense under chapter 47 of title 10, United States Code (the Uniform Code of Military Justice), each of the following offenses that are currently encompassed by general article section 934 of title 10, United States Code (article 134 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice):

(A) Assault with intent to commit murder, voluntary manslaughter, rape, robbery, forcible sodomy, arson, burglary, and housebreaking.

(B) Child endangerment.

(C) Child pornography.

(D) Negligent homicide.

(E) Kidnapping.

(F) Obstruction of justice.

(G) Pandering and prostitution.

(H) Subordination of perjury.

(I) Soliciting another to commit an offense.

(J) Any other offense currently encompassed by general article section 934 of title 10, United States Code that the Military Justice Review Committee considers appropriate.

(2) A recommendation as to the feasibility and advisability of terminating the authority of the Courts of Criminal Appeals to

overturn a finding of guilt based on factual insufficiency, including an assessment of any efficiencies that could be achieved in the appellate process by the termination of such authority.

SA 3709. Mrs. MCCASKILL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 2410, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2015 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle E of title V, add the following:

SEC. 567. APPLICABILITY OF ELIMINATION OF FIVE-YEAR STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS ON TRIAL BY COURT-MARTIAL TO OFFENSES INVOLVING SEX-RELATED CRIMES TO CERTAIN OFFENSES COMMITTED BEFORE ELIMINATION OF THE STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS.

Section 1703(c) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2014 (Public Law 113–66; 127 Stat. 958; 10 U.S.C. 843 note) is amended—

(1) by striking ''the date of the enactment of this Act'' and inserting ''December 26, 2013''; and

(2) by striking ''that is committed on or after that date.'' and inserting ''that is committed as follows:

''(1) On or after December 26, 2013.

''(2) Before December 26, 2013, but only if such offense was committed on such a date that the statute of limitations on such offense, as in effect on December 25, 2013, had not expired as of the date of the enactment of the Carl Levin National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015.''.

SA 3710. Mrs. MCCASKILL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 2410, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2015 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike section 827 and insert the following:

SEC. 827. PROHIBITION ON REIMBURSEMENT OF CONTRACTORS FOR CONGRESSIONAL INVESTIGATIONS AND INQUIRIES.

(a) CIVILIAN CONTRACTS.—Section 4304(a) of title 41, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(17) Costs incurred by a contractor in connection with any congressional investigation or inquiry.''.

(b) DEFENSE CONTRACTS.—Section 2324(e)(1) of title 10, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

''(Q) Costs incurred by a contractor in connection with a congressional investigation or inquiry into an issue that is the subject matter of a proceeding resulting in a disposition as described in subsection (k)(2).''.

SA 3711. Mrs. MCCASKILL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 2410, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2015 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle B of title VIII, add the following:

SEC. 830. EXTENSION OF WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTIONS FOR CONTRACTOR EMPLOYEES TO EMPLOYEES OF CONTRACTORS OF THE ELEMENTS OF THE INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY.

(a) CONTRACTORS OF DOD AND RELATED AGENCIES.—Subsection (e) of section 2409 of title 10, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

''(e) DISCLOSURES WITH RESPECT TO ELEMENTS OF INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY AND INTELLIGENCE-RELATED ACTIVITIES.—(1) Any disclosure under this section by an employee of a contractor, subcontractor, or grantee of an element of the intelligence community (as defined in section 3(4) of the National Security Act of 1947 (50 U.S.C. 3003(4)) with respect to an element of the intelligence community or an activity of an element of the intelligence community shall comply with applicable provisions of section 17(d)(5) of the Central Intelligence Agency Act of 1949 (50 U.S.C. 3517(d)(5)) and section 8H of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.)

''(2) Any disclosure described in paragraph (1) of information required by Executive order to be kept classified in the interests of national defense or the conduct of foreign affairs that is made to a court shall be treated by the court in a manner consistent with the interests of the national security of the United States, including through the use of summaries or ex parte submissions if the element of the intelligence community awarding the contract or grant concerned advises the court that the national security interests of the United States warrant the use of such summaries or submissions.''.

(b) PILOT PROGRAM ON OTHER CONTRACTOR EMPLOYEES.—Subsection (f) of section 4712 of title 41, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

''(f) DISCLOSURES WITH RESPECT TO ELEMENTS OF INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY AND INTELLIGENCE-RELATED ACTIVITIES.—

''(1) MANNER OF DISCLOSURES.—Any disclosure under this section by an employee of a contractor, subcontractor, or grantee of an element of the intelligence community (as defined in section 3(4) of the National Security Act of 1947 (50 U.S.C. 3003(4)) with respect to an element of the intelligence community or an activity of an element of the intelligence community shall comply with applicable provisions of section 17(d)(5) of the Central Intelligence Agency Act of 1949 (50 U.S.C. 3517(d)(5)) and section 8H of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.)

''(2) TREATMENT BY COURTS.—Any disclosure described in paragraph (1) of information required by Executive order to be kept classified in the interests of national defense or the conduct of foreign affairs that is made to a court shall be treated by the court in a manner consistent with the interests of the national security of the United States, including through the use of summaries or ex parte submissions if the element of the intelligence community awarding the contract or grant concerned advises the court that the national security interests of the United States warrant the use of such summaries or submissions.''.

SA 3712. Mrs. MCCASKILL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 2410, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2015 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle D of title VIII, add the following:

SEC. 864. DEFENSE BASE ACT INSURANCE IMPROVEMENTS.

(a) REQUIREMENT FOR USE OF GOVERNMENT SELF-INSURANCE PROGRAM FOR INSURANCE UNDER DEFENSE BASE ACT.—Section 1 of the Defense Base Act (42 U.S.C. 1651) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(g) TRANSITION TO GOVERNMENT SELF-INSURANCE PROGRAM.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—On the effective date of this subsection, the requirements in paragraphs (1) through (6) of subsection (a) imposed on contractors to secure the payment of compensation and other benefits under the provisions of this Act and to maintain in full force and effect such security for the payment of such compensation and benefits shall, for injuries sustained after such effective date, be satisfied through the Government Defense Base Act self-insurance program.

''(2) GOVERNMENT DEFENSE BASE ACT SELF-INSURANCE PROGRAM DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term 'Government Defense Base Act self-insurance program' means a self-insurance program developed in the implementation strategy required by section 864(b) of the Carl Levin National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015 and under which—

''(A) compensation and benefits for injuries sustained are satisfied directly by the Federal Government, without action of the contractor (or subcontractor or subordinate contractor with respect to such contractor); and

''(B) compensation and benefits are funded by the agencies whose contracts are affected.

''(3) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The effective date of this subsection is the date occurring one year after the date of the enactment of the Carl Levin National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015.''.

(b) IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY FOR GOVERNMENT DEFENSE BASE ACT SELF-INSURANCE PROGRAM.—

(1) REQUIREMENT.—The Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Labor shall jointly develop and execute an implementation strategy for a self-insurance program for insurance required by the Defense Base Act (42 U.S.C. 1651 et seq.).

(2) MATTERS COVERED.—The implementation strategy required under paragraph (1) shall address and provide a plan for the following:

(A) Appropriate administration of the self-insurance program, including appropriate program financing.

(B) Appropriate procedures for claims processing, claims adjudication, and benefits delivery, taking into consideration the unique circumstances of insuring overseas contractors.

(C) A timeline and strategy to transfer existing claims covered under the Defense Base Act (42 U.S.C. 1651 et seq.) and the War Hazards Compensation Act (42 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.) by private carriers to a Federal Government self-insurance program.

(D) Recommendations for any additional statutory revisions necessary to carry out the strategy.

(3) REPORT AND DEADLINE.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Labor shall jointly prepare and submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report on the implementation strategy.

(c) REPORT.—

(1) REPORT REQUIREMENT.—Not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Labor shall jointly prepare a report on the implementation of this section and the amendment made by this section.

(2) MATTERS COVERED.—The report shall cover, at a minimum, the following with respect to the Government Defense Base Act self-insurance program (as defined in the amendment made by subsection (a)):

(A) The cost savings from the use of the self-insurance program.

(B) The quality of administration of the self-insurance program.

(C) Whether the delivery of benefits to injured employees and their survivors (in the case of death) has improved under the self-insurance program.

(D) Recommendations for improvement of the self-insurance program.

(E) Such other matters as the Secretaries consider appropriate.

(d) DEFINITION OF CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—In this section, the term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means the following:

(1) The Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives.

(2) The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives.

SA 3713. Mr. BEGICH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2410, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2015 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle C of title VII, add the following:

SEC. 737. EXTENSION OF QUALIFICATION OF CERTAIN MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELORS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE FOR PRACTICE IN CERTAIN AREAS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding the termination of effect of section 199.6(c)(3)(iii)(N)(2) of title 32, Code of Federal Regulations (as in effect on August 18, 2014), any mental health counselor who meets the qualifications for a TRICARE certified mental health counselor under the TRICARE program and possesses a master's or higher-level degree from a mental health counseling program of education and training from a regionally accredited institution shall continue to qualify as a TRICARE certified mental health counselor on and after January 1, 2017, or any earlier termination date for qualification as specified by the Secretary of Defense, for purposes of providing mental health care to beneficiaries of the TRICARE program in each of the following areas:

(1) Areas—

(A) that are 300 miles driving distance or more from an institution of higher education that offers a mental health counseling program of education and training accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs; or

(B) in which veterans in such area do not have access to such an institution via road.

(2) Areas outside the United States.

(b) TRICARE CERTIFIED MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELOR DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''TRICARE certified mental health counselor'' has the meaning given such term in section 199.6(c)(3)(iii)(N) of title 32, Code of Federal Regulations, as in effect on August 18, 2014.

SA 3714. Mr. BEGICH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2410, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2015 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike section 603.

SA 3715. Mr. CASEY (for himself, Ms. AYOTTE, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. WARNER, and Mrs. SHAHEEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2410, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2015 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle A of title XII, add the following:

SEC. 1213. SUPPORT FOR SECURITY OF AFGHAN WOMEN AND GIRLS.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Through the sacrifice and dedication of members of the Armed Forces and civilian personnel, as well the American people's generous investment, oppressive Taliban rule has given way to a nascent democracy in Afghanistan. It is in our national security interest to help prevent Afghanistan from ever again becoming a safe haven and training ground for international terrorism and to solidify and preserve the gains our men and women in uniform fought so hard to establish.

(2) The United States through its National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security has made firm commitments to support the human rights of the women and girls of Afghanistan. The National Action Plan states that ''the engagement and protection of women as agents of peace and stability will be central to United States efforts to promote security, prevent, respond to, and resolve conflict, and rebuild societies''.

(3) As stated in the Department of Defense's July 2013 1230 Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan (in this section, the ''1230 Report''), the United States Government ''recognizes that promoting security for Afghan women and girls must remain a top foreign policy priority''. The November 2013 1230 Report also highlights this priority and further states, ''A major focus of DoD and others working to improve the conditions of women in Afghanistan is now to maintain the gains made in the last twelve years after the ISAF mission ends.''

(4) According to the November 1230 Report, female recruitment and retention rates for the Afghan National Security Forces fell short of the Ministry of Defense (MoD) and Ministry of the Interior (MoI) female recruitment goals. In regards to women serving in the ANP, the November 1230 report also states, ''Low female recruitment is due in part to the MoI's passive female recruitment efforts, which has no specific female recruitment strategy or plan.''

(5) According to the Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction (SIGAR) April 2014 report, despite more women showing an interest in joining the security forces, women still make up less than 1 percent of the ANA and AAF. Also, according to the SIGAR report, ''As in prior quarters, the number of women in the ANP is increasing, but progress has been slow toward reaching the goal to have 5,000 women in the ANP by the end of 2014. This quarter, ANP personnel included 1,743 women–226 officers, 728 NCOs, and 789 enlisted personnel–according to CSTC–A. This is an increase of 539 women since August 22, 2011.''

(6) According to Shaheen Chughtai, Oxfam's deputy head of policy and campaigns, ''This lack of policewomen, and effective policewomen, is one of the main reasons why violence and threats against women and girls in Afghanistan are under-reported. It's why prosecutions are so rare and it's why the culture of impunity continues.''

(7) According to the Afghan Ministry of Women's Affairs report released in January 2014, of 4,505 cases of violence against women in 2013, which include issues such as forced marriage, fewer than 10 percent were resolved through the legal process.

(8) According to the International Crisis Group, there are not enough female police officers to staff all provincial Family Response Units (FRUs). United Nations Assistance Mission Afghanistan and the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees found that ''in the absence of Family Response Units or visible women police officers, women victims almost never approach police stations willingly, fearing they will be arrested, their reputations stained or worse''.

(9) FRUs are a core component of strategies for how to both strengthen the roles of women in the police force and ensure attention to crimes of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). However, FRUs have been under-resourced and under-utilized, making it difficult for them to fulfill their mandate.

(10) The Government of Afghanistan, with support from United States-led coalition forces, recruited, trained, and contracted over 13,000 female searchers for the 2014 presidential election thereby ensuring many women-only polling centers would be operational on election day.

(11) The Presidential election on April 5, 2014, saw unprecedented levels of female voter participation. According to the SIGAR quarterly report published on April 30, 2014, approximately 35 percent of those votes were cast by women.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS ON PROMOTION OF SECURITY OF AFGHAN WOMEN.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) it is in the United States Government's national security interests to prevent Afghanistan from again becoming a safe haven and training ground for international terrorism;

(2) as an important part of a strategy to achieve this objective and to help Afghanistan achieve its full potential, the United States Government should continue to regularly press the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to commit to the meaningful inclusion of women in the political, economic, and security transition process and to ensure that women's concerns are fully reflected in relevant negotiations, such as the upcoming NATO summit and the Afghanistan Development Conference of 2014 in London;

(3) the United States Government and the Government of Afghanistan should reaffirm their commitment to supporting Afghan civil society, including women's organizations, as agreed to during the meeting between the International Community and the Government of Afghanistan on the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework (TMAF) in July 2013; and

(4) the United States Government should continue to support and encourage efforts to recruit and retain women in the Afghan National Security Forces, who are critical to the success of NATO's Resolute Support Mission.

(c) PLAN TO PROMOTE SECURITY OF AFGHAN WOMEN.—

(1) REPORTING REQUIREMENT.—The Secretary of Defense, in conjunction with the Secretary of State, shall include in the report required under section 1227—

(A) an assessment of the security of Afghan women and girls, including information regarding efforts to increase the recruitment and retention of women in the ANSF; and

(B) an assessment of the implementation of the authority under section 1531 of the National Defense Authorization Act of Fiscal Year 2014 (Public Law 113–66; 127 Stat. 937), as extended by section 1523 of this Act, for the recruitment, integration, retention, training, and treatment of women in the ANSF, including the challenges associated with such implementation and the steps being taken to address those challenges.

(2) PLAN TO PROMOTE SECURITY OF AFGHAN WOMEN.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Defense shall, to the extent practicable, support the efforts of the Government of Afghanistan to promote the security of Afghan women and girls during and after the security transition process through the development and implementation by the Government of Afghanistan of an Afghan-led plan that should include the elements described in this paragraph.

(B) TRAINING.—The Secretary of Defense, working with the International Security Force (ISAF) and NATO Training Mission–Afghanistan (NTM–A), should encourage the Government of Afghanistan to develop—

(i) an evaluation of the effectiveness of existing training for Afghan National Security Forces on this issue;

(ii) a plan to increase the number of female security officers specifically trained to address cases of gender-based violence, including ensuring the Afghan National Police's Family Response Units (FRUs) have the necessary resources and are available to women across Afghanistan;

(iii) a plan to address the development of accountability mechanisms for ANA and ANP personnel who violate codes of conduct related to the human rights of women and girls, including female members of the ANSF; and

(iv) a plan to develop training for the ANA and the ANP to increase awareness and responsiveness among ANA and ANP personnel regarding the unique security challenges women confront when serving in those forces.

(C) ENROLLMENT AND TREATMENT.—The Secretary of Defense, in cooperation with the Afghan Ministries of Defense and Interior, shall seek to assist the Government of Afghanistan in including as part of the plan developed under subparagraph (A) the development and implementation of a plan to increase the number of female members of the ANA and ANP and to promote their equal treatment, including through such steps as providing appropriate equipment, modifying facilities, and ensuring literacy and gender awareness training for female recruits and male counterparts.

(D) ALLOCATION OF FUNDS.—The $25,000,000 allocated from the Afghan Security Forces Fund pursuant to section 1523(b) for the recruitment, integration, retention, training, and treatment of women in the ANSF, may be available for activities, including the provision of—

(i) appropriate equipment for female security and police forces;

(ii) modification and refurbishment of facilities to support the recruitment and retention of women within the forces;

(iii) security provisions for high-profile female police and army officers;

(iv) mechanisms to address sexual harassment within the forces;

(v) support for ANP Family Response Units; and

(vi) training to include literacy training for women recruits as well as gender awareness training for male counterparts.

(3) STAFFING AT POLLING STATIONS.—The Secretary of Defense should assist the Afghan MOD and MOI in maintaining the female searcher capabilities that were established for the April 2014 presidential elections for the 2015 parliamentary elections, which may include—

(A) providing assistance in the development of a recruitment and training program for female searchers and security officers to staff voting stations during the 2015 parliamentary elections;

(B) working with the Ministry of Interior to ensure that female ANP officers and previously recruited searchers' training is maintained and that those searchers already recruited and trained are reassigned to provide security for polling stations; and

(C) allotting the appropriate amount of funds from the funds allocated to the Afghan Security Forces Fund to hire any additional temporary female personnel required to staff polling stations.

SA 3716. Mr. MCCAIN (for himself, Mr. FLAKE, and Mr. BARRASSO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2648, making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Beginning on 16, strike line 20 and all that follows through page 23, line 10, and insert the following:

CHAPTER 2—FLAME ACT AMENDMENTS

SEC. 2201. FINDINGS.

Congress finds that—

(1) over the past 2 decades, wildfires have increased dramatically in size and costs;

(2) existing budget mechanisms for estimating the costs of wildfire suppression are not keeping pace with the actual costs for wildfire suppression due in part to improper budget estimation methodology;

(3) the FLAME Funds have not been adequate in supplementing wildland fire management funds in cases in which wildland fire management accounts are exhausted; and

(4) the practice of transferring funds from other agency funds (including the hazardous fuels treatment accounts) by the Secretary of Agriculture or the Secretary of the Interior to pay for wildfire suppression activities, commonly known as ''fire-borrowing'', does not support the missions of the Forest Service and the Department of the Interior with respect to protecting human life and property from the threat of wildfires.

SEC. 2202. FLAME ACT AMENDMENTS.

(a) FUNDING.—Section 502(d) of the FLAME Act of 2009 (43 U.S.C. 1748a(d)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) by striking ''shall consist of'' and all that follows through ''appropriated to'' in subparagraph (A) and inserting ''shall consist of such amounts as are appropriated to''; and

(B) by striking subparagraph (B); and

(2) by striking paragraphs (4) and (5).

(b) USE OF FLAME FUND.—Section 502(e) of the FLAME Act of 2009 (43 U.S.C. 1748a(e)) is amended by striking paragraphs (1) and (2) and inserting the following:

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Amounts appropriated to a FLAME Fund, in accordance with section 251(b)(2)(E) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 902(b)(2)(E)), shall be available to the Secretary concerned for wildfire suppression operations if the Secretary concerned issues a declaration and notifies the relevant congressional committees that a wildfire suppression event is eligible for funding from the FLAME Fund.

''(2) DECLARATION CRITERIA.—A declaration by the Secretary concerned under paragraph (1) may be issued only if—

''(A) an individual wildfire incident meets the objective indicators of an extraordinary wildfire situation, including—

''(i) a wildfire that the Secretary concerned determines has required an emergency Federal response based on the significant complexity, severity, or threat posed by the fire to human life, property, or a resource;

''(ii) a wildfire that covers 1,000 or more acres; or

''(iii) a wildfire that is within 10 miles of an urbanized area (as defined in section 134(b) of title 23, United States Code); or

''(B) the cumulative costs of wildfire suppression and Federal emergency response activities, as determined by the Secretary concerned, would exceed, within 30 days, all of the amounts otherwise previously appropriated (including amounts appropriated under an emergency designation, but excluding amounts appropriated to the FLAME Fund) to the Secretary concerned for wildfire suppression and Federal emergency response.''.

(c) TREATMENT OF ANTICIPATED AND PREDICTED ACTIVITIES.—Section 502(f) of the FLAME Act of 2009 (43 U.S.C. 1748a(f)) is amended by striking ''(e)(2)(B)(i)'' and inserting ''(e)(2)(A)''.

(d) PROHIBITION ON OTHER TRANSFERS.—Section 502 of the FLAME Act of 2009 (43 U.S.C. 1748a) is amended by striking subsection (g) and inserting the following:

''(g) PROHIBITION ON OTHER TRANSFERS.—The Secretary concerned shall not transfer funds provided for activities other than wildfire suppression operations to pay for any wildfire suppression operations.''.

(e) ACCOUNTING AND REPORTS.—Section 502(h) of the FLAME Act of 2009 (43 U.S.C. 1748a(h)) is amended by striking paragraphs (2) and (3) and inserting the following:

''(2) ESTIMATES OF WILDFIRE SUPPRESSION OPERATIONS COSTS TO IMPROVE BUDGETING AND FUNDING.—

''(A) BUDGET SUBMISSION.—Consistent with section 1105(a) of title 31, United States Code, the President shall include in each budget for the Department of Agriculture and the Department of the Interior information on estimates of appropriations for wildfire suppression costs based on an out-year forecast that uses a statistically valid regression model.

''(B) REQUIREMENTS.—The estimate of anticipated wildfire suppression costs under subparagraph (A) shall be developed using the best available—

''(i) climate, weather, and other relevant data; and

''(ii) models and other analytic tools.

''(C) INDEPENDENT REVIEW.—The methodology for developing the estimates of wildfire suppression costs under subparagraph (A) shall be subject to periodic independent review to ensure compliance with subparagraph (B).

''(D) SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—Consistent with the schedule described in clause (ii) and in accordance with subparagraphs (B) and (C), the

Secretary concerned shall submit to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate and the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives an updated estimate of wildfire suppression costs for the applicable fiscal year.

''(ii) SCHEDULE.—The Secretary concerned shall submit the updated estimates under clause (i) during—

''(I) March of each year;

''(II) May of each year;

''(III) July of each year; and

''(IV) if a bill making appropriations for the Department of the Interior and the Forest Service for the following fiscal year has not been enacted by September 1, September of each year.

''(3) REPORTS.—Annually, the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Interior shall jointly submit to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate, the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives, and the Committees on Appropriations of the Senate and the House of Representatives a report that—

''(A) provides a summary of the amount of appropriations made available during the previous fiscal year, which specifies the source of the amounts and the commitments and obligations made under this section;

''(B) describes the amounts obligated to individual wildfire events that meet the criteria specified in subsection (e)(2); and

''(C) includes any recommendations that the Secretary of Agriculture or the Secretary of the Interior may have to improve the administrative control and oversight of the FLAME Fund.''.

SEC. 2203. WILDFIRE DISASTER FUNDING AUTHORITY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 251(b)(2) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901(b)(2)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(E) FLAME WILDFIRE SUPPRESSION.—

''(i)(I) The adjustments for a fiscal year shall be in accordance with clause (ii) if—

''(aa) a bill or joint resolution making appropriations for a fiscal year is enacted that—

''(AA) specifies an amount for wildfire suppression operations in the Wildland Fire Management accounts at the Department of Agriculture or the Department of the Interior; and

''(BB) specifies a total amount to be used for the purposes described in subclause (II) in the Wildland Fire Management accounts at the Department of Agriculture or the Department of the Interior that is not less than 50 percent of the amount described in subitem (AA); and

''(bb) as of the day before the date of enactment of the bill or joint resolution all amounts in the FLAME Fund established under section 502 of the FLAME Act of 2009 (43 U.S.C. 1748a) have been expended.

''(II) The purposes described in this subclause are—

''(aa) hazardous fuels reduction projects and other activities of the Secretary of the Interior, as authorized under the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6501 et seq.) and the Tribal Forest Protection Act of 2004 (25 U.S.C. 3115a); and

''(bb) forest restoration and fuel reduction activities carried out outside of the wildland urban interface that are on condition class 3 Federal land or condition class 2 Federal land located within fire regime I, fire regime II, or fire regime III.

''(ii) If the requirements under clause (i)(I) are met for a fiscal year, the adjustments for that fiscal year shall be the amount of additional new budget authority provided in the bill or joint resolution described in clause (i)(I)(aa) for wildfire suppression operations for that fiscal year, but shall not exceed $1,000,000,000 in additional new budget authority in each of fiscal years 2015 through 2021.

''(iii) As used in this subparagraph—

''(I) the term 'additional new budget authority' means the amount provided for a fiscal year in an appropriation Act and specified to pay for the costs of wildfire suppression operations that is equal to the greater of the amount in excess of—

''(aa) 100 percent of the average costs for wildfire suppression operations over the previous 5 years; or

''(bb) the estimated amount of anticipated wildfire suppression costs at the upper bound of the 90 percent confidence interval for that fiscal year calculated in accordance with section 502(h)(3) of the FLAME Act of 2009 (43 U.S.C. 1748a(h)(3)); and

''(II) the term 'wildfire suppression operations' means the emergency and unpredictable aspects of wildland firefighting including support, response, and emergency stabilization activities; other emergency management activities; and funds necessary to repay any transfers needed for these costs.

''(iv) The average costs for wildfire suppression operations over the previous 5 years shall be calculated annually and reported in the President's Budget submission under section 1105(a) of title 31, United States Code, for each fiscal year.''.

(b) DISASTER FUNDING.—Section 251(b)(2)(D) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901(b)(2)(D)) is amended—

(1) in clause (i)—

(A) in subclause (I), by striking ''and'' and inserting ''plus'';

(B) in subclause (II), by striking the period and inserting ''; less''; and

(C) by adding the following:

''(III) the additional new budget authority provided in an appropriation Act for wildfire suppression operations pursuant to subparagraph (E) for the preceding fiscal year.''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(v) Beginning in fiscal year 2016 and in subsequent fiscal years, the calculation of the 'average funding provided for disaster relief over the previous 10 years' shall not include the additional new budget authority provided in an appropriation Act for wildfire suppression operations pursuant to subparagraph (E).''.

CHAPTER 3—FOREST TREATMENT PROJECTS

SEC. 2301. DEFINITIONS.

In this chapter:

(1) COVERED PROJECT.—The term ''covered project'' means a project that involves the management or sale of national forest material within a Forest Management Emphasis Area.

(2) FOREST MANAGEMENT EMPHASIS AREA.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ''Forest Management Emphasis Area'' means National Forest System land identified as suitable for timber production in a forest management plan in effect on the date of enactment of this Act.

(B) EXCLUSIONS.—The term ''Forest Management Emphasis Area'' does not include National Forest System land—

(i) that is a component of the National Wilderness Preservation System; or

(ii) on which removal of vegetation is specifically prohibited by Federal law.

(3) NATIONAL FOREST MATERIAL.—The term ''national forest material'' means trees, portions of trees, or forest products, with an emphasis on sawtimber and pulpwood, derived from National Forest System land.

(4) NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ''National Forest System'' has the meaning given the term in section 11(a) of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. 1609(a)).

(B) EXCLUSION.—The term ''National Forest System'' does not include—

(i) the national grasslands and land utilization projects administered under title III of the Bankhead-Jones Farm Tenant Act (7 U.S.C. 1010 et seq.); or

(ii) National Forest System land east of the 100th meridian.

(5) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of Agriculture.

SEC. 2302. PROJECTS IN FOREST MANAGEMENT EMPHASIS AREAS.

(a) CONDUCT OF COVERED PROJECTS WITHIN FOREST MANAGEMENT EMPHASIS AREAS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may conduct covered projects in Forest Management Emphasis Areas, subject to paragraphs (2) through (4).

(2) DESIGNATING TIMBER FOR CUTTING.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding section 14(g) of the National Forest Management Act of 1976 (16 U.S.C. 472a(g)), the Secretary may use designation by prescription or designation by description in conducting covered projects under this chapter.

(B) REQUIREMENT.—The designation methods authorized under subparagraph (A) shall be used in a manner that ensures that the quantity of national forest material that is removed from the Forest Management Emphasis Area is verifiable and accountable.

(3) CONTRACTING METHODS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Timber sale contracts under section 14 of the National Forest Management Act of 1976 (16 U.S.C. 472a) shall be the primary means of carrying out covered projects under this chapter.

(B) RECORD.—If the Secretary does not use a timber sale contract under section 14 of the National Forest Management Act of 1976 (16 U.S.C. 472a) to carry out a covered project under this chapter, the Secretary shall provide a written record specifying the reasons that different contracting methods were used.

(4) ACREAGE TREATMENT REQUIREMENTS.—

(A) TOTAL ACREAGE REQUIREMENTS.—The Secretary shall identify, prioritize, and carry out covered projects in Forest Management Emphasis Areas that mechanically treat a total of at least 7,500,000 acres in the Forest Management Emphasis Areas during the 15-year period beginning on the date that is 60 days after the date on which the Secretary assigns the acreage treatment requirements under subparagraph (B).

(B) ASSIGNMENT OF ACREAGE TREATMENT REQUIREMENTS TO INDIVIDUAL UNITS OF THE NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act and subject to clause (ii), the Secretary, in the sole discretion of the Secretary, shall assign the acreage treatment requirements that shall apply to the Forest Management Emphasis Areas of each unit of the National Forest System.

(ii) LIMITATION.—Notwithstanding clause (i), the acreage treatment requirements assigned to a specific unit of the National Forest System under that clause may not apply to more than 25 percent of the acreage to be treated in any unit of the National Forest System in a Forest Management Emphasis Area during the 15-year period described in subparagraph (A).

(b) ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS AND PUBLIC REVIEW PROCESS FOR COVERED PROJECTS IN FOREST MANAGEMENT EMPHASIS AREAS.—

(1) ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT.—The Secretary shall comply with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321

et seq.) by completing an environmental assessment that assesses the direct environmental effects of each covered project proposed to be conducted within a Forest Management Emphasis Area, except that the Secretary shall not be required to study, develop, or describe more than the proposed agency action and 1 alternative to the proposed agency action for purposes of that Act.

(2) PUBLIC NOTICE AND COMMENT.—In preparing an environmental assessment for a covered project under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall provide—

(A) public notice of the covered project; and

(B) an opportunity for public comment on the covered project.

(3) LENGTH.—The environmental assessment prepared for a covered project under paragraph (1) shall not exceed 100 pages in length.

(4) INCLUSION OF CERTAIN DOCUMENTS.—The Secretary may incorporate, by reference, into an environmental assessment any documents that the Secretary, in the sole discretion of the Secretary, determines are relevant to the assessment of the environmental effects of the covered project.

(5) DEADLINE FOR COMPLETION.—Not later than 180 days after the date on which the Secretary has published notice of a covered project in accordance with paragraph (2), the Secretary shall complete the environmental assessment for the covered project.

(c) COMPLIANCE WITH ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT.—To comply with the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.), the Secretary shall use qualified professionals on the staff of the Forest Service to make determinations required under section 7 of that Act (16 U.S.C. 1536).

(d) LIMITATION ON REVISION OF NATIONAL FOREST PLANS.—The Secretary may not, during a revision of a forest plan under section 6 of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. 1604), reduce the acres designated as suitable for timber harvest under a covered project, unless the Secretary determines, in consultation with the Secretary of the Interior, that the reduction in acreage is necessary to prevent a jeopardy finding under section 7(b) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1536(b)).

SEC. 2303. ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW; ARBITRATION.

(a) ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW.—Administrative review of a covered project shall occur only in accordance with the special administrative review process established by section 105 of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6515).

(b) ARBITRATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—There is established in the Department of Agriculture a pilot program that—

(A) authorizes the use of arbitration instead of judicial review of a decision made following the special administrative review process for a covered project described in subsection (a); and

(B) shall be the sole means to challenge a covered project in a Forest Management Emphasis Area during the 15-year period beginning on the date that is 60 days after the date on which the Secretary assigns the acreage treatment requirements under section 202(a)(4)(B).

(2) ARBITRATION PROCESS PROCEDURES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Any person who sought administrative review for a covered project in accordance with subsection (a) and who is not satisfied with the decision made under the administrative review process may file a demand for arbitration in accordance with—

(i) chapter 1 of title 9, United States Code; and

(ii) this paragraph.

(B) REQUIREMENTS FOR DEMAND.—A demand for arbitration under subparagraph (A) shall—

(i) be filed not more than 30 days after the date on which the special administrative review decision is issued under subsection (a); and

(ii) include a proposal containing the modifications sought to the covered project.

(C) INTERVENING PARTIES.—

(i) DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION; REQUIREMENTS.—Any person that submitted a public comment on the covered project subject to the demand for arbitration may intervene in the arbitration under this subsection by submitting a proposal endorsing or modifying the covered project by the date that is 30 days after the date on which the demand for arbitration is filed under subparagraph (A).

(ii) MULTIPLE PARTIES.—Multiple objectors or intervening parties that meet the requirements of clause (i) may submit a joint proposal under that clause.

(D) APPOINTMENT OF ARBITRATOR.—The United States District Court in the district in which a covered project subject to a demand for arbitration filed under subparagraph (A) is located shall appoint an arbitrator to conduct the arbitration proceedings in accordance with this subsection.

(E) SELECTION OF PROPOSALS.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—An arbitrator appointed under subparagraph (D)—

(I) may not modify any of the proposals submitted under this paragraph; and

(II) shall select to be conducted—

(aa) a proposal submitted by an objector under subparagraph (B)(ii) or an intervening party under subparagraph (C); or

(bb) the covered project, as approved by the Secretary.

(ii) SELECTION CRITERIA.—An arbitrator shall select the proposal that best meets the purpose and needs described in the environmental assessment conducted under section 202(b)(1) for the covered project.

(iii) EFFECT.—The decision of an arbitrator with respect to a selection under clause (i)(II)—

(I) shall not be considered a major Federal action;

(II) shall be binding; and

(III) shall not be subject to judicial review.

(F) DEADLINE FOR COMPLETION.—Not later than 90 days after the date on which a demand for arbitration is filed under subparagraph (A), the arbitration process shall be completed.

SEC. 2304. DISTRIBUTION OF REVENUE.

(a) PAYMENTS TO COUNTIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Effective for fiscal year 2015 and each fiscal year thereafter until the termination date under section 206, the Secretary shall provide to each county in which a covered project is carried out annual payments in an amount equal to 25 percent of the amounts received for the applicable fiscal year by the Secretary from the covered project.

(2) LIMITATION.—A payment made under paragraph (1) shall be in addition to any payments the county receives under the payment to States required by the sixth paragraph under the heading ''FOREST SERVICE'' in the Act of May 23, 1908 (35 Stat. 260; 16 U.S.C. 500), and section 13 of the Act of March 1, 1911 (36 Stat. 963; 16 U.S.C. 500).

(b) DEPOSIT IN KNUTSON-VANDENBERG AND SALVAGE SALE FUNDS.—After compliance with subsection (a), the Secretary shall use amounts received by the Secretary from covered projects during each of the fiscal years during the period described in subsection (a) to make deposits into the fund established under section 3 of the Act of June 9, 1930 (commonly known as the ''Knutson-Vandenberg Act'') (16 U.S.C. 576b), and the fund established under section 14(h) of the National Forest Management Act of 1976 (16 U.S.C. 472a(h)) in contributions equal to the amounts otherwise collected under those Acts for projects conducted on National Forest System land.

(c) DEPOSIT IN GENERAL FUND OF THE TREASURY.—After compliance with subsections (a) and (b), the Secretary shall deposit into the general fund of the Treasury any remaining amounts received by the Secretary for each of the fiscal years referred to in those subsections from covered projects.

SEC. 2305. PERFORMANCE MEASURES; REPORTING.

(a) PERFORMANCE MEASURES.—The Secretary shall develop performance measures that evaluate the degree to which the Secretary is achieving—

(1) the purposes of this chapter; and

(2) the minimum acreage requirements established under section 2302(a)(4).

(b) ANNUAL REPORTS.—Annually, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate and the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives—

(1) a report that describes the results of evaluations using the performance measures developed under subsection (a); and

(2) a report that describes—

(A) the number and substance of the covered projects that are subject to administrative review and arbitration under section 2303; and

(B) the outcomes of the administrative review and arbitration under that section.

SEC. 2306. TERMINATION.

The authority of this chapter terminates on the date that is 15 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

CHAPTER 4—FOREST STEWARDSHIP CONTRACTING

SEC. 2401. CANCELLATION CEILINGS.

Section 604(d) of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6591c(d)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (5), (6), and (7) as paragraphs (6), (7), and (8), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (4) the following:

''(5) CANCELLATION CEILINGS.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Chief and the Director may obligate funds to cover any potential cancellation or termination costs for an agreement or contract under subsection (b) in stages that are economically or programmatically viable.

''(B) NOTICE.—

''(i) SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 30 days before entering into a multiyear agreement or contract under subsection (b) that includes a cancellation ceiling in excess of $25,000,000, but does not include proposed funding for the costs of cancelling the agreement or contract up to the cancellation ceiling established in the agreement or contract, the Chief and the Director shall submit to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate and the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives a written notice that includes—

''(I)(aa) the cancellation ceiling amounts proposed for each program year in the agreement or contract; and

''(bb) the reasons for the cancellation ceiling amounts proposed under item (aa);

''(II) the extent to which the costs of contract cancellation are not included in the budget for the agreement or contract; and

''(III) a financial risk assessment of not including budgeting for the costs of agreement or contract cancellation.

''(ii) TRANSMITTAL TO OMB.—At least 14 days before the date on which the Chief and Director enter into an agreement or contract

under subsection (b), the Chief and Director shall transmit to the Director of the Office of Management and Budget a copy of the written notice submitted under clause (i).''.

SA 3717. Mr. RISCH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2410, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2015 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle D of title XII, add the following:

SEC. 1268. REPLACEMENT OF LOCALLY EMPLOYED STAFF SERVING AT UNITED STATES DIPLOMATIC FACILITIES IN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION.

(a) EMPLOYMENT REQUIREMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State shall ensure that, not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, every supervisory position at a United States diplomatic facility in the Russian Federation shall be occupied by a citizen of the United States who has passed, and shall be subject to, a thorough background check.

(2) EXTENSION.—The Secretary of State may extend the deadline under paragraph (1) for up to one year by providing advance written notification and justification of such extension to the appropriate congressional committees.

(3) PROGRESS REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report on progress made toward meeting the employment requirement under paragraph (1).

(b) PLAN FOR REDUCED USE OF LOCALLY EMPLOYED STAFF.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State, in coordination with other appropriate government agencies, shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a plan to further reduce the reliance on Locally Employed Staff in United States diplomatic facilities in the Russian Federation. The plan shall, at a minimum, include cost estimates, timelines, and numbers of employees to be replaced.

(c) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means—

(1) the congressional defense committees, the Committee on Foreign Relations, and the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate; and

(2) the congressional defense committees, the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives.

SA 3718. Mr. RISCH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2410, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2015 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle D of title XII, add the following:

SEC. 1268. INCLUSION OF RESTRICTED ACCESS SPACES IN UNITED STATES DIPLOMATIC FACILITIES IN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION AND ADJACENT COUNTRIES.

(a) RESTRICTED ACCESS SPACE REQUIREMENT.—Each United States diplomatic facility that, after the date of the enactment of this Act, is constructed in, or undergoes a construction upgrade in, the Russian Federation, any country that shares a land border with the Russian Federation, or any country that is a former member of the Soviet Union shall be constructed to include a restricted access space.

(b) NATIONAL SECURITY WAIVER.—The Secretary of State may waive the requirement under subsection (a) if the Secretary determines that it is in the national security interest of the United States and submits a written justification to the appropriate congressional committees not later than 180 days before exercising such waiver.

(c) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means—

(1) the congressional defense committees, the Committee on Foreign Relations, and the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate; and

(2) the congressional defense committees, the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives.

SA 3719. Mr. WICKER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2648, making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____. No agency or instrumentality of the Federal Government may expend funds or resources made available under this Act or any other Act to consider or adjudicate any new or previously denied application of any alien requesting consideration of deferred action for childhood arrivals, as announced by Executive memorandum on June 15, 2012, or any successor memorandum.

SA 3720. Mr. CRUZ (for himself, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. VITTER, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. LEE, Mr. JOHANNS, and Mr. BOOZMAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2648, making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 15, after line 22, add the following:

SEC. 1503. No agency or instrumentality of the Federal Government may use Federal funding or resources—

(1) to consider or adjudicate any new or previously denied application of any alien requesting consideration of deferred action for childhood arrivals, as authorized by Executive memorandum on August 15, 2012, or by any other succeeding executive memorandum authorizing a similar program; or

(2) to issue a new work authorization to any alien who—

(A) was not lawfully admitted into the United States in compliance with the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101 et seq.); and

(B) is not in lawful status in the United States on the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 3721. Mr. WHITEHOUSE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2410, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2015 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle D of title XVI, add the following:

SEC. 1647. PLAN FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION ON CYBER MATTERS.

(a) PLAN REQUIRED.—Not later than 360 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense, in cooperation with the Secretaries of the military departments, shall submit to the congressional defense committees a plan for the continuing education of officers and enlisted members of the Armed Forces relating to cyber security and cyber activities of the Department of Defense.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The plan submitted under subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) A framework for provision of basic cyber threat education for all members of the Armed Forces.

(2) A framework for postgraduate education, joint professional military education, and strategic war gaming for cyber strategic and operational leadership.

(3) Definitions of required positions, including military occupational specialties and rating specialties for each military department, along with the corresponding level of cyber training, education, qualifications, or certifications required for each specialty.

SA 3722. Mr. REED (for himself and Mr. HELLER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2648, making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

DIVISION B—EMERGENCY UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION EXTENSION

SEC. __1. SHORT TITLE OF DIVISION.

This division may be cited as the ''Emergency Unemployment Compensation Extension Act of 2014''.

SEC. __2. EXTENSION OF EMERGENCY UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION PROGRAM.

(a) EXTENSION.—Section 4007(a)(2) of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008 (Public Law 110–252; 26 U.S.C. 3304 note) is amended by striking ''January 1, 2014'' and inserting ''the date that is 5 months after the date of the enactment of the Emergency Unemployment Compensation Extension Act of 2014''.

(b) FUNDING.—Section 4004(e)(1) of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008 (Public Law 110–252; 26 U.S.C. 3304 note) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (I), by striking ''and'' at the end;

(2) in subparagraph (J), by inserting ''and'' at the end; and

(3) by inserting after subparagraph (J) the following:

''(K) the amendment made by section __2(a) of the Emergency Unemployment Compensation Extension Act of 2014;''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to weeks of unemployment beginning on or after the date of the enactment of this division.

SEC. __3. TEMPORARY EXTENSION OF EXTENDED BENEFIT PROVISIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 2005 of the Assistance for Unemployed Workers and Struggling Families Act, as contained in Public Law 111–5 (26 U.S.C. 3304 note), is amended—

(1) by striking ''December 31, 2013'' each place it appears and inserting ''the date that is 5 months after the date of the enactment of the Emergency Unemployment Compensation Extension Act of 2014''; and

(2) in subsection (c), by striking ''June 30, 2014'' and inserting ''the date that is 11 months after the date of the enactment of the Emergency Unemployment Compensation Extension Act of 2014''.

(b) EXTENSION OF MATCHING FOR STATES WITH NO WAITING WEEK.—Section 5 of the Unemployment Compensation Extension Act of 2008 (Public Law 110–449; 26 U.S.C. 3304 note) is amended by striking ''June 30, 2014'' and inserting ''the date that is 11 months after the date of the enactment of the Emergency Unemployment Compensation Extension Act of 2014''.

(c) EXTENSION OF MODIFICATION OF INDICATORS UNDER THE EXTENDED BENEFIT PROGRAM.—Section 203 of the Federal-State Extended Unemployment Compensation Act of 1970 (26 U.S.C. 3304 note) is amended—

(1) in subsection (d), by striking ''December 31, 2013'' and inserting ''the date that is 5 months after the date of the enactment of the Emergency Unemployment Compensation Extension Act of 2014''; and

(2) in subsection (f)(2), by striking ''December 31, 2013'' and inserting ''the date that is 5 months after the date of the enactment of the Emergency Unemployment Compensation Extension Act of 2014''.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to weeks of unemployment beginning on or after the date of the enactment of this division.

SEC. __4. EXTENSION OF FUNDING FOR REEMPLOYMENT SERVICES AND REEMPLOYMENT AND ELIGIBILITY ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES.

(a) EXTENSION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 4004(c)(2)(A) of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008 (Public Law 110–252; 26 U.S.C. 3304 note) is amended by striking ''through fiscal year 2014'' and inserting ''through fiscal year 2015''.

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by this subsection shall take effect as if included in the enactment of the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–240).

(b) TIMING FOR SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 4001(i)(1)(A) of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008 (Public Law 110–252; 26 U.S.C. 3304 note) is amended by adding at the end the following new sentence:

''At a minimum, such reemployment services and reemployment and eligibility assessment activities shall be provided to an individual within a time period (determined appropriate by the Secretary) after the date the individual begins to receive amounts under section 4002(b) (first tier benefits) and, if applicable, again within a time period (determined appropriate by the Secretary) after the date the individual begins to receive amounts under section 4002(d) (third tier benefits).''.

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by this subsection shall apply on and after the date of the enactment of this division.

(c) PURPOSES OF SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES.—The purposes of the reemployment services and reemployment and eligibility assessment activities under section 4001(i) of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008 (Public Law 110–252; 26 U.S.C. 3304 note) are—

(1) to better link the unemployed with the overall workforce system by bringing individuals receiving unemployment insurance benefits in for personalized assessments and referrals to reemployment services; and

(2) to provide individuals receiving unemployment insurance benefits with early access to specific strategies that can help get them back into the workforce faster, including through—

(A) the development of a reemployment plan;

(B) the provision of access to relevant labor market information;

(C) the provision of access to information about industry-recognized credentials that are regionally relevant or nationally portable;

(D) the provision of referrals to reemployment services and training; and

(E) an assessment of the individual's ongoing eligibility for unemployment insurance benefits.

SEC. __5. ADDITIONAL EXTENDED UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS UNDER THE RAILROAD UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE ACT.

(a) EXTENSION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 2(c)(2)(D)(iii) of the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act (45 U.S.C. 352(c)(2)(D)(iii)) is amended—

(A) by striking ''June 30, 2013'' and inserting ''June 30, 2014''; and

(B) by striking ''December 31, 2013'' and inserting ''December 31, 2014''.

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this subsection shall apply to weeks of unemployment beginning on or after the date of the enactment of this division.

(b) CLARIFICATION ON AUTHORITY TO USE FUNDS.—Funds appropriated under either the first or second sentence of clause (iv) of section 2(c)(2)(D) of the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act shall be available to cover the cost of additional extended unemployment benefits provided under such section 2(c)(2)(D) by reason of the amendments made by subsection (a) as well as to cover the cost of such benefits provided under such section 2(c)(2)(D), as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this division.

(c) FUNDING FOR ADMINISTRATION.—Out of any funds in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, there are appropriated to the Railroad Retirement Board $250,000 for administrative expenses associated with the payment of additional extended unemployment benefits provided under section 2(c)(2)(D) of the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act by reason of the amendments made by subsection (a), to remain available until expended.

SEC. __6. FLEXIBILITY FOR UNEMPLOYMENT PROGRAM AGREEMENTS.

(a) FLEXIBILITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (g) of section 4001 of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008 (Public Law 110–252; 26 U.S.C. 3304 note) shall not apply with respect to a State that has enacted a law before June 30, 2014, that, upon taking effect, would violate such subsection.

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Paragraph (1) is effective with respect to weeks of unemployment beginning on or after the date of the enactment of this division.

(b) PERMITTING A SUBSEQUENT AGREEMENT.—Nothing in title IV of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008 (Public Law 110–252; 26 U.S.C. 3304 note) shall preclude a State whose agreement under such title was terminated from entering into a subsequent agreement under such title on or after the date of the enactment of this division if the State, taking into account the application of subsection (a), would otherwise meet the requirements for an agreement under such title.

SEC. __7. ENDING UNEMPLOYMENT PAYMENTS TO JOBLESS MILLIONAIRES AND BILLIONAIRES.

(a) PROHIBITION.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no Federal funds may be used for payments of unemployment compensation under the emergency unemployment compensation program under title IV of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008 (Public Law 110–252; 26 U.S.C. 3304 note) to an individual whose adjusted gross income in the preceding year was equal to or greater than $1,000,000.

(b) COMPLIANCE.—Unemployment Insurance applications shall include a form or procedure for an individual applicant to certify the individual's adjusted gross income was not equal to or greater than $1,000,000 in the preceding year.

(c) AUDITS.—The certifications required by subsection (b) shall be auditable by the U.S. Department of Labor or the U.S. Government Accountability Office.

(d) STATUS OF APPLICANTS.—It is the duty of the States to verify the residency, employment, legal, and income status of applicants for Unemployment Insurance and no Federal funds may be expended for purposes of determining whether or not the prohibition under subsection (a) applies with respect to an individual.

(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The prohibition under subsection (a) shall apply to weeks of unemployment beginning on or after the date of the enactment of this division.

SEC. __8. GAO STUDY ON THE USE OF WORK SUITABILITY REQUIREMENTS IN UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE PROGRAMS.

(a) STUDY.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study on the use of work suitability requirements to strengthen requirements to ensure that unemployment insurance benefits are being provided to individuals who are actively looking for work and who truly want to return to the labor force. Such study shall include an analysis of—

(1) how work suitability requirements work under both State and Federal unemployment insurance programs; and

(2) how to incorporate and improve such requirements under Federal unemployment insurance programs; and

(3) other items determined appropriate by the Comptroller General.

(b) BRIEFING.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this division, the Comptroller General of the United States shall brief Congress on the ongoing study required under subsection (a). Such briefing shall include preliminary recommendations for such legislation and administrative action as the Comptroller General determines appropriate.

SEC. __9. DESIGNATION OF AMOUNTS.

Amounts made available in this division are designated by the Congress as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 and section 4101 of this Act shall apply to such amounts.

SEC. __10. BUDGETARY EFFECTS.

(a) PAYGO SCORECARD.—The budgetary effects of this division shall not be entered on either PAYGO scorecard maintained pursuant to section 4(d) of the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010 (2 U.S.C. 933(d)).

(b) SENATE PAYGO SCORECARD.—The budgetary effects of this division shall not be entered on any PAYGO scorecard maintained for purposes of section 201 of S. Con. Res. 21 (110th Congress).

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 30, 2014, at 2:30 p.m.

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

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 30, 2014, at 2:30 p.m. in room SR–253 of the Russell Senate Office Building to conduct a hearing entitled, ''Cramming on Wireless Phone Bills: A Review of Consumer Protection Practices and Gaps.''

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

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Environment and Public Works be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 30, 2014.

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

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 30, 2014, at 2 p.m., in room SD–215 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''The African Growth and Opportunity Act at 14: The Road Ahead.''

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

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 30, 2014, at 10:15 a.m., in room SD–430 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building to conduct a hearing entitled ''Paid Family Leave: The Benefits for Businesses and Working Families.''

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

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 30, 2014, at 9:30 a.m.

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

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Indian Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 30, 2014, in room SD–628 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, at 2:30 p.m. to conduct a hearing entitled ''When Catastrophe Strikes: Responses to Natural Disasters in Indian Country.''

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

COMMITTTE ON THE JUDICIARY

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 30, 2014, at 10 a.m., in room SD–106 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''VAWA Next Steps: Protecting Women from Gun Violence.''

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ANTITRUST, COMPETITION POLICY, AND CONSUMER RIGHTS

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Antitrust, Competition Policy, and Consumer Rights be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate, on July 30, 2014, at 2:15 p.m., in room SD–226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled ''Pricing Policies and Competition in the Contact Lens Industry: Is What You See What You Get?''

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON HOUSING, TRANSPORTATION, AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Subcommittee on Housing, Transportation, and Community Development be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, July 30, 2014, at 10 a.m. to conduct a hearing entitled ''The Flood Insurance Claims Process in Communities After Sandy: Lessons Learned and Potential Improvements.''

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

SUBCOMMITTEE ON PUBLIC LANDS, FORESTS, AND MINING

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Public Lands, Forests, and Mining be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 30, 2014, at 9:30 a.m. in room SD–366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

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

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Special Committee on Aging be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on July 30, 2014, in room SR–418 of the Russell Senate Office Building, at 2:15 p.m. to conduct a hearing entitled ''Admitted or Not? The Impact of Medicare Observation Status on Seniors.''

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

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Akunna Cook be granted floor privileges for the duration of the consideration of the Bring Jobs Home Act.

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

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Joshua Wolff, a fellow with the Health, Education, Labor and Pension Committee, be granted floor privileges for the remainder of today's session and that Aly Boyce and Kate Kollars, interns with the committee, also be granted floor privileges for today's session.

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

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME—S. 2709

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I understand that S. 2709, introduced earlier today by Senator MANCHIN, is at the desk and I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title for the first time.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2709) to extend and reauthorize the Export-Import Bank of the United States, and for other purposes.

Mr. CASEY. I now ask for a second reading and object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard. The bill will be read for the second time on the next legislative day.

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, JULY 31, 2014

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, July 31, 2014; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that following any leader remarks, the Senate resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 2648, the emergency supplemental appropriations bill, postcloture, with the time until 10 a.m. equally divided between the two leaders or their designees, with Senator SESSIONS controlling the time from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m., and the majority controlling the time from 11 a.m. to 12 noon; and finally, that the time during the adjournment count postcloture.

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

PROGRAM

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, Senators will be notified when any votes are scheduled.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it adjourn under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 7:26 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, July 31, 2014, at 9:30 a.m.

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate July 30, 2014:

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

CYNTHIA H. AKUETTEH, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER–COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE GABONESE REPUBLIC, AND TO SERVE CONCURRENTLY AND WITHOUT ADDITIONAL COMPENSATION AS AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE.

METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON AIRPORTS AUTHORITY

RICHARD A. KENNEDY, OF PENNSYLVANIA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON AIRPORTS AUTHORITY FOR A TERM EXPIRING MAY 30, 2016.

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

ERIKA LIZABETH MORITSUGU, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GARY C. PETERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2014

Mr. PETERS of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday July 29, 2014 I inadvertently voted "yes" on final passage of H.R. 4315 (rollcall 463). I wish the RECORD to reflect my intention to vote "no" on H.R. 4315.

CELEBRATING THE CITY OF FORT BRAGG'S 125TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. JARED HUFFMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2014

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to recognize the City of Fort Bragg on the occasion of its 125th Anniversary Celebration on August 5, 2014.

For a century and a quarter, the remarkable citizens of Fort Bragg have helped the city evolve from a small lumber and fishing town to a city renowned for its beauty and small town feel. With just over 7,000 residents, Fort Bragg is a destination for sport fishermen, abalone divers, and visitors wishing to enjoy one of the most beautiful stretches of coastline in California.

In 1889, the City of Fort Bragg was incorporated on the site of a former military fort and Pomo Indian reservation with C. R. Johnson, president of the Fort Bragg Redwood Company, as its first mayor. His company established the plans for the city, which maintains many of its original historic features today.

The City of Fort Bragg is a Mendocino County treasure, a gateway to the Redwoods, and due to the enduring dedication of its residents, the city will surely continue to be a wonderful place to live and visit for years to come. Please join me in expressing hearty congratulations to the City of Fort Bragg on the occasion of its 125th anniversary.

HONORING MR. HARRY WURTH

HON. STEVE ISRAEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2014

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Mr. Harry Wurth, an esteemed citizen of my congressional district who committed his life to his country and to his fellow veterans. Mr. Wurth, a longtime resident of Albertson, NY, passed away on June 14, 2014 at the age of 87. A veteran of World War II and a leader of the United States Veterans of Foreign Wars Department of New York, Mr. Wurth's life was an example of what it means to serve one's nation.

After graduating high school in 1945, Mr. Wurth enlisted in the Navy and was deployed to the Pacific Theatre toward the end of the war. Aboard the aircraft carrier, the USS *Belleau,* he served as deck crew and later as a baker. He was honorably discharged at the end of the war.

Mr. Wurth committed the remainder of his life to serving New York veterans. In 1964 he joined the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 3211 in Hicksville, New York, and rose to Post Commander in 1969 and All State Commander. A frequent visitor to VA hospitals in Northport and St. Albans, New York, in 1972 he was elected Chaplin to the Nassau County VFW Council.

Mr. Wurth continued his dedication to the VFW in various positions on the Nassau County and State level. He was elected Chaplin and Commander of VFW District 1 in 1978, and in 1981 he transferred to the Albertson VFW Post 5253. Rising to New York State VFW Chief of Staff in 1993, Mr. Wurth led the effort to establish 19 new Veterans' Posts in New York.

From 1994 to 1996 he continued to move up the ranks in the State Council, rising to VFW State Commander. At the time of his passing Mr. Wurth was the Quartermaster for the Albertson VFW post and Quartermaster of the Nassau County VFW Council.

Mr. Wurth passed away while attending this year's NY State VFW Convention. Until his death, Mr. Wurth never ceased serving our country and veterans alike. I am honored to have had the pleasure to serve as Mr. Wurth's representative. His life will forever be remembered as one of service and commitment to his fellow countrymen.

RECOGNIZING GEORGE FLASINSKI FOR HIS SERVICE TO THE SONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION

HON. PATRICK MEEHAN

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday July 30, 2014

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. George Flasinski, the Commander of the Sons of the American Legion, Detachment of Pennsylvania. In his time as Commander, George Flasinski has been an invaluable leader of the Detachment and has shown a strong commitment to the Four Pillars of the American Legion.

The Sons of The American Legion is the nation's largest wartime veterans service organization. The Legion is committed to supporting our veterans and service members, honoring our country, and mentoring youth in our community.

Under Mr. Flasinski's leadership, the membership of the Pennsylvania Sons of the American Legion has risen to nearly 60,000 members. George has organized two Honor Flights to Washington, DC for World War II veterans. Mr. Flasinski has also raised funds for Pennsylvania's homeless veterans and the American Legion's Child Welfare Foundation.

Mr. Speaker, I thank George Flasinski and the Sons of the American Legion for their dedication to honoring our nation's heroes and inspiring our nation's youth to emulate them. George Flasinski has shown exceptional guidance in his service as Detachment of Pennsylvania Commander, and I applaud his successes and wish him the best of luck in his retirement.

HONORING LEROY R. COLES UPON HIS RETIREMENT

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2014

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to acknowledge and honor the unparalleled work of Leroy R. Coles—former Buffalo Urban League CEO. Mr. Coles' work, knowledge, and expertise have left a mountainous, positively-influential footprint not only on the Western New York Area, but nationwide.

Mr. Coles received much of his early social and cultural development as a participant in the Buffalo Urban League programs—which strive to enhance education and youth empowerment, economics, health and quality of life, civic engagement, as well as civil rights and racial justice.

During the historic and tumultuous times of the 1960s and 1970s, Mr. Coles bravely and actively participated in the March on Washington and continued to march for the rights of others through the 1990s. Furthermore, Mr. Coles was especially active in promoting peace and racial harmony during and after the 1960 riots and the desegregation of public schools in Buffalo, New York.

Upon returning to the Western New York area in 1972, Mr. Coles was appointed as president and chief executive officer to the Buffalo Urban League—the same establishment where he began laying his foundation of ethics. Mr. Coles led the Buffalo Urban League through a variety of locations, steadily building programs and services to meet the emerging needs of the minority citizens of Buffalo, New York and Erie County.

Mr. Coles was especially successful in leading the Buffalo Urban League in grant development at the national and state level in order to bring new services to the Western New York community, resulting in additional project initiatives such as the small business loan program for women and minorities who were rejected by banks. Additionally, Mr. Coles advocated for the development of Advanced Vocational Education and Progressive Advanced Vocational Education and Exploration programs for young at-risk students seeking to improve their academic and social skills.

The accomplishments of Leroy R. Coles are extraordinary and uniquely admirable. From being the first African-American trustee of Erie

Community College, to president of the National Urban League's Association of Executives, or to his induction into the Buffalo Urban League's Quarter Century Club, Mr. Coles' work ethic shines brightly through.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in acknowledging the commendable hard work and positive influence that Leroy R. Coles has brought to Western New York and the nation as a whole. I encourage Americans to use Mr. Coles as an exemplar in how to carry one's self as an individual. Furthermore, I am grateful for the hard work that Mr. Coles has continued to put forward, making Western New York as a whole a better place for all.

CELEBRATING THE RICH HISTORICAL HERITAGE OF MONESSEN, PENNSYLVANIA

HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2014

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the rich heritage of Monessen, Pennsylvania, and to remember two important events which took place 150 years ago and ultimately helped shape the town's history.

This year marks the sesquicentennial of the birth of one of the key figures in Monessen's founding, William Henry Donner. Donner was instrumental in the development of the town, using a cash bonus of $10,000 to turn twenty acres of land on the banks of the Monongahela River into Monessen's first factory, the National Tin Plate Company. In doing so he created the town's initial industry, one that went on to grow and thrive. He was a member of Monessen's first school board and spearheaded efforts to build the Monessen Water Company, as well as Monessen's first school building. His work was crucial to the emergence of Monongahela as a vibrant community, and he played a major part in spurring its growth.

I would also like to take this opportunity to recognize another great figure in the history of Southwestern Pennsylvania who also was a founder of Monessen, James M. Schoonmaker. Schoonmaker was born in Peebles Township in 1842, and was a student at Western University of Pennsylvania when the Civil War broke out. He enlisted in the army and was assigned to the 1st Maryland Calvary, where he quickly established himself as a competent leader. In 1862, Schoonmaker was given the authority by Secretary of War Edwin Stanton to raise the 14th Pennsylvania Cavalry Regiment, of which he was made colonel. His actions in leading soldiers during the Third Battle of Winchester in 1864 were crucial in helping the Union achieve victory, and for his heroic efforts he was awarded the Medal of Honor. This September marks the 150th anniversary of that famous cavalry charge.

On August 16th, The Greater Monessen Historical Society in Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania will celebrate the City of Monessen's annual Founders Day at Monessen City Park, commemorating these two events. I wish to thank the Society and its President Dan Zyglowicz for keeping alive the memory of these important leaders, and preserving our region's history for the next generation. We must never forget the lessons of the past, and their work is a crucial way to make sure these Pennsylvania leaders continue to be a part of our heritage for decades to come.

HONORING THE TOWN OF ELIZABETH, MISSISSIPPI

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the remarkable Town of Elizabeth, Mississippi.

The town of Elizabeth, Mississippi is located on U.S. Highway 61, approximately 1 mile north of Leland and 2 miles east of Stoneville. In March 1889, a deed was issued to Mr. Joshua Skinner for a railroad depot in the area. At the time, the place was named "Athol", but it was later changed to its current name "Elizabeth".

In 1889, Elizabeth was advertised as "a new town with an unparalleled future, located in the heart of the famous Yazoo Delta . . . the richest and most fertile section of the earth where king cotton reigns supreme." Elizabeth had the unique distinction of being located at the crossroads of the first two main railroads in the Delta: the Louisville, New Orleans, and Texas RR (which later became the Illinois Central RR) and the Georgia Pacific RR (which eventually became the Columbus and Greenville RR).

The town of Elizabeth was designed along the west and south sides of both railroads. Elizabeth emerged early on as a mercantile city, with numerous businesses started up due to the existence of the rail lines. The town can no longer boast a commercial center. Leland has taken that role. However, it does retain its identity as Elizabeth. It boasts a modest population of nearly 200 people and a beautiful roadside park. In 2013, DuPont Pioneer opened a new 30,000 square foot research center near Elizabeth that focuses on soybean breeding and product development as well as corn product testing and characterization for farmers in the Delta.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the Town of Elizabeth for its dedication to serving others.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2014

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, on Friday, July 25, I missed a series of rollcall votes. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay" on No. 453 and "yea" on No. 451, No. 452, and No. 454.

On Monday, July 28, I missed a series of rollcall votes. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on No. 455, No. 456, and No. 457.

On Tuesday, July 29, I missed a series of rollcall votes. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on No. 458 and No. 459. I would have voted "nay" on No. 460, No. 461, and No. 462. I would have voted "yea" on No. 463 and No. 464.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2014

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was $10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is $17,613,035,203,018.10. We've added $6,986,158,154,105.02 to our debt in 5 years. This is over $6.9 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

IN COMMEMORATION OF THE 7TH ANNIVERSARY OF PASSAGE OF H. RES. 121

HON. ENI F.H. FALEOMAVAEGA

OF AMERICAN SAMOA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2014

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 7th anniversary of the passage of H. Res. 121, an historic resolution which expresses the sense of the U.S. House of Representatives that the Government of Japan should formally acknowledge, apologize, and accept historical responsibility in a clear and unequivocal manner for its Imperial Armed Force's coercion of young women into sexual slavery, known to the world as 'comfort women', during its colonial and wartime occupation of Asia and the Pacific Islands from the 1930s through the duration of World War II.

H. Res. 121 was passed on July 30, 2007, and I commend my good friend, Congressman MICHAEL HONDA of California, for introducing it. I admire his courage and devotion for causes that matter. As a Japanese-American, he gave voice to this cause in a way no other could and, because of him, this Resolution stands as a testament of his advocacy for and on behalf of those who suffer.

I also commend Dong Suk Kim of Korean American Civic Empowerment (KACE) for his grassroots efforts in bolstering support for H. Res. 121 which led to its successful passage. His contributions made a significant difference.

I also commend the Honorable NANCY PELOSI. In my opinion, her decision to bring H. Res. 121 to the Floor for House consideration was the key factor that made passage possible. As the first woman in American history to serve as Speaker of the House, her clarion call for equality and empowerment for women is of consequence globally and historically. Her personal commitment to the women who still bear the scars from the Imperial Armed Force's coercion will never be forgotten.

In 2007, it was my honor to hold the first hearing ever held on this sensitive issue. Although this legislation had been introduced in the U.S. Congress for more than a decade, including by my good friend, former Congressman Lane Evans, no Committee had ever held

a hearing on the matter. But, in 2007, I determined that my first action as Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs' Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific would be to hold a hearing calling upon Japan to apologize for the war crimes its Imperial Armed Forces perpetuated against innocent young girls and women.

Congressman HONDA testified before the Subcommittee as did three survivors, including Ms. Yong Soo Lee, Ms. Jan Ruff O'Herne, and Ms. Koon Ja Kim. I will never, ever forget the testimony of these three women. They remain my heroes. Because of their courage, an official record now stands forevermore on file with the U.S. House of Representatives that speaks the truth about what Japan's Imperial Armed Forces did to them. Their childhoods were stolen. Their destinies were disrupted. But their spirits were not broken because they know, like I know, that God will one day set everything right and justice will come—no matter what.

And so, I pay tribute to Ms. Lee, Ms. O'Herne, Ms. Kim and all those they represented. It has been my honor to know them and also to know all my grandmothers at the House of Sharing. I wish God's sweetest blessings upon them.

I also thank President Park Geun-hye, then a member of South Korea's National Assembly, for attending our Subcommittee hearing as an observer. The Subcommittee was extraordinarily honored to welcome her. Her presence at the hearing honored every young girl and woman ever victimized by Japan's Imperial Armed Forces.

While I strongly urge the Government of Japan to formally acknowledge and apologize in order to begin the reconciliation process, I bear no animosity or ill-will towards the people of Japan. If given the choice, I believe the people of Japan would also call for its government to apologize for the atrocities its Imperial Armed Forces committed against innocent young girls and women. But, regrettably, the Government of Japan chooses to whitewash its history. However, sooner or later, truth will prevail. Until it does, I will continue to do everything I can to bring increasing awareness to this issue.

HONORING MICHAEL MAY, FORMER EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, AMY BIEHL HIGH SCHOOL

HON. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2014

Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Michael May, an outstanding leader and educator in Albuquerque, New Mexico, for his time as Executive Director for Amy Biehl High School (ABHS).

Founded in 1999, by public school teachers Tony Monfiletto and Tom Siegel, ABHS fundamentally changed the idea of what a high school can contribute to the students it educates. The founders envisioned a school that not only prepared students for college, but held itself accountable for a student's success after graduation. It is no coincidence that during Mike's tenure, nearly 100 percent of ABHS students attended college and 86 percent of those students graduated with a Bachelor's degree.

More than that, Mike has inspired students to strive for academic excellence while fulfilling their commitment to the community at large. On March 18, 2014, I visited the school to recognize and congratulate the students for their achievement of 65,000 hours of community service to over 140 non-profit organizations. And on June 17, 2014, after working closely with Mike, I introduced and the House of Representatives passed the Albuquerque, New Mexico, Federal Land Conveyance Act of 2014 (H.R. 3998), which allows ABHS to obtain ownership of the Old Federal Court House and Post Office in the heart of downtown Albuquerque. We will continue to work to enact this bill into law, preserve this historic building, and provide students with a first-rate education.

Mike always put his students first and even talked at length to the Economic Forum of Albuquerque about the great work done by his school to benefit the business community. When asked about ABHS's numerous successes during his time as Executive Director, Mike said:

> I would love to thank the community for the support of the school and what we have accomplished. What we have accomplished would not have been possible without the commitment of so many people who have seen the value in what we are doing.

This statement reflects Mike's selflessness and demonstrates the respect and admiration that Mike has for our community in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Mike's vision, passion, dedication, and hands-on approach with students are one-of-a-kind. While he will be sorely missed, I have no doubt that he will accomplish great things in his new role directing the L'Ecole d'Humanite boarding school in Switzerland.

HONORING WEE CARE NURSERIES AND LEARNING CENTERS, INC.

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a landmark establishment within the City of Tchula that provides one of the most critical and essential services for all working parents: Wee Care Nursery and Learning Center, Inc.

Tchula's Wee Care Nursery and Learning Center began as Tchula Day Care. Tchula Day Care opened its doors on September 3, 1991. The name was later changed to Tchula's Wee Care Nursery and Learning Center, Inc. On May 15, 1995, Wee Care Nursery and Learning Center #2 opened its doors in Lexington, MS.

Tchula's Wee Care capacity is 142 and Lexington's is 169. Current enrollment is 77 and 54 respectively.

At Wee Care Nurseries and Learning Centers, their mission is to provide child care that meets the needs of each child and family in a safe, educational environment.

They take pride in the Centers and focus on the individual needs of each child, while providing quality, reliable and safe child care.

The goals of Wee Care Nurseries and Learning Centers are: (1) To provide affordable, convenient, dependable child care services; (2) To create a child care setting for social, cognitive, and physical development; (3) To provide a nurturing environment; (4) To provide learning experiences for children; and (5) To provide a preschool program, readying children for lifelong learning.

Wee Care Nurseries and Learning Centers, Inc. believes that a high quality early childhood program provides a safe and nurturing environment that promotes the physical, emotional, social, and cognitive development of young children while responding to the needs of families. They believe in promoting an anti-bias, pro-social curriculum that teaches children to value and respect themselves and others for their own unique individuality. Each child is considered unique in temperament and rate of development. Curriculum is planned to enhance and challenge particular, distinct individual needs, interests and abilities. The curriculum includes: manipulatives, art, music, games, and outdoor play. They believe child-initiated, child-directed, teacher-supported play is an essential component of developmentally appropriate practice. Activities and relationships occur in a healthy, positive and relaxed environment in which well-qualified staff provide personal attention, guidance and nurturing to each child.

Wee Care Nurseries and Learning Centers, Inc. strives to maintain continuity and consistency throughout the program by conducting helpful staff planning, training and a variety of joint activities involving various groups of children. In this context, all caregivers at Wee Care Nurseries and Learning Centers are encouraged to express their individual educational strengths as they work with children and in their cooperative efforts with other staff members.

When you come to Wee Care Nurseries and Learning Centers, your child will receive the best care the industry has to offer. All you need to do is "expect more." They have been fortunate to get special recognition from: Greenwood Voters' League, Mississippi State University, The Cities of Tchula and Lexington, Mississippi Building Blocks and The Delta Foundation.

Wee Care Nurseries and Learning Centers are able to care for children ages 6 weeks to 12 years. Along with regular childcare services, they also provide before and after school care and a summer reading and math enrichment program.

Wee Care Nurseries and Learning Centers, Inc. have a motto/slogan: Building a better world one child at a time. Learning Today . . . Leading Today!

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Wee Care Nurseries and Learning Centers, Inc. for its past and present dedication to providing impeccable, dependable childcare services in an effort to help families of all backgrounds within the Tchula community.

COMMEMORATING THE 49TH ANNIVERSARY OF MEDICARE

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2014

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 49th anniversary of

Medicare, one of the most popular and successful social insurance programs in the history of the United States.

When President Lyndon Johnson signed it into law on July 30, 1965, less than 50 percent of seniors had health insurance and 35 percent lived in poverty.

Now, over 52.4 million Americans are given health care benefits regardless of their condition or income.

This includes over 40 million Americans age 65 or above and 9 million disabled Americans receiving Social Security benefits.

Medicare saves lives and money, and here is why.

Since its creation Medicare has provided comprehensive health care coverage for the senior citizens who cannot afford it.

Without Medicare, most seniors would not have insurance and be unable to afford health care due to high costs or pre-existing conditions.

It provides 37 million seniors prescription drug coverage and offers free preventive health screenings, including mammograms, diabetes, or cancer screenings now thanks to the Affordable Care Act.

Medicare is not welfare. It is an cost-effective social program that works.

In combination with the Affordable Care Act, I believe that Medicare's future is even brighter.

These improved benefits include incentives for doctors and health care providers to coordinate more smoothly, reduce waste and fraud, and lower out of pocket costs for beneficiaries.

Forty-nine years after its inception, the program continues to do its job and I hope that we can continue to support it.

IMMIGRATION

HON. GLENN THOMPSON

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, the situation on our southern border and the influx of unaccompanied migrant children is both tragic and alarming.

As the House and Senate debate this matter, it's important for us to recognize several areas of discussion that demand our attention.

To start, Mr Speaker, we know this influx has been building for some time and that over the last several months it has grown at an even faster pace.

Before 2009, the flow of unaccompanied children attempting to cross the border was less than 10,000 per year.

These numbers have increased dramatically over the last few years. While recent estimates over the past month appear to indicate the flow is subsiding, we remain on pace to exceed 90,000 children for 2014.

We also know that more than 90 percent of all these children come from just three countries—El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras.

While economic conditions in this region have been poor for quite some time, they have not significantly changed in the last few years.

We also know that a law passed in 2008 with the best of intentions—the William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization—is making it more difficult to return unaccompanied children to their families.

Unlike illegal immigrants from Mexico, who are required by law to be processed and promptly returned home, the 2008 law guarantees minors from these countries a court date and mandates extensive assistance for temporary relocation as they wait out their pending appeal.

We also know that a large number of these individuals evade attending these proceedings, and that ultimately, few minors are sent home. In fact, most are able to stay for years, and a large number remain permanently.

According to Immigration and Customs Enforcement data, only 1,669 children were deported in 2013 despite more than 26,000 apprehensions.

These statistics are stunning, Mr. Speaker.

There is no wonder that according to interviews conducted by the Department of Homeland Security that more than 90 percent of these children expect they will be able to stay in the United States.

Mr. Speaker, what's even more concerning is how many of the Obama Administration's policies have not helped the current crisis.

For example, the President's 2012 policy for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals gives these families hope that they might receive some sort of amnesty. This policy not only is detrimental to the rule of law and an overreach of executive authority, but it also sends the wrong signal.

Mr. Speaker, all of this is a stark reminder of just how flawed the President and Senate's immigration reform bill is. Granting amnesty to 11 million illegal immigrants would merely serve to reinforce the perceptions that if you come to the U.S. illegally you will be rewarded—and not only with a hearing, but full legalization. This does not help the current situation, to say the least.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, billions in new spending as the President has requested will not reverse the perceptions of a lenient enforcement environment in the U.S.

Alternatively, what we do know is that this administration—and every administration—must do more to secure the border.

What we do know, Mr. Speaker, is that we must do more to stem this migration influx, which should include changes to the 2008 trafficking law.

What we do know, Mr. Speaker, is that we must do more to leverage our relations with Central America to support the expedited return of these children in a humane fashion.

What we do know Mr. Speaker, is that we need the White House to enforce the laws, better secure our border, and to put aside political games and actually start working with Congress in a bipartisan manner.

HONORING ISAAC PALMER

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable person, Mr. Isaac Palmer.

Mr. Isaac Palmer was born on May 23, 1914 in Sharkey County, Mississippi, the oldest of nine children born to the late Reverend Littleton and Frances Nathaniel Palmer. Mr. Palmer was married to the late Vera Lee Bell Palmer for over 50 years. He has eight children: Betty, Geraldine, Odell, Isaac Lavelle, Nina, Patricia, David (deceased) and Fred (deceased).

Mr. Palmer wanted to attend school badly; but, he had to leave school when he was twelve years old, in the 6th grade, to work on the farm and help provide for his younger sisters and brothers. However, he didn't let this stop him. He learned to read, write and speak more fluently by studying the Holy Bible. Mr. Palmer was a ''jack of all trades'', doing things like driving tractors, farming, welding and being a mechanic, just to name a few.

At an early age, Mr. Palmer accepted Christ as his Savior. He was an active member of New Hope Baptist Church in Blanton, Mississippi, where he served as Senior Deacon and Superintendent of the Sunday school for many years. During this time, he led many children, friends and acquaintances to Christ. He has been and remains a laborer for Christ for more than 85 years.

Though Mr. Palmer only had a 6th grade education, he remains passionate about helping and encouraging his children and other young people to get as much education as possible. To help out, he would drive his own children to and from Alcorn and Jackson State Universities, as well as their friends who lived in the area (free of charge), after working all day.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mr. Isaac Palmer for his dedication to serving and giving back to his family and community.

STATEMENT OF INTRODUCTION

HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2014

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, today I introduced a bill to amend section 218 of the Social Security Act to allow for the governments of Guam and American Samoa to enter into voluntary agreements for Social Security and Medicare coverage for their local government employees. This bill provides parity to Guam and American Samoa with each of the 50 states and other territories.

Section 218 of the Social Security Act authorizes the Social Security Administration and State governments to enter into voluntary agreements to provide Social Security and Medicare Hospital Insurance (HI) or Medicare HI-only coverage for State and local government employees. Under the current statute, the governments of the 50 states, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands are eligible to enter into these agreements with the Social Security Administration; however the District of Columbia, Guam, and America Samoa are specifically excluded from the definition of ''State'' for this section of the law. All 50 states, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands have entered into a Section 218 agreement to cover some or all of their government employees.

Guam and America Samoa's exclusion from this section prevents our local governments from entering into a similar agreement with the Social Security Administration. It prevents government employees in Guam from receiving

Social Security benefits similar to what is provided to private sector employees on Guam who contribute to Social Security. The Guam Legislature unanimously passed a resolution requesting for me to introduce legislation that would remove Guam from the exclusion of the definition of ''State'' for Section 218. The Guam Legislature wishes to provide the government of Guam with the opportunity to enter into a Section 218 agreement to have their employees covered under Social Security. They have identified a local funding source to begin contributions to the Social Security Trust Fund.

In closing, I urge support for this bill to rectify this inequity and provide government employees in Guam and American Samoa an equal opportunity to contribute into Social Security. I thank Congressman FALEOMAVAEGA for cosponsoring this bill, and I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to advance this legislation.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. KEVIN BRADY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2014

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I was called away yesterday, July 29, 2014, for an important meeting along with local officials at Southwest Key, a shelter in my district for youth that crossed the border illegally. I would like to submit my votes on the matters considered by the House in my absence.

For rollcall vote No. 458, ordering the previous questions on H. Res. 693—the rule providing for consideration of H.R. 4315—21st Century Endangered Species Transparency Act, I would have voted ''yea.''

For rollcall vote No. 459 on adoption of H. Res. 693—the rule providing for consideration of H.R. 4315—21st Century Endangered Species Transparency Act, I would have voted ''yea.''

For rollcall vote No. 460 on Amendment No. 2 by Rep. DEFAZIO (D–OR) to exclude scientific information published solely in internal Interior Department publications from the definition of ''best available science,'' I would have voted ''nay.''

For rollcall vote No. 461 on Amendment No. 3 by Rep. HOLT (D–NJ) to strike a provision which includes all data submitted by State, County or Tribal governments as ''best available science,'' I would have voted ''nay.''

For rollcall vote No. 462 on Rep. KIRKPATRICK (D–AZ) Motion to Recommit H.R. 4315 with instructions, I would have voted ''nay.''

For rollcall vote No. 463 on passage of H.R. 4315—21st Century Endangered Species Transparency Act, I would have voted ''yea.''

For rollcall vote No. 464 on H.R. 4809 to reauthorize the Defense Production Act, to improve the Defense Production Act Committee, I would have voted ''yea.''

RAISING AWARENESS OF HEPATITIS C AND FORGING A PATH TO ITS ERADICATION

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2014

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize The Second Annual African American Hepatitis C Awareness Action Day which was held on Friday, July 25, 2014. Hepatitis C is a deadly and contagious viral disease that attacks the liver and kills thousands of Americans each year. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), an estimated 3.2 million people in the United States have chronic Hepatitis C virus infection, many of them unknowingly in the absence of symptoms. African-Americans have been disproportionately afflicted by the Hepatitis C virus more than any other ethnic group, representing an estimated 22 percent of chronic Hepatitis C cases in the United States.

The National Black Leadership Commission on AIDS, Inc. (NBLCA) has played a tremendous role in raising awareness by organizing the African American Hepatitis C Awareness Action Day. HIV infected persons are more susceptible to contracting the Hepatitis C virus, thus it is critical that people at risk are made aware in order to prolong a quality life. NBLCA does the community and its residents an exceptional service, surpassing its mission of educating African-Americans on means to counteract HIV/AIDS and other health disparities across the nation.

NBLCA has serviced thousands of organizations through technical assistance, development, and public policy. Their actions have garnished over $2 billion in federal funding for HIV/AIDS, formulating the first programs existing in the black community to address the problems caused by the HIV/AIDS virus. Furthermore, NBLCA continues to maintain chief consultant positions on various health related issues in numerous national organizations. They remain partners with the Congressional Black Caucus, the National Association of Black Social Workers, and the National Caucus of Black State Legislators, totaling over 500 black state officials being represented by the organization. NBLCA is also a prominent partner of the National Baptist Ministers' Convention, which represents 8.2 million African Americans. Internationally, this well-accomplished organization has served as an advisor on HIV/AIDS related issues to the United Nations, Gabon, Central African Republic, Uganda, The Bahamas, and others.

During this week, NBLCA has partnered with health care organizations and providers to provide communities with free screening services and information on behaviors associated with contracting the Hepatitis C virus. This initiative will allow many people who are unknowingly infected with the Hepatitis C virus to receive treatment before the virus causes fatal conditions such as liver cancer or cirrhosis. With the establishment of alliances with community leaders, clergy, and public officials across the nation, NBLCA has truly become a remarkable asset inspiring a much needed element of change within our communities.

Fortunately for millions across the world suffering from this chronic disease, an effective and curative treatment for the Hepatitis C virus, Solvadi, has been developed by the U.S. based pharmaceutical company Gilead Sciences, Inc. However, it is disappointing that the high cost of Solvadi, $84,000 for a 12-week treatment, may leave the drug inaccessible to many Americans reliant on Medicaid. State Governments and health insurers in the U.S. will be challenged as they seek to provide this curative treatment to a large population of beneficiaries who otherwise could not afford it. Solvaldi is truly a triumph in modem medicine but if it cannot be made affordable to all those in need of treatment, it would certainly fail to serve its purpose. It is especially disheartening to learn that Gilead has offered to supply its ground breaking drug to foreign countries at up to a 99 percent discount of the price within the United States. Hepatitis C is a contagious chronic disease that often requires decades of treatment and expensive organ transplant procedures. If made affordable, Solvadi could save our country's health care system indefinite costs.

We are in the midst of a golden opportunity to rid the world of a disease that has claimed the lives of countless people. As evolution continues to give rise to new disease that may plague future generations, we must make a fervent national commitment to eliminating disease and ensuring the health of our citizens as we have in the past against diseases such as polio and smallpox. I am glad we have organizations such as the NBLCA, who is fighting the good fight on the grassroots level. It would be a great triumph for humanity and modem medicine to speak of Hepatitis C as a disease of the past.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and my distinguished colleagues join me in raising awareness of such a debilitating disease and support appropriations that grant funding to nonprofit organizations like the NBLCA across our Great Nation. These talented organizations do such a tremendous job saving so many lives.

RECOGNIZING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF KEVIN LEO OSWALD

HON. ALAN GRAYSON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2014

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an outstanding member of the Central Florida community, Mr. Kevin Oswald. Oswald was recently awarded the Air Traffic Control Association (ATCA) Air Traffic Controller of the Year Award.

As a controller, Oswald has seen the Kissimmee Gateway Airport grow and expand from a small non-automated facility to a control tower with Standard Terminal Automation Replacement System (STARS) radar, touch screen communications and FAA flight data input/output (FDIO) equipment. He has been an integral player in the success of the Kissimmee Air Traffic Control Tower (ATCT) in achieving over 2.3 million operations without an operational error.

An excellent example of Mr. Oswald's controller abilities occurred on December 19, 2013, when he was working as controller at the Kissimmee ATCT. He observed a Beechcraft airplane that had been cleared for landing and was over the approach end of runway 15 without the landing gear extended.

He immediately cleared the aircraft for a ''go around'' and explained the situation to the pilot. The pilot responded and on the next approach made a safe landing. Later, the facility received a letter from the pilot expressing his appreciation to Mr. Oswald and stated that his actions prevented a catastrophe. Apparently, the pilot had inadvertently silenced the gear warning light to accomplish a single engine landing. The Pan Am International Flight Academy changed its operations policies based on Mr. Oswald's actions.

Seeing a need to improve emergency response time, Oswald developed a training program to assist both the Fire and Police departments to better understand the Air Traffic Operations during an inflight emergency. He contacted the Kissimmee Fire Department Training Director and jointly they developed a plan to have all the fire and police department personnel visit the tower for an extensive training and observation course. This training has improved the emergency response time for both departments.

Mr. Oswald was also instrumental in developing routes for the medevac unit which flies out of Kissimmee Airport. He established standardized procedures and expedited routes to allow the life-saving medevac unit to operate in the quickest and safest way possible.

As a true team player, his efforts on a daily basis have significantly helped the Kissimmee Airport to be recognized as a destination of choice for individual pilots and aviation oriented organizations. His devotion and dedication to duty make him most deserving of the ATCA Air Traffic Control Specialist of the Year Award.

I am happy to honor Kevin Oswald for his accomplishments and contributions to the Central Florida and aviation communities.

HONORING PASTOR E.L. KING

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Pastor E.L. King, who is a former Educator in the Greenwood Public School District, Extraordinary and public servant.

Mrs. Ethel King was born in Leflore County on June 8, 1959 to Robert and Ethel L. Lawrence. At the age of thirteen, her mother died and she was nurtured by her grandfather, Mr. Willie James Lawrence, along with her seven siblings.

Mrs. King attended Greenwood Public School. She dropped out of school in the twelfth grade in 1976 because she had her first child. She was very independent and determined to make an easier life for her child. She immediately went to work at Rocky Manufactory at the age of eighteen. She remained there 3½ years. She left Rocky Manufactory to work for Irvin Industry Automobile & Parts for 3½ years. After seven years of working in a factory environment, she felt life had more to offer her. She went on to take her GED and attended Mississippi Valley State University in 1986. Before completing college in November, 1989, her daughter fell ill and later died with Leukemia in December, 1990. While at the University Hospital, she volunteered as a coordinator to help parents cope with their children's illness. She later volunteered with a candidate for a supervisor position in the 2nd District in Greenwood.

Mrs. King was called into the Ministry in 1992. She completed her Bachelor of Science Degree in Criminal Justice in 1993. After completing her degree, her health failed. She continued to fight on in 1996. She went to work as a volunteer permanent substitute teacher at Dickerson Elementary School under the leadership of Mrs. Vivian Redmond. Later she was hired as a full-time substitute teacher. Mrs. King was very dedicated to educating children.

In 1998 she was hired at Bankston Elementary School as an assistant teacher until her health failed again. She retired in 2006. After retiring from the school system, Mrs. King worked as a Notary Public of the State of Mississippi under Governor Haley Barbour. She also volunteered with the Fannie Lou Hamer Foundation in Leflore County. Later, she became Pastor of Monument of Grace Church II in Lexington, MS for three years under the leadership of Bishop L.J. Johnson.

Pastor Ethel L. King has made an impact on the lives of many children and adults alike, encouraging them through the scripture, ". . . but seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all things shall be added unto you."

Pastor Ethel L. King is married to Edward E. King and they are the proud parents of two beautiful daughters and eight precious grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Pastor Ethel L. King, a Former Educator, a Pastor who is yet inspiring others and often giving of herself to make many lives better.

CELEBRATING THE HILLCREST COMMUNITY CIVIC ASSOCIATION ON ITS 25TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2014

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask the House of Representatives to join me in celebrating the Hillcrest Community Civic Association (HCCA) on its 25th anniversary, which will be celebrated in September.

Ward 7's Belva T. Simmons, was the founder and 1st president of the HCCA. The idea for the HCCA was conceived on the front lawn of Dennis and Gloria Logan, on August 8, 1989, National Night Out Against Crime. The HCCA past and current Presidents are: Belva Simmons, Paul Savage, Pastor Franklin G. Singer, HI, Vincent Spaulding, and Karen Lee Williams.

Located just east of the Anacostia River in Ward 7, Hillcrest is a beautiful and increasingly diverse neighborhood. Among its residents are D.C. Mayor Vincent C. Gray, former Metropolitan Police Chief Isaac Fulwood, former U.S. Marshal James Palmer, and other notable public figures, as well as teachers, doctors, lawyers, government workers, civic leaders, professionals, retirees, and blue collar workers.

In the early 1900s, Hillcrest was referred to as part of East Washington Heights. The initial developer, Andrew Randle and his United States Realty Company, is responsible for establishing the Pennsylvania Avenue southeast gateway that paved the way for development of Hillcrest under the Alger Company. Both early developers had inserted into some of the residential property deeds racial covenants to preclude African Americans from renting or purchasing homes in East Washington Heights. In fact, these deplorable covenants continue to remain as burdens on the land, but cannot be enforced due to a 1948 U.S. Supreme Court case known as Hurd vs. Hodge.

HCCA is a proud force joining members together in a community that stands for equality, diversity, civic pride and fellowship, while opposing crime and threats to its beloved community. HCCA has adopted Beers, Randle Highlands, and Winston Elementary schools. HCCA has partnered with the Palisades Community Civic Association. The community continues to grow and acquire new members and diversify.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to join me in congratulating the Hillcrest Community Civic Association of Ward 7 on 25 years in the District of Columbia.

RECOGNIZING SARA BARBA, CALVIN FRAUENFELDER, KATHRYN KORNACKI, AND NATHAN VANNOY

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2014

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Sara Barba, Calvin Frauenfelder, Kathryn Kornacki, and Nathan Vannoy for their hard work and dedication to the people of Colorado's Sixth District as interns in my Washington, DC office for the Summer 2014 session of Congress.

The work of these young men and women has been exemplary and I know they all have bright futures. They served as tour guides, interacted with constituents, and learned a great deal about our nation's legislative process. I was glad to be able to offer this educational opportunity to these four and look forward to seeing them build their careers in public service.

All four of our interns have made plans to continue their work in public service next year with various organizations in both Colorado and Washington. I am certain they will succeed in their new roles and wish them all the best in their future endeavors. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to recognize Sara Barba, Calvin Frauenfelder, Kathryn Kornacki, and Nathan Vannoy for their service this summer.

IN HONOR OF FRANK DeCLERQ

HON. JUAN VARGAS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2014

Mr. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Frank DeClerq for the outstanding commitment and dedication he has demonstrated to the community of San Diego throughout his 35 years of service in the Fire Department.

Throughout his career, Frank DeClerq has been an advocate for the San Diego City Firefighters and their families. He earned the rank of Fire Captain in the San Diego Fire-Rescue Department. As a fearless leader he has worked with the Fire Department Management, elected officials, and industry experts to advocate for the enhancement of firefighter health and safety.

Frank DeClerq believes that a firefighter's sworn duty to serve their community extends to their off duty time as well. He has consistently demonstrated this belief by supporting numerous charities such as: the Muscular Dystrophy Association, the San Diego Burn Institute, San Diego Firefighter Aid, San Diego 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb, San Diego Youth Sports, and Local 145 Holiday Giving Programs for Low Income Families, among others. Frank DeClerq has not only influenced the welfare of firefighters of Local 145 as their leader, but also promoted the welfare of our residents throughout San Diego and the region.

EDUCATION IS THE ONLY ANSWER

HON. JOHN J. DUNCAN, JR.

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2014

Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, one of my constituents, Lee R. Johnson, a man for whom I have great, great respect, is very concerned about the type of education young people are receiving today.

Mr. Johnson spent a long and distinguished career in the U.S. Army. Since leaving the U.S. Military, he has become a leader in East Tennessee.

I bring to the attention of my Colleagues and other readers of the RECORD the wise words of Mr. Johnson.

MY LIFE FROM ZERO TO 101

(By Lee R. Johnson)

EDUCATION IS THE ONLY ANSWER

America's New National Education Mission Statement: America must educate and mentor all of our young men and women so that they are prepared to be academically and financially competitive in all walks of their lives no matter where they choose to live and work in this global society.

Globalization has brought us to the realization that the entire world is more important than ever. Globalization has forever changed the way that we should judge the education system in the United States, and there is no going back! Think, for instance, about the way that we often compare our local public school system with the same type of system in neighboring cities, counties, and states. We even compare our local system with the national average. When we judge our school system in this way, the future of our education system looks good. But if we judge our education system on a worldwide basis, we can see that our system actually deserves a failing grade. If our students are to compete successfully in a global culture and economy, our school systems will have to undergo a major overhaul. Our students (who will become our future workers, supervisors, and CEO's) must be prepared to compete—as never before—with the rest of the world. Most Americans have not yet come to realize what a problem this is now and how much more problematic this worldwide competition will become in the future. If we fail to recognize this problem, we will never find the answer to global competition, and we will be left far behind.

To understand how other nations impact most areas of our lives, consider President Ronald Reagan's answer when he was asked about the strength of America's military. He answered that he did not determine the strength of America's military; instead, he added, that the enemies of the U.S. determine the strength of our military. The same can be said of our education system. Competitors in every corner of the world will determine what our education system must be like. Our system should be flexible and constantly updated to meet ever-changing global demands or the United States will fail to keep up.

DRASTIC CHANGE IS THE ONLY ANSWER

Education is the largest business in America today, and so education must be run as a business! Teachers, principals, school board members, school superintendents, members of state legislatures, governors, and federal government leaders who don't believe this should get out of the American education system immediately!

In the business world, a business must be operated in real time—even better five, ten, fifteen even twenty years in the future—certainly not 25 years in the past. Our school systems should be just as up-to-date! At the present time in our nation's school systems, it takes years to change a simple policy or even to add or drop a single subject. With the changes in the world today, we must find a way to be flexible enough to change twenty-five percent of our entire education system within one year and continue to make changes every year until we get our school systems back on track. If not, our country will be in serious trouble—unable to compete in a global economy.

To date, our government and our leaders in the education field have not even been able to define what a proper world-class education is. We don't even have a national education ''Mission Statement''—what we expect from our children when they finish each of the four levels of training (pre-K through elementary years, middle school years, high school years, and college/university years). A ''Mission Statement'' is essential to our understanding of the definition of a ''world-class education.'' I give our government and all of our so-called learning institutions an ''F'' for their failure to understand what the problems are in our education systems. Many people, who realize that this problem exists, would describe the situation by use of this age-old saying. ''the blind leading the blind.'' And when the blind lead the blind, everyone goes around in circles—never getting anywhere.

If America fails to adopt this mission statement and carry through on its implementation, then our students will not be prepared to measure up to other students around the world. We cannot fail our children and grandchildren! After all, they are the most cherished treasures of our hearts and our most valuable resources. We must be ''on mission'' to provide these students of ours with a world-class education.

HONORING MRS. DEBORAH MOORE

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable Unsung Hero in Cleveland, Mississippi.

Deborah Moore is the Associate Vice President of Community Relations at Delta Health Alliance. Mrs. Moore is assigned to the Indianola Promise Community where she provides administrative oversight and technical assistance to the community and organizations. Mrs. Moore worked one year as Project Manager IV at Delta Health Alliance before being promoted to Assistant Vice President and then to Associate Vice President.

Mrs. Moore is a retiree from the state of Mississippi where she served 27 years in community and economic development. She spent the last 12 years of her career before coming to Delta Health Alliance at Delta State University's Center for Community and Economic Development in Cleveland, MS where she served as AmeriCorps director for two programs and then as director of the Center for Community and Economic Development the last five years. In her role as director of the Center for Community and Economic Development she assisted grass-root communities by empowering individuals, strengthening relationships and developing projects and programs to strengthen communities. Moore has extensive work with proposal writing having secured grants in excess of $15,000,000.00.

Mrs. Moore is a member of several nonprofit boards, the Mississippi Center for Nonprofits, Cleveland Youth Council and Friends of the Environment. She currently serves as chair of the board for the Delta Fresh Foods Initiative. Moore serves in an advisory capacity for the Breast Education-Early Detection Project and the School-based Asthma Management Project at Delta State University. She also serves on the advisory board of the Excel By 5 program in Cleveland, MS and is a member of the Excel By 5 Coalition in Indianola, MS.

Mrs. Moore works tirelessly in assisting: the elderly by running errands and doing other tasks they may desire; mentoring youth in diverse subject areas, so they can become an asset to society and work faithful with her husband's ministry to enhance congregants both spiritually and naturally.

Mrs. Moore is a native of Cleveland, MS. She is a graduate of Delta State University with a B.B.A. degree and a M.B.A. degree. She has a certification as an Economic Development Finance Professional from the National Development Council (NDC) and received her PhD from the University of Southern Mississippi in Human Capital Development.

Mrs. Moore is married to Dr. Billy Moore and they are the proud parents of two daughters, A'ndrea and Alicia.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mrs. Deborah Moore, an amazing Unsung Hero, for her dedication and service to mankind.

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF DEXTER FOXWORTH

HON. ALAN GRAYSON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2014

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Pride Month, to recognize Dexter Foxworth. A recognized Central

Florida community leader, Dexter is known for achieving change through collaboration, partnerships, and relationships.

Since 2012, Dexter has served as the Director for the Zebra Coalition, whose mission is to foster hope, dignity, and self-respect in lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and all youth (LGBT+) community and to provide them an opportunity to grow up in a safe, healthy and supportive environment. In partnership with 24 different local social service and government agencies, schools, colleges and universities, and businesses, Dexter oversees the coalition's operations and strategic growth in order to provide a full continuum of services and resources to LGBT+ youth throughout Central Florida. The Zebra Coalition is the only organization in Central Florida that assesses the needs of and offers a full continuum of services to LGBT+ youth.

Under Dexter's direction, the Zebra Coalition has strengthened its programming and resources, opened Central Florida's first drop-in center dedicated to LGBT+ youth, and became a national model for LGBT+ youth continuum of care. The coalition also received accreditation and licensing under the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) as well the Department of Children and Families (DCF). Dexter also helped the coalition obtain its first federal grants through the White House and the Office of National Drug Control Policy.

Through Dexter's leadership, the Zebra Coalition, its staff members, volunteers, member organizations, supporters and board members, have come together to provide support and hope to Central Florida's LGBT+ youth.

I am happy to honor Dexter Foxworth, during LGBT Pride Month, for his service to Central Florida's youth.

RECOGNIZING DR. CORA MARRETT

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2014

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Dr. Cora Marrett's career of service to our country—both in government and education. Since 2011, Dr. Marrett has served as deputy director of the National Science Foundation (NSF), and I have had the pleasure of working with her as chairman of the House Commerce-Justice-Science Appropriations subcommittee. I recently learned that she will be retiring next month after an exceptional career in academia and with NSF.

Dr. Marrett has helped lead NSF as its acting director, deputy director, acting deputy director and as the assistant director for Education and Human Resources, where she led efforts on STEM education research and outreach—a key priority for the CJS subcommittee in recent years. I particularly appreciate her leadership on efforts included in appropriations bills at my request to better understand gaps in K–12 STEM education research and to bolster American competitiveness in those fields.

Cora has a long history of service at NSF. She previously served as the first assistant director for the Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences directorate from 1992–1996. During that time she earned NSF's "Distinguished Service Award" for her leadership. She subsequently served as senior vice chancellor for academic affairs and provost at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst and later the senior vice president for academic affairs for the University of Wisconsin system, as well as a professor of sociology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Dr. Marrett for her outstanding leadership and service at NSF and wish her and her family all the best for her upcoming retirement.

COMMEMORATING MR. GARNETT KELLY'S 90TH BIRTHDAY

HON. JASON T. SMITH

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2014

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate Mr. Garnett Kelly's 90th birthday. Throughout his life, Garnett has served his country and community with the utmost respect and integrity. Garnett is a veteran of World War II, a retired Missouri State Representative, and a farmer.

Garnett Kelly nobly served his country in the United States Navy between 1944 and 1946, during World War II. He then turned his focus to farming and later to state politics where he ran for Missouri's 143rd District, and served Douglas County from 1970–1984. While serving in the Missouri House of Representatives, Garnett served on the House Committees on Agriculture, Fees and Salaries, Appropriations, and Education. After his tenure in the Missouri House of Representatives, Garnett came back to his farm in Douglas County. He has been farming for over 65 years, running both dairy and beef cattle and still puts up his own hay.

Garnett has been married to his wife Loretta since 1945, and they have been blessed with five children, twenty-three grandchildren, forty-nine great-grandchildren, and two great-great-grandchildren. It is my privilege to commemorate Mr. Garnett Kelly's 90th birthday, as well as recognize his numerous achievements before the House of Representatives.

HONORING MR. RYAN CEPREGI

HON. ROBERT A. BRADY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2014

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Ryan Cepregi for his commendable and brave actions that saved his friend's life and earned him The Medal of Merit from the Boy Scouts of America. Mr. Cepregi has acted in a manner that shows great concern for the well-being of others and will contribute greatly to our community in the future. We are proud to call Mr. Cepregi a resident of Pennsylvania's First Congressional District.

Mr. Ryan Cepregi is only fourteen years of age, but this past June he saved his friend's life. Ryan received a text message from his friend stating that he had taken all of his depression medication in an attempt to take his own life. Ryan immediately contacted his friend's father and paramedics were able to save his life, partially as a result of Ryan's immediate and mature response. Ryan said, "I was just being a friend. He has so many more years to live his life, he is too young to die." Ryan put the skills he was taught as a Boy Scout to use in order to save his friend's life. Ryan has been involved in the Boy Scouts of America since he was a Tiger Cub at the age of 7, and has been active in Troop 120 for many years now. For his use of these skills, Ryan is being awarded The Medal of Merit, which is given to a youth member or adult leader who has performed some outstanding act of service of a rare or exceptional character that reflects an uncommon degree of concern for the well-being of others.

It is a privilege to recognize a person whose admirable actions have already impacted our community greatly and will likely continue to do so in the future. I ask you and my other distinguished colleagues to join me in commending Mr. Ryan Cepregi for his service and dedication to Pennsylvania's First Congressional District.

HONORING TRINA GEORGE

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Trina George, who is a Director, Leader and Public Servant.

Trina George was appointed on June 29, 2009, by President Barack Obama to serve as Mississippi's Director of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Development. She has made history by being the first woman appointed in this position for the State of Mississippi. In her new role, she is charged with assisting residents of rural Mississippi with a range of programs such as: Affordable Housing, Water Systems Upgrades, and Economic Development Efforts. Rural development also provides grant and loan assistance to local governments and non-profit organizations for fire and police protection as well as health clinics, libraries and other facilities for public use. She is an advocate for rural communities throughout the state to assist with their growth, development and sustainability.

Prior to this appointment, Mrs. George served for 15 years as a Special Project Coordinator for Congressman BENNIE THOMPSON where she resolved community and constituency issues by thinking inside, outside and around the box. Her hands-on experience in the Congressional Office served as an ideal prerequisite for her role in rural economic development and community participation for the State of Mississippi.

Mrs. George served on many civic organizations, including education and volunteer groups. She is actively involved in the community where she is: a Board Member for the Heart of the South Girl Scouts Council, which serves Northern Mississippi and Southern Tennessee; and a Member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc, and PI Alpha Alpha Honor Society. She holds a Bachelor's Degree from Mississippi Valley State University and a Master's Degree from Mississippi State University. She is currently a Ph.D. Candidate in Public Policy and Administration at Walden University. Also, she holds a Professional Certificate

in Management and Leadership from the NeighborWorks Training Institute of America in Washington, DC.

Mrs. George is an important advocate for rural communities throughout the state. She administers and manages over 40 programs which include: housing; business and cooperative programs; community programs; and community facilities which are designed to improve the quality of life in rural America. Rural Development is an agency that the Obama Administration wants to see in the forefront of efforts to promote renewable energy and conservation of natural resources while ensuring a safe, sustainable, nutritious food supply through the Agency's cooperatives for present and future users.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Trina George, a director, leader and advocate, who is improving the quality of life for rural America.

CELEBRATING EDITH LEDERBERG

HON. LOIS FRANKEL

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2014

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Edith Lederberg, who turns 85 years old in August. Edith is a vibrant member of our community, and a true friend and advocate to senior citizens locally, statewide, and across the country. Edith has worked for the Aging and Disability Resource Center for 37 years. She currently serves as Executive Director, a position she has held since 1986. As Executive Director, she plans, coordinates, and directs senior programming and advocates on behalf of seniors at the local, state, and national level. She also raises financial resources to support programs for Older Americans residing in Broward County.

Ms. Lederberg has been recognized for her dedication several times over the course of her successful career, including her selection as a Media Representative and then as a Regular Delegate to the White House Conference on Aging. She served as President of the Florida Association of Area Agencies on Aging, and as Vice Chair of Broward's Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Board for almost 18 years. She has been elected to the Broward Women's Hall of Fame and the Broward Senior Hall of Fame.

These are just a few from her long list of accomplishments. Ms. Lederberg was born in Freeport, New York and she has three children and four grandchildren. She is a truly exceptional woman and I know I join with her friends and family in celebrating her birthday. I wish her good health and continued success in the coming year.

RECOGNIZING EDMUND COOK

HON. NITA M. LOWEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2014

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize Mr. Edmund Cook for his many years of service to American Legion Post 506, and to veterans in Westchester County, New York.

Born in Lithuania in 1945, Edmund Cook was separated from his family in the closing days of World War II. After being found and fed by American soldiers, he was put in a ''displaced persons (DP)'' Red Cross camp for five years until he was adopted by an American family. The kindness shown to him by those American soldiers would have a lasting impact on Mr. Cook, and would lead to a lifelong career of helping veterans.

After receiving a masters degree from Fordham University, Edmund joined the Veterans Administration (VA) at the Montrose, New York, VA Hospital facility as a Clinical Social Worker. In 1991, he was transferred to the White Plains, New York, Veterans Center to help soldiers suffering from PTSD in the aftermath of the Iraq War. He soon started treating veterans from all wars, and has worked tirelessly to ensure they all receive the care they need. He would even go to homeless shelters to seek out veterans in need of medical treatment, and would collect clothes to give veterans.

For the past 30 years, Mr. Cook has chaired the Boys State Program for Ossining Post 506 American Legion. This program offers high school boys the opportunity to learn how our government works, from the local and state level to the Federal Government. It is an important learning experience for young men who might one day seek opportunities in government work. Mr. Cook has infused his passion for helping others into this program, and he continues to inspire young men every year.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Edmund Cook of Ossining, NY, for his lifetime of service to the veterans and youth of my district. His work has inspired others to help those in need, and he has truly lived up to the Veterans Administration motto, ''to care for him who shall have borne the battle.'' I urge my colleagues to join me in honoring his tremendous accomplishments.

CONGRATULATIONS TO MRS. MARTHA ANN (GIBBS) MELTON ON THE OCCASION OF HER 100TH BIRTHDAY

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2014

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I take this opportunity to congratulate Mrs. Martha Ann (Gibbs) Melton, who was born on August 7, 1914, to Charles and Chanie Gibbs. She is the youngest and only daughter of three siblings. Her two older brothers, Scott and Jim, have both made their transitions. After becoming a grandmother, Martha has been affectionately addressed as Granny by all who know and love her. She is indeed a very proud grandmother with 32 grandchildren and a host of great grandchildren and great-great grandchildren.

Martha Ann had a very interesting childhood. Her father, Charles Gibbs (Poppa) was one of 12 siblings born to Henry and Ann (Wright) Gibbs. Grandpa Henry Gibbs was a free slave in Clay County, West Point, Mississippi. Because he was a man of many trades—such as a farmer, shoe maker, textile worker, blacksmith, cotton gin operator, and molasses mill operator—Grandpa Henry's 12 children also followed in his path. His freedom came with a 225-acre land grant from the Cottrell Plantation owner, which was eventually inherited by his children and passed down through generations to living descendants. The young Poppa Charles Gibbs was a very hardworking farmer and shoemaker. His 3 children also had to work hard. Although there was always work to do, the kids did find time to play. Some of Granny's favorite games were baseball, hop scotch, and jump rope. Her recollection of a normal day was being up at day break, attending the one room Pooles' school house, and then working in the cotton fields until sundown where she was either chopping cotton or picking up 200 pounds of cotton a day during harvest. She took what she learned from Pooles' school to later earn a GED. Granny shared one of her favorite pastimes which was sitting and watching Poppa operate his shoe lasting machines to make shoes. She was always amazed how the machine would use a needle to punch and sew shoes. Not only did Poppa make shoes, but he also removed soles from old shoes and patched the soles to make them look new.

As tradition goes, the expectation is that, as the only daughter in the household, Granny would have a room with some special frills or girly touches. Quite the opposite, she remembers having the basics—a small bed, a trunk and a chifferobe, and she was quite content with her provisions. In addition, Sundays were special in the Gibbs family. Everyone got up early and put on their best attire for a day of worship at Primitive Baptist Church. Granny later became a member of Union Star Baptist Church (West Point) where she sang in the choir. Granny was also a member of the Prince Hall Masons, Heroines of Jericho Lounge, Court #324.

As a young woman, Martha Ann was a mother to 5 children, the late Chanie (Gibbs) Randle, Sallie (Collins) Sellars, Isaac Melton, Jr., Amos Melton, and Clarence Melton. Her husbands from previous marriages were the late Willie James Collins and the late Isaac Melton, Sr. She held a variety of jobs while living in West Point, ranging from day work at various homes to Bryan Bros. Packing Company, Swift and Company, working as a dry cleaning attendant, and later as a salesperson for American Burial Insurance Company.

In her senior years, Granny became ill and moved to Chicago to be cared for by her daughter, Sallie. Her church, Union Star Baptist, honored her transition with a letter for membership to Greater Garfield Baptist Church (Chicago) under the pastorship of Reverend George Henderson, where she serves faithfully and is the senior member of the Mother's Board. Granny occasionally breaks out in song during service, and is welcomed by Pastor Henderson. She affirms that her all-time favorite hymn is ''I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say.'' Even though Granny has reached this historical milestone, she continues to be one of the feistiest elders you will ever encounter. She has been there and done that and knows more than any of us will ever be able to profess . . . just ask her.

I take this opportunity to congratulate Mrs. Melton as she reaches a milestone of 100 years and commend her and her family for the great legacy of history and the contributions they have made to human kind.

AN APPRECIATION TO AMERICAN SONGWRITERS

HON. HOWARD COBLE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2014

Mr. COBLE. Mr. Speaker, it is no secret that American songwriters are my sweethearts. Their ability to conjure emotion and experience into a tune that can be enjoyed by all rivals any talent in the world.

Recently, I sponsored H.R. 4079, the Songwriter Equity Act of 2014, because of the obvious inequity that exists in the rate structure for songwriters and performers. It is my hope that this disparity will be corrected but not solely at the expense, however, of our nation's and my home state's radio and television broadcast stations.

The art of songwriting depends on a vibrant workplace, which unfortunately is becoming more and more difficult to find. If we want to continue to lead the world in music, from a cultural and economic perspective, future changes to our copyright laws should be aimed at supporting and helping the American songwriter.

HONORING LAMBS OF GOD, INC.

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a landmark establishment within the Clinton community that provides one of the most critical and essential services for all working parents: Lambs of God, Inc.

Lambs of God, Inc., formerly known as Agape' Childcare, was established on August 1987 by Jessie and Shirley Burns of Bolton, Mississippi. Over the past two decades, the establishment has changed ownership and name twice, but the quality of childcare and nurturing has continued to grow for over 20 years. In 1998, Victor and Cantrell Keyes, also of Bolton, Mississippi, became the new owners and changed the name to Agape Christian Academy. In June 2005, Kenneth and Vickie Lewis of Clinton, Mississippi became the establishment's present day owners and renamed the business Lambs of God, Inc.

Over 1000 children have been served and ministered to through Lambs of God, Inc.

Founded in reference to John 21:15. The business is currently licensed to serve 57 children and is dedicated to developing and nurturing the physical, cognitive, emotional, and social growth in a safe Christian learning environment.

In addition to providing childcare, the establishment also offers summer camp, preschool, afterschool, before school drop-off, A'Beka tutorial and two well-balanced meals and two afternoon snacks. The overall mission of Lambs of God, Inc. is to interactively engage a child's educational needs while promoting professionalism in the field of childcare.

The vision and inspiration for Lambs of God, Inc. manifested via the encouragement given by Mrs. Daisy Johnson, owner of Kids Are Kids Learning Center in Brandon, Mississippi. Her insight in the field of childcare gave Mr. and Mrs. Lewis the inspiration and the tools needed to encourage and redirect families and single parents. Childcare became the perfect opportunity to lay a strong spiritual/educational foundation, build character and exemplify love, all while strengthening the community and establishing lifelong relationships.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Lambs of God, Inc. for its' past and present dedication to providing impeccable, dependable childcare services in an effort to help families of all backgrounds within the Clinton community.

HONORING MASTER CHIEF PETTY OFFICER FRANCIS L. WAWROSKI, JR., U.S. NAVY RET.

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2014

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the contributions of the late Master Chief Petty Officer Francis L. Wawroski, Jr., U.S. Navy Ret. of Laredo, Texas—a well-known veteran, educator, and philanthropist.

Master Chief Wawroski was a graduate of Southwest Texas State University. After graduating Master Chief Wawroski served a tour of duty in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War. After being honorably discharged from the U.S. Army, Master Chief Wawroski enlisted in the U.S. Naval reserve, where he continued to serve for 32 years including service during Operation Desert Storm.

Master Chief Wawroski was also a long-term educator; he retired after 33 years of service with the Laredo Independent School District. Master Chief Wawroski was an honorable teacher, administrator and mentor to both colleagues and students. Civic involvements were also considered high priority to Master Chief Wawroski. These civic involvements included various community organizations, most recently with the Laredo Veteran's Coalition.

Master Chief Wawroski is survived by his wife of 41 years, Francisca Gamboa Wawroski; their loving children Judith Wawroski-Addison, Valerie Wawroski-Rodriguez, and Dr. Patricia Wawroski-Mendoza; and his first granddaughter Olivia Marie Rodriguez. Master Chief Wawroski is also survived by his brother, MSG John W. Wawroski, U.S. Army Ret.; sister, Sandra M. Wawroski; and a foster brother, Eugene Perales.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to have had the opportunity to recognize the late Master Chief Petty Officer Francis L. Wawroski, Jr., U.S. Navy Ret. for his hard work and generosity that has truly impacted many lives and our community.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO JOHN ''SHERM'' SHERMAN LEHMAN OF BUFFALO MILLS, PENNSYLVANIA

HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2014

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to my constituent John ''Sherm'' Sherman Lehman, a lifelong resident of Buffalo Mills, Pennsylvania. He is currently 100 years old.

Sherm Lehman was born on September 6, 1913, one of 14 brothers and sisters. He attended Hyndman High School until the age of 15, when he began working at the Celanese Corporation in Cumberland, Maryland to help support his family. He worked there for the next 45 years, seven months, and 17 days.

Sherm Lehman has always been deeply involved with his family, his church, and his local community. He married Geraldine Miller on January 25, 1936, and they have been together for 62 years, with three sons and two daughters who continue to reside in the Bedford, Pennsylvania region. His faith was particularly important to him, and he continues to worship at Christ Lutheran Church. Sherm even celebrated his 100th birthday in 2013 there, joined by many friends and family members. In addition, Sherm served on the Hyndman-Londonderry School Board in the 1950s, served as church treasurer, and remains an active member in the local Lions Club.

Sherm was drafted into the U.S. Navy in February 1945, and was honorably discharged when World War II ended six months later. As he describes it, ''When the Germans found out Lehman was coming they decided to surrender right then and there.'' Sherm continued to express joy and success in athletics, winning over 100 medals in track and field events in the Bedford County Senior Olympics. He also went on to compete in the 100 meter dash in the National Senior Olympics held in St. Louis, Missouri in 1987, when he was 74 years old.

John Sherman Lehman stands as an outstanding example of American honor and citizenship, and to this day he takes the time to vote in every election. He worked hard throughout his life, providing for his family and ensuring that future generations understand the ideals of genuine humility and love-for-country that you find so frequently in Pennsylvania.

Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege for me to honor Mr. John Sherman Lehman on the floor of the House of Representatives today. I congratulate him on a life well-lived.

TRIBUTE—DOUGLAS RING

HON. SCOTT R. TIPTON

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2014

Mr. TIPTON. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to rise today to recognize the life of Mr. Douglas Ring, a valuable member of the Pueblo, Colorado community. Mr. Ring, a beloved husband, father, grandfather and friend, was a businessman and community servant who faithfully stood by his community for over four decades.

Mr. Ring moved to Pueblo with his family when he was 14 years old where he attended Centennial High School, graduating in 1958. As an avid baker and gourmet chef, Mr. Ring worked in the restaurant business in multiple capacities, eventually opening the Great American Winery in 1974. Throughout the rest of his life, Mr. Ring fueled his passion for cooking and baking, bringing as many as 15

to 20 recipes to the Colorado State Fair each year, and winning an award for his baklava recipe.

Mr. Ring was not only an award-winning chef and pastry maker, but a respected public servant. From 1975 to 1989, Mr. Ring served on the Pueblo City Council during some of Pueblo's hardest economic times. He worked tirelessly to help the city manage the downsizing of the then CF&I Steel Mill and the Pueblo Army Depot. During this time, the unemployment rate throughout Pueblo reached as high as 20 percent, forcing Mr. Ring to make tough decisions with his colleagues to determine the fate of his beloved community. As one of his colleagues on the Pueblo City Council recently said about him, Mr. Ring was a major influence in keeping the city moving in a positive direction.

In later years, Mr. Ring became a local realtor, working for Prudential Platinum. Even after retirement, he remained active in the Pueblo community, serving on multiple volunteer boards and community projects, and spending time with his wife, children and grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to recognize the life of Mr. Douglas Ring. He lived a life filled with passion for his family, friends, baking and cooking, and service to the Pueblo community. I stand with the Pueblo community and the State of Colorado in recognition of his life and service. He will be missed.

RECOGNIZING JENNY LIN FOUNDATION CONCERT

HON. ERIC SWALWELL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2014

Mr. SWALWELL of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the free concert on August 1 organized by the Jenny Lin Foundation.

The Jenny Lin Foundation was founded 20 years ago, in 1994, following the tragic murder of Jenny Lin of Castro Valley at just 14 years old. Thanks to her parents, John and Mei-lian, Jenny's talents and spirit will never be forgotten through the work of this wonderful organization.

In recognition of Jenny's love of music, the Jenny Lin Foundation sponsors a free summer music program. It culminates in a free community concert each year.

Not only have thousands of East Bay students benefited from this music education, but they have gained leadership skills too. That is because the Foundation's programs are student led.

The Foundation also supports music education through two scholarships to help with private music lessons. These are annual awards given to a Castro Valley Unified School District Music Program participant chosen as the "Most Promising Musician" and a Castro Valley middle school student for "Academic and Musical Achievement."

Another focus of the Jenny Lin Foundation is to help protect our children. It has done this through fairs to educate parents and children on how to stay safe, self-defense classes, and art contests.

Thank you to John and Mei-lian, the Foundation, and everyone involved in it for making a tremendous contribution to the East Bay. I want to wish everyone involved in this year's concert the very best.

It is moving to see that such a positive benefit can come out of such a terrible crime. May the Jenny Lin Foundation continue to help our East Bay community for many years to come.

HONORING MURIEL ELLIS

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mrs. Muriel Ellis, who has been blazing through Mississippi's legal system.

Mrs. Ellis, 54, became the first African American clerk of Mississippi's Supreme Court and Court of Appeals on July 1 this year, after being the first African American Supreme Court deputy clerk and chief deputy clerk.

Mrs. Ellis worked her way through the clerk's office for 23 years after beginning as a legal clerk in 1991. The Callaway High School alumna, who graduated in 1977, became chief deputy clerk in 2009 after being named a team leader in 2000 and deputy clerk in 2007.

The Jackson native said she is blessed and honored to accept her new position. "I am just going to lead the clerk's office forward," she said. Mrs. Ellis took courses at Phillips Business College and worked as a ward secretary for St. Dominic Hospital from 1979–1987.

Mrs. Ellis has seen many changes since working in the clerk's office. Along with Ms. Kathy Gillis, former Mississippi Supreme Court Clerk of 33 years, Mrs. Ellis supervised the office's transition to electronic filing. Since the office's mandatory e-filing for briefs and motions began on January 1, 2014, she continues to work on the electronic transition through implementing emailed orders and clerk's notices, as well as e-filing transcripts and records from other trial courts.

The clerk became interested in a career in the legal system when she was serving as an alternate juror in the Hinds County Circuit Court. While working in the billing edits department at the City of Jackson Water Department, she said she drove past the Supreme Court building all the time on her way to the Water Department office, which is also located on High Street. "I never knew what this building was, but I used to say: 'That is a pretty building. I would love to work there someday,'" Mrs. Ellis said.

Mrs. Ellis has three children: Karen Ellis Evans, Kimberly Ellis and Leonard Ellis; three grandchildren: Madison Evans, Leonard Ellis, III and Bryson Williams—and is married to Mr. Leonard Ellis, Sr.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mrs. Muriel Ellis.

RECOGNIZING NSF INTERNATIONAL

HON. JOHN D. DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2014

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the good work of NSF International and to commend them for their 70 years of service to citizens around the world. NSF International was founded in 1944 as the National Sanitation Foundation and aimed to set standards of quality for food and water. Since changing their name to NSF International in 1990 and expanding their influence to other areas, such as certifications for consumer goods and the environment, they have contributed greatly to the well being of our citizens and our planet.

NSF International is devoted to ensuring reliable and effective standards for all types of consumer goods, services and systems. The organization also provides auditing and risk management tools and solutions for the businesses and industries they support. They are truly great members of the business community as well as valued industry partners.

The sanitation and quality of our products and food present a monumentally important responsibility. We need to make every effort to ensure that people around the world receive healthy and safe goods and services that have a standardized backing. NSF International combines all of these values and I am proud to support their mission. I would like to thank NSF International for all their work over the past 70 years and wish them the best of luck in the future as they continue to work on behalf of people everywhere.

21ST CENTURY ENDANGERED SPECIES TRANSPARENCY ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 29, 2014

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 4315) to amend the Endangered Species Act of 1973 to require publication on the Internet of the basis for determinations that species are endangered species or threatened species, and for other purposes:

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chair, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 4315, which would interfere with scientific determinations for endangered species recovery and divert resources towards unnecessary bureaucracy at the Fish and Wildlife Service.

The Endangered Species Act is designed to use the best possible science to identify and protect our most vulnerable species from extinction. This bill would eliminate rational assessment of data and instead mandate that any information from any state, local, or tribal government must be named the "best available science" to make decisions. It includes no minimum threshold, such as peer review, for the integrity of that data. Moreover, it invites uncertainty, as there is no way to distinguish between conflicting data from two different states or localities.

The bill also creates unnecessary and cumbersome reporting requirements for the Fish and Wildlife Service, including listing potentially sensitive commercial data and species location information online. It includes no additional funding to complete these reports, diverting funds from the agency's core mission of safeguarding vulnerable species.

As the Speaker plans to recess the House at the end of this week, there are important

issues that we should be addressing, including the wildfires that threaten public and private lands in the west. Instead, we are weakening fundamental protections for endangered species, creating more paperwork to distract from recovery efforts, and devising bizarre new rules to politicize science. I urge my colleagues to vote no on this bill.

IN RECOGNITION OF WYNNTON HILL BAPTIST CHURCH'S 153RD ANNIVERSARY

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2014

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor and pleasure to extend my sincere congratulations to the congregation of Wynnton Hill Baptist Church in Columbus, Georgia as the church's membership and leadership celebrates a remarkable 153 years. The congregation of Wynnton Hill Baptist Church will celebrate this noteworthy anniversary on Sunday, August 24, 2014 at 3:00 p.m. at the Wynnton Hill Baptist Church in Columbus, Georgia.

Tracing its roots back to the Civil War era, the church was the first of any denomination to be built in the Wynnton area of Columbus. In 1961, during a meeting at the home of Mr. Willis and Mrs. Sarah James, the first members of the church, the plans were established to build a sanctuary.

The first pastor, Reverend Phillip Owens, assisted in building the foundation of the church. Land was purchased from the James family to build a bush arbor which was covered by fresh bushes from a wooded area every Saturday before the Sunday service. After some time, a wooden structure was built. Rev. Owens served the church devotedly for 47 years.

In 1911, Reverend James H. Carter was called to lead Wynnton Hill Baptist Church and he continued to build from Rev. Owens' foundation. Under Rev. Carter's leadership, the church expanded and the structure changed from wooden to brick. The first public school in the area was taught in the basement of the church. Mrs. Selena Cody and Miss Johnnie Hutchins were the teachers.

One of the most significant moments in the church's history occurred after a city ordinance was enforced in 1928. The church was condemned and torn down. However, a sanctuary was erected in 1930 and the church began to flourish. Throughout the coming decades, an education wing was installed. In addition, the church was incorporated in 1979. Unfortunately, turmoil was on the rise again. In 1989, a firebomb destroyed the education wing, but that did not prevail against the spirit of the members. The following year, the education wing was remodeled and rededicated. The construction of the present sanctuary was completed in 1999 and the loan was paid off in 2003.

During these progressions, Wynnton Hill Baptist Church had eleven dedicated spiritual leaders that shepherded the flock and led them to a state of prosperity. Today the church continues to grow and give back to the community it has served for over 150 years.

The story of Wynnton Hill Baptist Church, which began as a small group of people worshipping in a bush arbor church 153 years ago and has grown into an expansive and successful church, is truly an inspiring one of the dedication and perseverance of a faithful congregation of people who put all their love and trust in the Lord.

Mr. Speaker, today I ask my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to Wynnton Hill Baptist Church in Columbus, Georgia for their long history of coming together through the good and difficult times to praise and worship our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

INTRODUCTION OF THE GROWING AMERICAN SHIPPING ACT

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2014

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my concern about the demise of the U.S. flag merchant marine and U.S. shipbuilding industry and to offer legislation to help revitalize these industries that are indispensable to the national security and economic interests of the United States.

Admiral Alfred Thayer Mahan, often recognized as the most important American strategist of the 19th Century, argued persuasively that our national greatness was inextricably associated with our control of the sea in order to secure both our commercial and security interests. That concept is as relevant today as it was in Mahan's time.

Our economic strength and national security today remain tethered to our ability to control the safety and security of the global supply chain. What has changed, however, is our vigilance in maintaining our commercial U.S. maritime industry.

That must change and fortunately I see a way forward. The U.S. shipbuilding industry and U.S. natural gas market are strategic industrial and natural resources essential to U.S. national security interests. In fact, the U.S. maritime industry has been interwoven into the fabric of our economy and national security since the founding of our Republic and the establishment of our Continental Navy in 1775.

Several factors explain why it is in the U.S. national interest to utilize the emerging coastwise and export trades for liquefied natural gas (LNG) to revitalize the U.S. flag.

First, this newly available and abundant energy source would provide reliable, long-term markets for U.S. commercial shipbuilding and new trades for U.S. flag vessel operators. Second, the imminent LNG export trade might also provide the impetus to attract new capital investment to expand the U.S. shipbuilding industrial base which has declined in capacity and international competitiveness over the past forty years. And third, the LNG export trade could be used productively to strengthen U.S. strategic interests and alliances with LNG trading partners, especially Japan, South Korea and India.

For these reasons, today I am introducing, along with my good friend, the Chairman of the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Subcommittee, Congressman DUNCAN HUNTER, legislation to provide a clear signal to the administration, maritime industry, energy industry, and our foreign trading partners that we in Congress intend to get serious about revitalizing our shipbuilding and maritime industries.

The Growing American Shipping Act is straightforward legislation that would expand existing authority under section 306 of the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Act of 2006 and under the Deepwater Port Act (33 U.S.C. 1503(i)) to ensure that the trade in LNG—both the import and the export of LNG—benefits the U.S. maritime industry.

This legislation, if enacted, would enhance U.S. national security and port safety by encouraging the transport of LNG on U.S. flag vessels. It would help maintain the skilled labor pool and technological and industrial infrastructure of the U.S. shipbuilding industry necessary to build and repair both military and commercial vessels. Furthermore, this legislation would ensure that vessels carrying LNG to or from the U.S. are crewed by credentialed U.S. mariners to reduce safety and security risks.

This legislation has received robust support from a host of maritime stakeholders, including the Maritime Trades Department (AFL–CIO), Seafarers International Union (AFL–CIO), Transportation Institute, Shipbuilders Council, Navy League of the United States, American Maritime Officers, Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association (MEBA), International Association of Masters, Mates and Pilots (MM&P), Maritime Institute for Research and Industrial Development (MIRAID), Marine Firemen's Union, Metal Trades Department (AFL–CIO), Sailors' Union of the Pacific, and American Maritime Congress.

Again, this legislation builds on existing authority under the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Act of 2006 and the Deepwater Port Act which specifically authorized the Secretary of Transportation to develop a program to promote the use of U.S. flag vessels in the importation of LNG to the United States. This legislation simply would amend each statute to expand the scope of these authorities to apply also to the LNG export trade.

This legislation is a measured and reasonable step forward to revitalize our U.S. maritime industries, to support our economic and national security, and to begin the process of reclaiming our mantle as a great maritime nation. I urge members to join Chairman HUNTER and myself in this effort.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. STEVEN A. HORSFORD

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2014

Mr. HORSFORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise to explain that on rollcall vote No. 463, held on July 29, 2014, I intended to vote "no." I am opposed to the 21st Century Endangered Species Transparency Act, and I inadvertently recorded myself as an "aye" when the bill came to a vote.

HONORING LILLIE G. HENSON

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable hero, Lillie G. Henson.

Lillie G. Dean Henson was born to the late Aaron and Lillian Dean on August 10, 1949 in Sardis, MS, Panola County. She is the ninth of eleven children, five boys and six girls. There were many challenges that she faced that seemed to have placed her in the line of the first born. She was blessed to be born in a Christian home where reading and studying the Bible were not an option, therefore, her faith in the Lord was well rooted and grounded.

Faced with many challenges of sickness in her family, Lillie learned the application of her faith was the only true anchor. Growing up was very challenging at times. Early in her growing up years her mother was stricken with a severe heart condition which required lots of rest and carefully prepared meals.

At the age of fourteen, much of the responsibility of taking care of the family fell upon Lillie. Cooking breakfast for the family and preparing a special diet for her ailing mom before going off to school was quite an experience.

As a little girl growing up, Lillie's dad would ask her to read the Bible to him, and as a child she remembers reading: ''Honor your father and your mother that your days may be long upon the earth.'' This scripture and many others rested in her spirit as she grew into adulthood. Lillie's passion for the word of God grew greater and greater.

By the time Lillie was a junior in high school, she began to make plans for college . . . only to be asked by her ailing mother to stay home to make sure her younger sister, who was then a junior, finish high school. Her plans were shattered but she learned to be obedient to her parents through the studying of the scriptures.

In 1969, Lillie's mother went to be with the Lord, her sister completed her junior year of high school with perfect attendance and completed high school as planned.

In 1970, Lillie moved to Chicago with her older siblings. Lillie was employed at Brachs Candy Company for twenty years. She was among the first few African Americans to hold a manager's position in the Quality Control Department.

In 1990, Lillie's dad at the age of eighty-two became ill. Her husband, Otha Henson, Sr., who was also employed at Brach Candy Company and is from Kilmichael, MS, decided to move back south to care for Lillie's dad and baby sister, Rebecca, who was born with Spinal Bifida. Lillie's dad passed away in 1991 and Rebecca lived ten years after his death.

Since 1996 to present, Lillie has been employed as Program Manager at Youth Opportunities Unlimited, a Youth Development Program located in Lambert, MS.

Lillie continued her education at Northwest Community College, Senatobia, MS, Rust College, Holly Springs, MS, and in 2012, she earned a BA in Ministry and in 2013 she received a Masters in Christian Counseling from Jacksonville Theological Seminary in Jacksonville, FL.

Lillie is happily married, the proud mother of four children, eleven grandchildren and two great grand boys.

You can find her teaching Sunday school on Sunday mornings at Pleasant Green M.B. Church, Sardis, MS, also a praise and worship leader, counseling, and encouraging and nurturing those in need.

Eph. 6:2, ''Honor thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise.''

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mrs. Lillie G. Henson for she is definitely the epitome of an unsung hero.

HONORING THE DEDICATED SERVICE OF FRANK ALSCHULER TO THE UPTOWN COMMUNITY

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2014

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Frank Alschuler on his 90th birthday, September 10, 2014.

Frank is a lifelong Chicagoan and Cubs fan. He graduated from George B. Swift Elementary School, the University of Chicago Lab School, Dartmouth College and Yale University School of Architecture and he served in the United States Navy.

He and his late wife, Marjorie Traxler, married on July 24, 1960. In 1965, they moved to Junior Terrace in Chicago's Uptown neighborhood where they raised their two children, Matthew and Mimi.

Frank was a founding board member of C4 (Community) Counseling Centers of Chicago, formerly known as EUCMHC, Edgewater Uptown Community Mental Health Center). Recognizing the need to serve the many low-income residents living with mental health concerns in the Uptown and Edgewater neighborhoods, the mental health center was opened in 1972. As a licensed architect, Frank volunteered his services to help the organization every step of the way. Now with five locations and an additional one under construction, C4 currently provides mental health services, crisis intervention, and substance use treatment to more than 10,000 at-risk children, adults and families annually. Now, 42 years later, Frank is still on the board and still helping with space planning.

In addition to C4, Frank also served on the board of Voice of the People in Uptown for over 40 years. Voice of the People has worked for and with low-income individuals and families in Uptown to create quality affordable housing. Working with early directors Irene Hutchinson and Anne Dee Harper, Frank helped build a tenant organizing group into a full-fledged neighborhood housing development organization. With Frank's expertise on the Board, the Voice went from managing one 6-flat to developing and managing hundreds of units of family housing in Uptown.

Frank and his late wife Marjorie instilled in their children and grandchildren the importance of giving back to the community. I wish him a happy celebration of a life well-lived, and good health in the coming years.

CONGRATULATIONS TO MAYOR SHERMAN JONES AND THE VILLAGE OF BROADVIEW, ILLINOIS AS IT CELEBRATES ITS ONE HUNDRED (100) YEAR ANNIVERSARY

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2014

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, on Saturday, July 26th, I had the opportunity to march with the Mayor of Broadview, the Honorable Sherman Jones; Mayor of Westchester, the Honorable Sam Paulia; Cook County Recorder of Deeds, the Honorable Karen Yarborough; the Honorable Chris Welch, State Representative; the Honorable Edwina Perkins, Mayor of Maywood; Trustees of Broadview, Attorney Richard Boykin and Democratic Nominee for District 1 of the Cook County Board, as well as a host of dignitaries from throughout the western suburbs, especially Proviso Township.

Proud residents of Broadview were lined outside their beautiful homes as we made our way to the shopping center where a daylong family festival was being staged. I understand that Governor Pat Quinn came later to bring greetings and salute the Mayors and other elected officials and residents who had gathered.

I take this opportunity to congratulate the Village of Broadview on its 100 years as an organized part of Cook County and Proviso Township in the great state of Illinois.

49TH ANNIVERSARY OF MEDICARE AND MEDICAID

HON. JOYCE BEATTY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2014

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to wish Medicare and Medicaid a very happy 49th Anniversary!

On this day in 1965, President Lyndon Johnson signed the Social Security Act into law, establishing Medicare and Medicaid and the guarantee that a wide range of health and medical services would be available to millions of Americans.

A year after declaring a war on poverty in 1954, President Johnson created two programs that would serve as the backbone of our Great Society and provide a backstop so that our fellow Americans would never again be left without a safety net or a helping hand.

These programs matter, not only to their users, but to all citizens in our great nation.

Medicare matters because it provides comprehensive health coverage to seniors and gives families peace of mind that their loved ones can retire with security.

The program has provided seniors and the disabled with the quality health care, economic security, and the peace of mind they deserve.

Because of Medicare, millions of Americans have been able to age with respect and dignity, instead of mounting medical debt and uncertainty regarding treatment.

Mr. Speaker, I know firsthand how important Medicare is to seniors and families in America.

Nearly 98 percent of older Ohioans were enrolled in Medicare in 2011, and nationwide more than 50 million seniors and people with disabilities are covered under Medicare.

Medicaid matters because 1 in 5 Americans and 1 and 3 children receive health care through Medicaid. Providing preventative care and lifelong health assistance is not only the right, moral thing to do, it is also fiscally responsible.

I look forward to continuing to work to strengthen and protect these programs and to ensure that the promise of health and economic security will be there for generations to come.

CONGRATULATIONS TO REV. MARK McCOLLUM AND THE NEW HOME BAPTIST CHURCH

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2014

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, Rev. Mark McCollum was born in Sunflower, Mississippi on June 12, 1934. In 1954 he moved to Chicago, Illinois. In 1964, Rev. Mark McCollum and a small group of faithful followers and believers founded the New Home Baptist Church in February of that year. The church's first location was in the Stone Temple Baptist Church Annex on Millard and Douglas Boulevard. A year later on March 19, 1965, Pastor McCollum lost his right arm in an accident and the church moved several times before locating to 349 South Cicero Avenue. It was always Pastor McCollum's desire to be in a church building and the New Home Family worked and prayed for forty years for it to happen. They called those years, the wilderness years, referring to the 40 years the children of Israel wandered in the wilderness after leaving Egypt. The Church and its pastor had their challenges and struggles but as a skilled leader, administrator and businessperson, the church acquired most of the 300 South Cicero Avenue block and used it as leverage to purchase the new church location at 4804 W. Polk Street, which is now known as Dr. Mark McCollum Avenue.

While being a great preacher and pastor, Dr. Mark McCollum is also known as one of the greatest gospel singers in the world, and brings great joy and inspiration to thousands every week with his voice. He can be heard on radio every Sunday night on AM 1450 at 9:00 pm where thousands wait for his theme song, ''I Will Trust In The Lord Until I Die.''

Finally, the wait was over and for the past ten years the New Home Congregation has been worshiping at 4804 W. Polk St. in Chicago, Illinois and saying thanks be to God for all that he has done. As one who lived at 5252 W. Polk Street for twenty years, I say thank you New Home, Thank You Dr. Mark McCollum for all that you mean to our community!

God Bless and Keep you.

HONORING CLEOTHA SADDLER

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable hero, Cleotha Saddler.

Cleotha Saddler was born on February 1, 1945 in Illinois to Garfield Allen and Viola Orr. She grew up in a home with six other relatives until her father decided he would raise her in Memphis, TN. Cleotha attended Mississippi Valley State University where she earned multiple degrees in elementary education. She later married Frank Saddler, Jr., settled in Marks, MS, and gave birth to nine children.

Today, Cleotha, also known as ''Cleo'' or ''Lou,'' is the rock of her family. She continues to care for her children, and take care of her grandchildren. Over the course of her life, she has contributed to her community tremendously. Her name has become one so common for helping others that the desire from others to want to help even her grandchildren has increased. She is most known in her efforts for raising money for those in need.

In 2005, she stood at the main intersection in Marks, MS tirelessly to gather donations from townspeople to send to Louisiana for Hurricane Katrina victims. In addition to that, she has never been reluctant to gather donations in that same way for families who cannot afford to pay for the funerals and burials of their loved ones. She comforts those families, not just with funds but with endless visits and ''check-in'' calls. She also helps organizations to decorate and/or cook for different events in the community. She is one that is very supportive of the school system, in reference to achieving adequate education. Cleotha is never hesitant to help anyone in any way that she possibly can.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mrs. Cleotha Saddler for she is definitely the epitome of an unsung hero.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, July 31, 2014 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

Daily Digest
Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S5075–S5158

Measures Introduced: Twenty-eight bills and two resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 2686–2713, and S. Res. 529–530. **Pages S5134–35**

Measures Reported:

Report to accompany S.J. Res. 19, proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States relating to contributions and expenditures intended to affect elections. (S. Rept. No. 113–223)

S. 2132, to amend the Indian Tribal Energy Development and Self-Determination Act of 2005, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute. (S. Rept. No. 113–224) **Page S5133**

Measures Considered:

Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act—Agreement: Senate continued consideration of the motion to proceed to consideration of S. 2648, making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014.

Pages S5075–76, S5083–90

During consideration of this measure today, Senate also took the following action:

By 63 yeas to 33 nays (Vote No. 250), three-fifths of those Senators duly chosen and sworn, having voted in the affirmative, Senate agreed to the motion to close further debate on the motion to proceed to consideration of the bill. **Page S5083**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing for further consideration of the motion to proceed to consideration of the bill, post-cloture, at approximately 9:30 a.m., on Thursday, July 31, 2014; with the time until 10 a.m. equally divided between the two Leaders, or their designees, and with Senator Sessions controlling the time from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m., and the Majority controlling the time from 11 a.m. to 12 noon; and that the time during adjournment count post-cloture. **Page S5157**

Bring Jobs Home Act: Senate resumed consideration of S. 2569, to provide an incentive for businesses to bring jobs back to America, taking action on the following motion and amendments proposed thereto: **Pages S5076–80, S5080–83**

Pending:

Reid Amendment No. 3693, to change the enactment date. **Page S5076**

Reid Amendment No. 3694 (to Amendment No. 3693), of a perfecting nature. **Page S5076**

Reid motion to commit the bill to the Committee on Finance, with instructions, Reid Amendment No. 3695, to change the enactment date. **Page S5076**

Reid Amendment No. 3696 (to (the instructions) Amendment No. 3695), of a perfecting nature. **Page S5076**

Reid Amendment No. 3697 (to Amendment No. 3696), of a perfecting nature. **Page S5076**

During consideration of this measure today, Senate also took the following action:

By 54 yeas to 42 nays (Vote No. 249), three-fifths of those Senators duly chosen and sworn, not having voted in the affirmative, Senate rejected the motion to close further debate on the bill. **Page S5082**

Pryor Nomination—Cloture: Senate began consideration of the nomination of Jill A. Pryor, of Georgia, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Eleventh Circuit. **Page S5080**

A motion was entered to close further debate on the nomination, and, in accordance with the provisions of Rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, a vote on cloture will occur on Friday, August 1, 2014. **Page S5080**

Nominations Confirmed: Senate confirmed the following nominations:

Cynthia H. Akuetteh, of the District of Columbia, to be Ambassador to the Gabonese Republic, and to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as Ambassador to the Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe. **Pages S5083, S5158**

Erika Lizabeth Moritsugu, of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Housing and Urban Development. **Pages S5083, S5158**

Richard A. Kennedy, of Pennsylvania, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority for a term expiring May 30, 2016. **Pages S5083, S5158**

Messages from the House: **Page S5131**

Measures Referred: **Page S5131**

Measures Placed on the Calendar: **Pages S5075, S5131**

Measures Read the First Time: Pages S5131, S5157

Executive Communications: Pages S5131–33

Executive Reports of Committees: Pages S5133–34

Additional Cosponsors: Pages S5135–37

Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: Pages S5137–46

Additional Statements: Pages S5126–31

Amendments Submitted: Pages S5146–56

Authorities for Committees to Meet: Page S5157

Privileges of the Floor: Page S5157

Record Votes: Two record votes were taken today. (Total—250) Pages S5082–83

Adjournment: Senate convened at 9:30 a.m. and adjourned at 7:26 p.m., until 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, July 31, 2014. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Acting Majority Leader in today's Record on page S5157.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Armed Services: Committee ordered favorably reported the nominations of Jessie Hill Roberson, of Alabama, and Daniel J. Santos, of Virginia, both to be a Member of the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board, and 2,132 nominations in the Army, Navy, and Air Force.

UKRAINE

Committee on Armed Services: Committee received a closed briefing on the situation in Ukraine from Derek H. Chollet, Assistant Secretary for International Security Affairs, Don DeLeon, Senior Defense Intelligence Expert for Russia/Eurasia, Defense Intelligence Agency, and Vice Admiral Frank Pandolfe, Director, Strategic Plans and Policy, J–5, Joint Staff, all of the Department of Defense.

FLOOD INSURANCE CLAIMS

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: Subcommittee on Housing, Transportation and Community Development concluded a hearing to examine the flood insurance claims process in communities after Sandy, focusing on lessons learned and potential improvements, after receiving testimony from Craig Fugate, Administrator, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security; Donald L. Griffin, Property Casualty Insurers Association of America, Chicago, Illinois; and Maryann Flanigan, Legal Services of New Jersey Hurricane Sandy Legal Assistance Project, Edison.

WIRELESS PHONE BILLS

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: Committee concluded a hearing to examine wireless phone bills, focusing on a review of consumer protection practices and gaps, after receiving testimony from Terrell McSweeny, Commissioner, Federal Trade Commission; Travis LeBlanc, Acting Chief, Enforcement Bureau, Federal Communications Commission; Vermont Attorney General William H. Sorrell, Montpelier; and Michael F. Altschul, CTIA—The Wireless Association, Washington, DC.

PUBLIC LANDS, FORESTS, AND MINING BILLS

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources: Subcommittee on Public Lands, Forests, and Mining concluded a hearing to examine S. 1049 and H.R. 2166, bills to direct the Secretary of the Interior and Secretary of Agriculture to expedite access to certain Federal lands under the administrative jurisdiction of each Secretary for good Samaritan search-and-recovery missions, S. 1437, to provide for the release of the reversionary interest held by the United States in certain land conveyed in 1954 by the United States, acting through the Director of the Bureau of Land Management, to the State of Oregon for the establishment of the Hermiston Agricultural Research and Extension Center of Oregon State University in Hermiston, Oregon, S. 1554, to direct the heads of Federal public land management agencies to prepare reports on the availability of public access and egress to Federal public land for hunting, fishing, and other recreational purposes, to amend the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 to provide funding for recreational public access to Federal land, S. 1605, for the relief of Michael G. Faber, S. 1640, to facilitate planning, permitting, administration, implementation, and monitoring of pinyon-juniper dominated landscape restoration projects within Lincoln County, Nevada, S. 1888 and H.R. 1241, bills to facilitate a land exchange involving certain National Forest System lands in the Inyo National Forest, S. 2123, to authorize the exchange of certain Federal land and non-Federal land in the State of Minnesota, S. 2616, to require the Secretary of the Interior to convey certain Federal land to Idaho County in the State of Idaho, H.R. 1684, to convey certain property to the State of Wyoming to consolidate the historic Ranch A, and H.R. 3008, to provide for the conveyance of a small parcel of National Forest System land in Los Padres National Forest in California, after receiving testimony from Ed Roberson, Assistant Director, Resources and Planning, Bureau of Land Management, Department of the Interior; and Gregory Smith, Acting Associate

Deputy Chief, National Forest System, Forest Service, Department of Agriculture.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Environment and Public Works: Committee ordered favorably reported the following business items:

S. 1463, to amend the Lacey Act Amendments of 1981 to prohibit importation, exportation, transportation, sale, receipt, acquisition, and purchase in interstate or foreign commerce, or in a manner substantially affecting interstate or foreign commerce, of any live animal of any prohibited wildlife species;

Corps of Engineers Study Resolution relating to San Francisco Bay to Stockton Navigation Channels, California;

General Services Administration resolutions; and

The nominations of Jane Toshiko Nishida, of Maryland, and Ann Elizabeth Dunkin, of California, both to be an Assistant Administrator, both of the Environmental Protection Agency, and Manuel H. Ehrlich, Jr., of New Jersey, to be a Member of the Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation.

THE AFRICAN GROWTH AND OPPORTUNITY ACT

Committee on Finance: Committee concluded a hearing to examine ''The African Growth and Opportunity Act'' at 14, focusing on the road ahead, after receiving testimony from Michael Froman, Ambassador, United States Trade Representative.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: Committee ordered favorably reported the following business items:

H.R. 4007, to recodify and reauthorize the Chemical Facility Anti-Terrorism Standards Program, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 1618, to enhance the Office of Personnel Management background check system for the granting, denial, or revocation of security clearances or access to classified information of employees and contractors of the Federal Government, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 1347, to provide transparency, accountability, and limitations of Government sponsored conferences, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 2640, to amend title 44, United States Code, to require information on contributors to Presidential library fundraising organizations;

S. 2323, to amend chapter 21 of title 5, United States Code, to provide that fathers of certain permanently disabled or deceased veterans shall be included with mothers of such veterans as preference eligibles for treatment in the civil service;

S. 2651, to repeal certain mandates of the Department of Homeland Security Office of Inspector General, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

H.R. 4197, to amend title 5, United States Code, to extend the period of certain authority with respect to judicial review of Merit Systems Protection Board decisions relating to whistleblowers;

S. 2665, to amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to provide eligibility for broadcasting facilities to receive certain disaster assistance;

S. 1898, to require adequate information regarding the tax treatment of payments under settlement agreements entered into by Federal agencies, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

H.R. 606, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 815 County Road 23 in Tyrone, New York, as the ''Specialist Christopher Scott Post Office Building'';

H.R. 1671, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 6937 Village Parkway in Dublin, California, as the ''James 'Jim' Kohnen Post Office'';

H.R. 2291, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 450 Lexington Avenue in New York, New York, as the ''Vincent R. Sombrotto Post Office'';

H.R. 3472, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 13127 Broadway Street in Alden, New York, as the ''Sergeant Brett E. Gornewicz Memorial Post Office'';

H.R. 3765, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 198 Baker Street in Corning, New York, as the ''Specialist Ryan P. Jayne Post Office Building''; and

The nominations of Joseph L. Nimmich, of Maryland, to be Deputy Administrator, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, Anne E. Rung, of Pennsylvania, to be Administrator for Federal Procurement Policy, and James C. Miller, III, of Virginia, Stephen Crawford, of Maryland, David Michael Bennett, of North Carolina, and Victoria Reggie Kennedy, of Massachusetts, all to be a Governor of the United States Postal Service.

PAID FAMILY LEAVE

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions: Subcommittee on Children and Families concluded a hearing to examine paid family leave, focusing on the benefits for businesses and working families, after receiving testimony from Jeannine Sato, Durham Connects, Durham, North Carolina; Victoria S.

Shabo, National Partnership for Women and Families, Washington, DC; Kevin Trapani, The Redwoods Group, Morrisville, North Carolina; and Maryella Gockel, Ernst and Young LLP, Secaucus, New Jersey.

BUSINESS MEETING

Committee on Indian Affairs: Committee ordered favorably reported the following business items:

S. 1948, to promote the academic achievement of American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian children with the establishment of a Native American language grant program, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 2299, to amend the Native American Programs Act of 1974 to reauthorize a provision to ensure the survival and continuing vitality of Native American languages, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 2442, to direct the Secretary of the Interior to take certain land and mineral rights on the reservation of the Northern Cheyenne Tribe of Montana and other culturally important land into trust for the benefit of the Northern Cheyenne Tribe, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 2465, to require the Secretary of the Interior to take into trust 4 parcels of Federal land for the benefit of certain Indian Pueblos in the State of New Mexico, with an amendment;

S. 2479, to provide for a land conveyance in the State of Nevada, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute;

S. 2480, to require the Secretary of the Interior to convey certain Federal land to Elko County, Nevada, and to take land into trust for certain Indian tribes, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute; and

H.R. 4002, to revoke the charter of incorporation of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma at the request of that tribe.

NATURAL DISASTERS IN INDIAN COUNTRY

Committee on Indian Affairs: Committee concluded an oversight hearing to examine responses to natural disasters in Indian country, after receiving testimony from Elizabeth Zimmerman, Deputy Associate Administrator, Office of Response and Recovery, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security; Governor J. Michael Chavarria, Santa Clara Pueblo, Espanola, New Mexico; Ronda Metcalf, Sauk-Suiattle Indian Tribal Council, Darrington, Washington; Matt Gregory, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Durant; Mary David, Kawerak, Inc., Nome, Alaska; and Jake Heflin, Tribal Emergency Management Association, Reno, Nevada.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT

Committee on the Judiciary: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the next steps for the ''Violence Against Women Act'' (VAWA), focusing on protecting women from gun violence, including S. 1290, to protect victims of stalking from gun violence, and S. 2483, to amend title 18, United States Code, to protect more victims of domestic violence by preventing their abusers from possessing or receiving firearms, after receiving testimony from Seamus McCaffery, Supreme Court of Pennsylvania Justice, Harrisburg; Jacquelyn Campbell, Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing, Baltimore, Maryland; Joyce Lee Malcolm, George Mason University School of Law, Arlington, Virginia; Christopher Schmaling, Racine County Sheriff, Racine, Wisconsin; and Elvin Daniel, McHenry, Illinois.

CONTACT LENS INDUSTRY

Committee on the Judiciary: Subcommittee on Antitrust, Competition Policy and Consumer Rights concluded a hearing to examine pricing policies and competition in the contact lens industry, after receiving testimony from R. Joe Zeidner, 1–800 CONTACTS, Draper, Utah; Millicent L. Knight, Johnson and Johnson Vision Care Inc., Jacksonville, Florida; David A. Cockrell, American Optometric Association, Stillwater, Oklahoma; and George Slover, Consumers Union, Washington, DC.

MEDICARE OBSERVATION STATUS ON SENIORS

Special Committee on Aging: Committee concluded a hearing to examine the impact of Medicare observation status on seniors, after receiving testimony from Ann M. Sheehy, University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health, Madison, on behalf of the Society of Hospital Medicine; Bob Armstrong, St. Mary's Health System, Lewiston, Maine; Marna Borgstrom, Yale-New Haven Health System, New Haven, Connecticut; Toby S. Edelman, Center for Medicare Advocacy, Inc., Boston, Massachusetts; and Sylvia C. Engler, Framingham, Massachusetts.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 47 public bills, H.R. 5255–5301; 1 private bill, H.R. 5302; and 4 resolutions, H. Con. Res. 111; and H. Res. 695, 697–698 were introduced. **Pages H7124–27**

Additional Cosponsors: **Pages H7128–29**

Report Filed: A report was filed today as follows:

H. Res. 696, providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 5230) making supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 5272) to prohibit certain actions with respect to deferred action for aliens not lawfully present in the United States, and for other purposes; providing for consideration of the Senate amendment to the bill (H.R. 5021) to provide an extension of Federal-aid highway, highway safety, motor carrier safety, transit, and other programs funded out of the Highway Trust Fund, and for other purposes; and for other purposes (H. Rept. 113–567). **Page H7123**

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he appointed Representative Stewart to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. **Page H7043**

Recess: The House recessed at 11:35 a.m. and reconvened at 12 noon. **Page H7053**

Chaplain: The prayer was offered by the guest chaplain, Reverend Dr. Alphonso Jackson, Second Baptist Church of Richmond Heights, Miami, Florida. **Page H7053**

Suspensions: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measures:

Emergency Afghan Allies Extension Act of 2014: H.R. 5195, amended, to provide additional visas for the Afghan Special Immigrant Visa Program; **Pages H7070–74**

Denouncing the use of civilians as human shields by Hamas and other terrorist organizations in violation of international humanitarian law: H. Con. Res. 107, amended, to denounce the use of civilians as human shields by Hamas and other terrorist organizations in violation of international humanitarian law; and **Pages H7074–78**

Veterans' Access to Care through Choice, Accountability, and Transparency Act of 2014: Conference Report to accompany H.R. 3230, to improve the access of veterans to medical services from the Department of Veterans Affairs, by a ⅔ yea-and-nay vote of 420 yeas to 5 nays, Roll No. 467. **Pages H7078–85, H7086–87**

Moment of Silence: The House observed a moment of silence in honor of our brave men and women in uniform who have given their lives in the service of our country in Iraq and Afghanistan, their families, and all who serve in our armed forces and their families. **Page H7086**

Directing the Clerk of the House of Representatives to make certain corrections in the enrollment of the bill H.R. 3230: The House agreed by unanimous consent to H. Con. Res. 111, to direct the Clerk of the House of Representatives to make certain corrections in the enrollment of the bill H.R. 3230. **Page H7087**

Providing for authority to initiate litigation for actions by the President or other executive branch officials inconsistent with their duties under the Constitution of the United States: The House agreed to H. Res. 676, to provide for authority to initiate litigation for actions by the President or other executive branch officials inconsistent with their duties under the Constitution of the United States, by a yea-and-nay vote of 225 yeas to 201 nays, Roll No. 468. **Pages H7058–70, H7085–86, H7087–89**

Pursuant to the rule, the amendment recommended by the Committee on Rules now printed in the resolution shall be considered as adopted. **Page H7087**

H. Res. 694, the rule providing for consideration of the resolution (H. Res. 676) and the bill (H.R. 935), was agreed to by a yea-and-nay vote of 227 yeas to 196 nays, Roll No. 466, after the previous question was ordered by a yea-and-nay vote of 227 yeas to 195 nays, Roll No. 465. **Pages H7085–86**

Reducing Regulatory Burdens Act: The House began consideration of H.R. 935, to amend the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act and the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to clarify Congressional intent regarding the regulation of the use of pesticides in or near navigable waters. Consideration is expected to continue tomorrow, July 31st. **Pages H7100–08**

H. Res. 694, the rule providing for consideration of the resolution (H. Res. 676) and the bill (H.R. 935), was agreed to by a yea-and-nay vote of 227 yeas to 196 nays, Roll No. 466, after the previous question was ordered by a yea-and-nay vote of 227 yeas to 195 nays, Roll No. 465. **Pages H7085–86**

Meeting Hour: Agreed that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 9 a.m. tomorrow, July 31st. **Page H7108**

Recess: The House recessed at 9:51 p.m. and reconvened at 11:38 p.m. Page H7123

Senate Messages: Messages received from the Senate by the Clerk and subsequently presented to the House today appear on page H7053.

Senate Referral: S. 2577 was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs. Page H7123

Quorum Calls—Votes: Four yea-and-nay votes developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H7085, H7086, H7086–87, H7099. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 10 a.m. and adjourned at 11:39 p.m.

Committee Meetings

IMPACT OF ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES BY THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR ON SPECIALTY CROP GROWERS

Committee on Agriculture: Subcommittee on Horticulture, Research, Biotechnology, and Foreign Agriculture held a hearing to review the impact of enforcement activities by the Department of Labor on specialty crop growers. Testimony was heard from David Weil, Administrator, Wage and Hour Division, Department of Labor; and Brad Avakian, Commissioner, Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries.

RISKS TO STABILITY IN AFGHANISTAN: POLITICS, SECURITY, AND INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENT

Committee on Armed Services: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Risks to Stability in Afghanistan: Politics, Security, and International Commitment''. Testimony was heard from Catherine Dale, Specialist in International Security, Congressional Research Service; and public witnesses.

LOGISTICS AND SEALIFT FORCE REQUIREMENTS AND FORCE STRUCTURE ASSESSMENT

Committee on Armed Services: Subcommittee on Seapower and Projection Forces held a hearing entitled ''Logistics and Sealift Force Requirements and Force Structure Assessment''. Testimony was heard from VADM William A. Brown, Deputy Commander, U.S. Transportation Command; F. Scott DiLisio, Director, Strategic Mobility/Combat Logistics Division, Chief of Naval Operations (CNO–N42); and Paul N. Jaenichen, Sr., Acting Maritime Administrator, Department of Transportation Maritime Administration.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Energy and Commerce: Full Committee resumed a markup on the following legislation: H.R. 3522, the ''Employee Health Care Protection Act''; H.R. 4701, the ''Lyme and Tick-borne Diseases Act of 2014''; H.R. 4067, to provide for the extension of the enforcement instruction on supervision requirements for outpatient therapeutic services in critical access and small rural hospitals through 2014; H.R. 5214, to require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to provide for recommendations for the development and use of clinical data registries for the improvement of patient care; H.R. 3670, the ''Anti-Spoofing Act of 2013''; H.R. 5161, the ''E-LABEL Act''; and H.R. 1575, the ''Kelsey Smith Act''. The following bills were ordered reported, as amended: H.R. 3670, H.R. 1575, H.R. 5214, and H.R. 4701. The following bills were ordered reported, without amendment: H.R. 5161, H.R. 4067, and H.R. 3522.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Financial Services: Full Committee resumed a markup on the following legislation: H.R. 5018, the ''Federal Reserve Accountability and Transparency Act of 2014''; H.R. 4329, the ''Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Reauthorization Act of 2014''; H.R. 3913, to amend the Bank Holding Company Act of 1956 to require agencies to make considerations relating to the promotion of efficiency, competition, and capital formation before issuing or modifying certain regulations; H.R. 4042, the ''Community Bank Mortgage Service Asset Capital Requirements Study Act of 2014''; and H.R. 5148, the ''Access to Affordable Mortgages Act of 2014''. The following bills were ordered reported, as amended: H.R. 4042, H.R. 4329, and H.R. 5018. The following bills were ordered reported, without amendment: H.R. 5148 and H.R. 3913.

ALLEGATIONS OF DISCRIMINATION AND RETALIATION AND THE CFPB MANAGEMENT CULTURE

Committee on Financial Services: Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations held a hearing entitled ''Allegations of Discrimination and Retaliation and the CFPB Management Culture''. Testimony was heard from Richard Cordray, Director, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Full Committee held a markup on H.R. 3398, the ''Girls Count Act of 2014''; H.R. 5041, the ''Naftali Fraenkel Rewards for Justice Act of 2014''; H.R. 5235, the ''Emergency Iron Dome Replenishment Act''; H. Res. 281, expressing concern over persistent and credible reports of systematic, state-sanctioned organ harvesting from non-consenting prisoners of conscience, in the

People's Republic of China, including from large numbers of Falun Gong practitioners imprisoned for their religious beliefs, and members of other religious and ethnic minority groups; and H. Res. 683, expressing the sense of the House of Representatives on the current situation in Iraq and the urgent need to protect religious minorities from persecution from the Sunni Islamist insurgent and terrorist group the Islamic State in Iraq and Levant (ISIL) as it expands its control over areas in northwestern Iraq. The following legislation was ordered reported, as amended: H.R. 3398, H.R. 5041, H.R. 5235, H. Res. 281, and H. Res. 683.

BUILDING PROSPERITY IN LATIN AMERICA: INVESTOR CONFIDENCE IN THE RULE OF LAW

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere held a hearing entitled ''Building Prosperity in Latin America: Investor Confidence in the Rule of Law''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

TWENTY-YEARS OF U.S. POLICY ON NORTH KOREA: FROM AGREED FRAMEWORK TO STRATEGIC PATIENCE

Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific held a hearing entitled ''Twenty-Years of U.S. Policy on North Korea: From Agreed Framework to Strategic Patience''. Testimony was heard from Glyn Davies, Special Representative for North Korea Policy, Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Department of State; and Robert King, Special Envoy for North Korean Human Rights, Office of the Special Envoy for Human Rights in North Korea, Department of State.

THE IRS TARGETING SCANDAL: THE NEED FOR A SPECIAL COUNSEL

Committee on the Judiciary: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''The IRS Targeting Scandal: The Need for a Special Counsel''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

OVERSIGHT OF THE FALSE CLAIMS ACT

Committee on the Judiciary: Subcommittee on the Constitution and Civil Justice held a hearing on oversight of the False Claims Act. Testimony was heard from Senator Grassley; and public witnesses.

THE U.S. PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE: THE AMERICA INVENTS ACT AND BEYOND, DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL POLICY GOALS

Committee on the Judiciary: Subcommittee on Courts, Intellectual Property, and the Internet held a hearing entitled ''The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office: The America Invents Act and Beyond, Domestic and International Policy Goals''. Testimony was heard from Michelle K. Lee, Deputy Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property, and Deputy Director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office, Department of Commerce.

MISCELLANEOUS MEASURES

Committee on Natural Resources: Full Committee held a markup on the following legislation: H. J. Res. 120, approving the location of a memorial to commemorate the more than 5,000 slaves and free Black persons who fought for independence in the American Revolution; H.R. 361, the ''Alpine Lakes Wilderness Additions and Pratt and Middle Fork Snoqualmie Rivers Protection Act''; H.R. 3006, to authorize a land exchange involving the acquisition of private land adjacent to the Cibola National Wildlife Refuge in Arizona for inclusion in the refuge in exchange for certain Bureau of Land Management lands in Riverside County, California, and for other purposes; H.R. 3109, to amend the Migratory Bird Treaty Act to exempt certain Alaskan Native articles from prohibitions against sale of items containing nonedible migratory bird parts, and for other purposes; H.R. 4119, the ''West Hunter Street Baptist Church Study Act''; H.R. 4182, to provide that the Ozark National Scenic Riverways shall be administered in accordance with the general management plan for that unit of the National Park System, and for other purposes; H.R. 4867, the ''Economic Development Through Tribal Land Exchange Act''; H.R. 5026, the ''Fish Hatchery Protection Act''; H.R. 5069, the ''Federal Duck Stamp Act of 2014''; H.R. 5203, the ''Dwight D. Eisenhower Memorial Commission Reform Act''; H.R. 5204, the ''Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Modernization Act of 2014''; H.R. 5205, the ''Northern Nevada Land Conservation and Economic Development Act''; S. 311, the ''Lower Mississippi River Area Study Act''; S. 354, the ''Oregon Caves Revitalization Act of 2013''; S. 476, to amend the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Development Act to extend to the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park Commission; and S. 1603, the ''Gun Lake Trust Land Reaffirmation Act''. The following bills were ordered reported, as amended: H.R. 361, H.R. 3006, H.R. 4119, H.R. 4867, H.R. 5069, H.R. 5203, and H.R. 5205. The following legislation was ordered reported, without amendment: H. J. Res. 120, H.R. 3109, H.R. 4182, H.R. 5026, H.R. 5204, S. 311, S. 354, S. 476, and S. 1603.

IRS ABUSES: ENSURING THAT TARGETING NEVER HAPPENS AGAIN

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''IRS Abuses: Ensuring that Targeting Never Happens Again''. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

MAKING SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2014, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES; SENATE AMENDMENT TO THE ''HIGHWAY AND TRANSPORTATION FUNDING ACT OF 2014''; TO PROHIBIT CERTAIN ACTIONS WITH RESPECT TO DEFERRED ACTION FOR ALIENS NOT LAWFULLY PRESENT IN THE UNITED STATES, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Committee on Rules: Full Committee held a hearing on H.R. 5230, making supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes; Senate amendment to H.R. 5021, the ''Highway and Transportation Funding Act of 2014''; and H.R. 5272, to prohibit certain actions with respect to deferred action for aliens not lawfully present in the United States, and for other purposes. The committee granted, by record vote of 8–3, a closed rule for H.R. 5230. The rule provides one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill and provides that it shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against provisions in the bill. The rule provides one motion to recommit. In section 2, the rule provides that after passage of H.R. 5230 and on the legislative day of July 31, 2014, the House shall consider H.R. 5272, to prohibit certain actions with respect to deferred action for aliens not lawfully present in the United States, and for other purposes, under a closed rule. The rule provides one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill and provides that it shall be considered as read. The rule waives all points of order against provisions in the bill. The rule provides one motion to recommit. In section 3, the rule provides for consideration of the Senate amendment to H.R. 5021. The rule makes in order a motion offered by the chair of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure or his designee that the House disagree to the Senate amendment to H.R. 5021. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the motion and provides that the Senate amendment and the motion shall be considered as read. The rule provides one hour of debate on the motion equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. In section 4, the rule provides that any motion pursuant to clause 4 of rule XXII relating to H.R. 5021 may be offered only by the Majority Leader or his designee. In section 5, the rule provides that it shall be in order at any time on the legislative day of July 31, 2014, for the Speaker to entertain motions that the House suspend the rules and that the Speaker or his designee shall consult with the Minority Leader or her designee on the designation of any matter for consideration pursuant to this section. In section 6, the rule waives clause 6(a) of rule XIII (requiring a two-thirds vote to consider a rule on the same day it is reported from the Rules Committee) against any resolution reported from the Rules Committee through the legislative day of July 31, 2014. Testimony was heard from Chairman Rogers of Kentucky and the following Representatives: Granger, Lowey, Farr, Fattah, King of Iowa, Lummis, Lofgren, Castro of Texas, Kelly of Illinois, Jackson Lee, Tierney, and Lee of California.

EPA'S CARBON PLAN: FAILURE BY DESIGN

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''EPA's Carbon Plan: Failure by Design''. Testimony was heard from David Cash, Commissioner, Massachusetts Department of Environmental Quality; and public witnesses.

REGULATORY OVERREACH: IS EPA MEETING ITS SMALL BUSINESS OBLIGATIONS?

Committee on Small Business: Full Committee held a hearing entitled ''Regulatory Overreach: Is EPA Meeting Its Small Business Obligations?''. Testimony was heard from Bob Perciasepe, Deputy Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency.

GSA TENANT AGENCIES: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN REDUCING COSTS OF LEASED SPACE

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure: Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings and Emergency Management held a hearing entitled ''GSA Tenant Agencies: Challenges and Opportunities in Reducing Costs of Leased Space''. Testimony was heard from Norman Dong, Commissioner, Public Buildings Service, General Services Administration; Joyce Barr, Assistant Secretary for Administration, Department of State; Michael H. Allen, Deputy Assistant Attorney General for Policy, Management and Planning, Justice Management Division, Department of Justice; Jeffery Orner, Chief

Readiness Support Officer, Department of Homeland Security; E.J. Holland, Jr., Assistant Secretary for Administration, Department of Health and Human Services; William E. Brazis, Director, Washington Headquarters Service, Department of Defense; and Peter Spencer, Deputy Commissioner of Budget, Finance, Quality and Management, Social Security Administration.

DYNAMIC ANALYSIS OF THE TAX REFORM ACT OF 2014

Committee on Ways and Means: Subcommittee on Select Revenue Measures held a hearing on dynamic analysis of the Tax Reform Act of 2014. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

SUBSIDIZED JOBS PROGRAMS AND THEIR EFFECTIVENESS IN HELPING FAMILIES ESCAPE POVERTY

Committee on Ways and Means: Subcommittee on Human Resources held a hearing on subsidized jobs programs and their effectiveness in helping families escape poverty. Testimony was heard from Amy Dvorak, Employer Relations Coordinator, New York State/Erie County Department of Social Services; and public witnesses.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR THURSDAY, JULY 31, 2014

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: to hold hearings to examine financial products for students, focusing on issues and challenges, 10 a.m., SD–538.

Subcommittee on Financial Institutions and Consumer Protection, to hold hearings to examine the Government Accountability Office report on expectations of government support for bank holding companies, 2 p.m., SD–538.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: Subcommittee on Aviation Operations, Safety, and Security, to hold hearings to examine domestic challenges and global competition in aviation manufacturing, 10:30 a.m., SR–253.

Committee on Finance: business meeting to consider the nominations of Robert W. Holleyman II, of Louisiana, to be a Deputy United States Trade Representative, with the rank of Ambassador, D. Nathan Sheets, of Maryland, to be Under Secretary, and Ramin Toloui, of Iowa, to be Deputy Under Secretary, both of the Department of the Treasury, Maria Cancian, of Wisconsin, to be Assistant Secretary of Health and Human Services for Family Support, and Cary Douglas Pugh, of Virginia, to be a Judge of the United States Tax Court, Time to be announced, Room to be announced.

Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine the nomination of Carolyn Watts Colvin, of Maryland, to be Commissioner of Social Security, 10 a.m., SD–215.

Select Committee on Intelligence: to receive a briefing on certain intelligence matters, 3 p.m., SH–219.

House

Committee on Energy and Commerce, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, hearing entitled ''PPACA Implementation: Updates from CMS and GAO'', 9:15 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Subcommittee on Government Operations, hearing entitled ''Planes, Trains and Automobiles: Operating While Stoned'', 9 a.m., 2154 Rayburn.

Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, Subcommittee on Research and Technology; and Subcommittee on Oversight, joint subcommittee hearing entitled ''Technology Needed to Secure America's Border'', 10 a.m., 2318 Rayburn.

Committee on Small Business, Subcommittee on Health and Technology, hearing entitled ''Telemedicine: A Prescription for Small Medical Practices?'', 10 a.m., 2360 Rayburn.

Committee on Ways and Means, Full Committee, markup on H.R. 647, the ''Able Act of 2013'', 10:15 a.m., 1100 Longworth.

House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, Full Committee, markup on final HPSCI Investigative Report on the September 2012 Attacks in Benghazi, Libya, 8:30 a.m., HVC–304. A portion of the meeting will close.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

9:30 a.m., Thursday, July 31

Senate Chamber

Program for Thursday: Senate will continue consideration of the motion to proceed to consideration of S. 2648, Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act, postcloture.

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

9 a.m., Thursday, July 31

House Chamber

Program for Thursday: Consideration of H.R. 5230—Making supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014 (Subject to a Rule), H.R. 5272—To prohibit certain actions with respect to deferred action for aliens not lawfully present in the United States (Subject to a Rule), and the Senate amendment to H.R. 5021—Highway and Transportation Funding Act of 2014 (Subject to a Rule). Complete consideration of H.R. 935—Reducing Regulatory Burdens Act.

Extensions of Remarks, as inserted in this issue

HOUSE

Beatty, Joyce, Ohio, E1281
Bishop, Sanford D., Jr., Ga., E1280
Bordallo, Madeleine Z., Guam, E1272
Brady, Kevin, Tex., E1273
Brady, Robert A., Pa., E1276
Coble, Howard, N.C., E1278
Coffman, Mike, Colo., E1270, E1274
Cuellar, Henry, Tex., E1278
Davis, Danny K., Ill., E1277, E1281, E1282
Dingell, John D., Mich., E1279
Duncan, John J., Tenn., E1275
Faleomavaega, Eni F.H., American Samoa, E1270
Frankel, Lois, Fla., E1277
Garamendi, John, Calif., E1280
Graves, Sam, Mo., E1270
Grayson, Alan, Fla., E1273, E1275
Higgins, Brian, N.Y., E1269
Horsford, Steven A., Nev., E1280
Huffman, Jared, Calif., E1269
Israel, Steve, N.Y., E1269
Jackson Lee, Sheila, Tex., E1271
Lowey, Nita M., N.Y., E1277
Lujan Grisham, Michelle, N.M., E1271
Meehan, Patrick, Pa., E1269
Norton, Eleanor Holmes, D.C., E1274
Peters, Gary C., Mich., E1269
Rangel, Charles B., N.Y., E1273
Schakowsky, Janice D., Ill., E1281
Shuster, Bill, Pa., E1270, E1278
Smith, Jason T., Mo., E1276
Swalwell, Eric, Calif., E1279
Thompson, Bennie G., Miss., E1270, E1271, E1272, E1274, E1275, E1276, E1278, E1279, E1281, E1282
Thompson, Glenn, Pa., E1272
Tipton, Scott R., Colo., E1278
Van Hollen, Chris, Md., E1279
Vargas, Juan, Calif., E1274
Wolf, Frank R., Va., E1276

Congressional Record

The *Congressional Record* (USPS 087–390). The Periodicals postage is paid at Washington, D.C. The public proceedings of each House of Congress, as reported by the Official Reporters thereof, are printed pursuant to directions of the Joint Committee on Printing as authorized by appropriate provisions of Title 44, United States Code, and published for each day that one or both Houses are in session, excepting very infrequent instances when two or more unusually small consecutive issues are printed one time. ¶Public access to the *Congressional Record* is available online through the U.S. Government Publishing Office, at *www.fdsys.gov*, free of charge to the user. The information is updated online each day the *Congressional Record* is published. For more information, contact the GPO Customer Contact Center, U.S. Government Publishing Office. Phone 202–512–1800, or 866–512–1800 (toll-free). E-Mail, *contactcenter@gpo.gov*. ¶To place an order for any of these products, visit the U.S. Government Online Bookstore at: bookstore.gpo.gov. Mail orders to: Superintendent of Documents, P.O. Box 979050, St. Louis, MO 63197–9000, or phone orders to 866–512–1800 (toll-free), 202–512–1800 (D.C. area), or fax to 202–512–2104. Remit check or money order, made payable to the Superintendent of Documents, or use VISA, MasterCard, Discover, American Express, or GPO Deposit Account. ¶Following each session of Congress, the daily *Congressional Record* is revised, printed, permanently bound and sold by the Superintendent of Documents in individual parts or by sets. ¶With the exception of copyrighted articles, there are no restrictions on the republication of material from the *Congressional Record*.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Superintendent of Documents, *Congressional Record*, U.S. Government Publishing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402, along with the entire mailing label from the last issue received.